

OUR CANADIAN PORTRAIT GALLERY.

No. 118.—STEPHEN TOBIN, ESQ., M. P.,

MOVER OF THE ADDRESS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Mr. Tobin, we learn from the last edition of Morgan's Parliamentary Companion, belongs to a family of Irish origin, the members of which removed from Massachusetts to Halifax in 1759. He is the son of Thomas S. Tobin, Esq., of Halifax, and the grandson of the late Hon. Michael Tobin, at one time a member of the Legislative Council of Nova Scotia. Mr. Stephen Tobin was born at Halifax in 1836, and received his education at Stoneyhurst. He has held several honourable appointments in connection with his native city, and in 1868 was sent as a delegate to the International Convention at Portland, Me. He sat in the Halifax City Council for a lengthened period, and has been twice elected to the Mayoralty, which he held from 1867 to 1870. At the general elections of 1867 he was an unsuccessful candidate for the representation of Halifax in the Local Assembly, but at the last general elections he was returned to the House of Commons for that constituency. Mr. Tobin's political record is but a short one, but he gives great promise for the future. As an orator he is second to no member of the House. His speech in moving the Address made a great impression, and received the eulogiums of nearly the entire press of the country.

No. 119.—A. L. PALMER, Q. C., M. P.,

SECONDER OF THE ADDRESS.

Acalus Lockwood Palmer, Esq., member of the Dominion House of Commons for the City and County of St. John, is a descendant of a New York Loyalist family, the members of which settled in New Brunswick during the Revolution. He was born in 1820 at Sackville, N. B., and for over twenty years has been a leading member of the Provincial Bar, to which he was called in 1846. In 1867 he was appointed Queen's Counsel. During the Confederate elections in New Brunswick he contested Westmoreland County in the Confederate interest against the Hon. Albert J. Smith, the then leader of the Anti-Confederate Government, but although he received upwards of fourteen hundred votes he was unsuccessful in carrying the election. At the last general election Mr. Palmer was returned to the House of Commons, where he has the honour of representing the largest constituency in the Dominion—the population of which exceeds fifty-eight thousand.

Mr. Palmer's father, Philip Palmer, Esq., represented the County of Westmoreland for twenty-five years in the New Brunswick Parliament.

Owing to the difficulty in procuring photographs of the Mover and Secunder of the Address we were unable to produce their portraits at an earlier date.

[Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.]

BABOOS,

AND THEIR PECULIARITIES.

Let not the reader start dismayed at the title of this article and hurriedly turn over the page, imagining that he is about to be bored with an abstruse dissertation upon the varieties of the genus *Simia*—nothing of the kind! This paper has no connection whatever with the Monkey family, unless we accept the Darwinian theory, and regard man as only a higher development of that interesting animal.

The "Baboos," of whose peculiarities I propose to treat, are the native clerks of Bengal, whose "tricks and manners" I had ample opportunity of observing during a residence there for several years as head of a large mercantile firm employing nearly a hundred of these gentry.

Admirable as a mere machine for the routine work of the office, the Bengalee Baboo, with a few rare exceptions, is totally unfit for any post requiring the exercise of judgment and discrimination. He has usually a fair colloquial knowledge of the English language and writes with great neatness and facility; but as he is remarkably fond of polysyllables and interlard his epistles with the very longest words he can pick out of the dictionary, allowing considerable latitude as to their strict meaning, besides introducing numerous flowery Eastern metaphors, his correspondence is rather bewildering and somewhat mirth-provoking. He is as imitative as his Darwinian prototype, and soon picks up the official phraseology which, combined with his natural style, generally results in a highly ludicrous composition.

Many of my readers will be familiar with the somewhat hackneyed story of the Baboo in a Government office, who, in true official style, wrote to excuse his absence on the ground that he was "laid up with boils *as per margin*," on which margin he portrayed a vivid delineation of the said boils, their number and locality,—and further explained that owing to the limited size of the margin he was compelled to make them only half their actual dimensions. This is by no means an exaggeration, and I have now before me an original letter which I received from one of my Baboos, stating that he was unable to attend office that day in consequence of his wife having eloped with some gay Hindoo Lothario. He described in moving and grandiloquent terms his sense of the desolation that had fallen on his domestic hearth, and then by way of conveying some adequate idea of the awful calamity, concludes his description with the exclamation, "Good Lord, how magnificent!"

Another, writing to me for an increase of salary, occupies three sheets of a sheet of foolscap in explaining that he regards me in the light of his father, mother, and in fact, the whole

of his family concentrated under one head; he states that without the support of my protecting kindness he would long since have perished of inanition, and expresses his determination to carry the memory of my beneficence with him to the grave, "and even beyond the grave, if practicable." Here is a copy *verbatim et literatim* of another letter on the same subject:

"HONOURED SIR,—Your great magnanimity and charitable temper are *prepitious* (probably intended for *propitious*) to the poor and those to help them in obtaining a small post, I therefore sue with modesty for obtaining your exemption and perplex you with these few lines as a pattern of my handwriting, which I trust will meet with your favourable approbations,

"I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient humble servant,
"KEDDERNATH MOOKERJEE."

The Baboo is a great admirer of "Shakespeare," and neglects no opportunity of introducing a quotation from the immortal Bard; he is also fond of specifying the exact nature of the various complaints which necessitate his absence from business, and the details into which he enters are occasionally somewhat startling, and would be only suited for the pages of a Medical Journal. One, with a curious mixture of poetry and medical science, wrote to tell me that on the previous evening his wife had taken her departure for that bourne from which no traveller returns, after vomiting two days, accompanied by coldness of the extremities.

I was once somewhat taken aback by being requested to add another to the great army of commentators who have so unmercifully maltreated the unfortunate Swan of Avon. It occurred in this wise: I had called in at the Metcalfe Library, and was looking over the recently arrived English newspapers when to me approaches a young Baboo attired in immaculate white calico, and bearing a huge folio volume on his arm. He made me a very low *salam*, and said in precise and perfectly well pronounced English, "Sir, I am a poor student and am at present engaged in studying the works of Mr. Shakespeare; but there is here a sentence which I do not understand, will your honour be kind enough to explain it to me?"

"Oh! certainly, Baboo," I replied affably, unconscious to what I was committing myself. "What is it?" "It is this, sir," he returned, pointing to the incantation scene in "Macbeth":

"Fair is foul and foul is fair,
Hover through fog and misty air."

"I do not understand this; will your Honour tell me what it means?"

The reader may imagine my embarrassment on being called upon to explain such a passage as this to a coloured young gentleman, with a superficial knowledge of the English language; however, I gave him the best explanation I could on the spur of the moment, and the unfortunate youth walked off, looking very much bewildered and I fear but little enlightened by my dissertation—a not unfrequent result of such attempts even by more qualified commentators than myself.

The Baboo is a confirmed shirker, and is remarkably ingenious and fertile in inventing excuses for his absence from office; it is only on the last day of the month—pay day—that one can count with any certainty on a full attendance of the staff.

For nearly twelve months I was almost worried out of my life by an old man of the sea in the shape of an elderly Baboo, whose services, in an evil moment, I had engaged. He had come to me armed with the most flattering testimonials, accrediting him with all the cardinal virtues, and quite a respectable number over and above. He was venerable and intelligent in his appearance, but somehow, even while I was engaging him, my mind misgave me, and I feared that there must be some drawbacks I was unaware of, or such a treasure would have been eagerly snapped up by those acquainted with his merits. My misgivings were soon verified—indeed it was only two days after his engagement that a brother merchant caught sight of him as he passed through my private office. "Hallo!" he cried, "have you got hold of that old reprobate?" "Why, what's the matter with him?" I replied, "he seems a first-rate hand and has capital testimonials." My friend smiled sardonically: "you won't be long in finding out what's the matter with him," he said, "and I wish you joy of your bargain." I comforted myself with the reflection that he was probably prejudiced against the old man, but, alas! I was speedily undeceived. In less than a week my venerable employee was absent, and there came a letter announcing the death of his mother, and praying for leave of absence to perform the funeral ceremonies. In a week he returned, looking a very evil case; it might be from grief, but it bore a suspicious resemblance to effects of a prolonged debauch. A few days of regular attendance, and then his father died. Brothers and sisters followed in rapid succession, and any unusual press of work in the office was invariably accompanied by the untimely decease of one of his ill-omened family. They were, however, remarkably consistent in dying always early in the month, so as to allow their relation to be on the spot in time to receive his pay.

Over and over again did I discharge this aggravating beathen, but he would grovel at my feet, clasping my knees, and shedding crocodile tears, while he bowed his venerable head in the dust and promised amendment, so I always relented and withdrew the sentence of banishment, but at length my overtaxed patience could endure no longer, and summoning my head man I commanded him on pain of his own dismissal to get rid of my unbearable incubus. This plan succeeded; the hypocritical old unbeliever disappeared, and his place knew him no worse. An analysis of the attendance roll after his departure showed that during the nine months he was in my employ *twenty-six* of his relations had died, each bereavement entailing an absence of not less than a week.

I afterwards ascertained that this was his usual course of proceeding, and that his family possessed, like the fabled Phoenix, the power of rising from their ashes, and died or were re-animated as suited the convenience of their mendacious relative.

Here is a good example of native "cheek." I had in my employ a favourite servant who had been with me ever since I came to the country; he had risen from the ranks of domestic service, and now filled the exalted and very profitable post of *Kanaukabi* or Major-Domo of the establishment. His chief duty was to provide the supplies for the house, for which he sent in his bill every week; at length it was forced

upon my notice that this attached and faithful old servant was charging me something like five hundred per cent more than the market value of the articles he supplied, so I carpeted my gentleman and demanded an explanation. At first he denied the fact in toto. Driven out of this position by the production of his old accounts, he then fell back on the assertion that the market price had risen very much. Defeated here and beaten at every point he at last turned at bay, and with an indescribable expression of demure impudence said: "When I first come into the *Sahib's* service, he very small man—servant very small man too—now *Sahib* very great man—servant very great man too, and must charge accordingly!" The sublime impudence of this reply of course disarmed all further criticism, and he retired triumphant.

W. H. F.

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TOUCHSTONE PAPERS.

NO. II.—THE PHARISEE.

Some people like earnest men. I do not. The world is such a comedy that he is apt to be its special scapegoat, who takes its ways and its sayings *au grand sérieux*. It is just as well to be on one's guard against being made a fool of. Aristippus would be ridiculously out of place in a cage of monkeys.

It is all very well to follow one's own conscience. Indeed, in a certain sense, there is no other golden rule to go by. But we have the authority of the Good Book for superadding the wiliness of serpents to the simplicity of doves. Expediency may not be a goal to aim at, but it is necessary to have it always and everywhere in the tail of our eye.

Philosophers, veteran spinsters and, indeed, old women of both sexes admire Gladstone, though he is a Radical. He is such an earnest, direct man. Politicians, and all other artists, admire Disraeli, though he is a Tory. He is such a playful oblique man. He is a lineal descendant of the Jewish Pharisees.

On a smaller theatre, look at John A. Macdonald and Alex. McKenzie. The one handles the weightiest matters of State, as if he were a boy playing with soap-bubbles, light and iridescent. The other charges at a point of order, as if he were attacking a horde of Phillistines. There is no finer study of human nature, to an observer in the press gallery, than that of the slippery old knight, bending his head to one side and listening with mock contrition to a vociferous lecture from McKenzie on his political sins.

My Pharisee is an adept in theology, and the cardinal point of his doctrine is charity. A poor fellow died some days ago belonging to a guild which he had illustrated by his talents and social virtues. A subscription was opened for his widow and destitute children. The poorest members of the profession, who had scarcely enough to keep themselves in clean collars and cuffs, contributed a mite to the fund. A wealthy member of the society, grown fat on the brains of his impetuous subordinates, was applied to for a few dollars. Of course, he gave an X? Not so fast. He was charitable, but charity must be discriminate. Had the dead associate had a moral life? Had his death not been caused by intemperance? The collector, who is one of your foolish earnest men, got indignant, thrust his subscription-list in his pocket and stalked out, while the other smiled benignly, having escaped paying a few dollars under the cloak of religion. Sublime Pharisee!

The Pharisee is the most self-denying of men. He never seeks his own interest. He would scorn to prostitute his principles or his positions to his own behests. People, "his friends," have actually to force him to do anything that bears the faintest semblance of egotism. Some time ago there was a disaster on a certain river, by which several sailors lost their lives. The usual cry of criminal negligence against owners and officers was raised. A hundred fellows, knowing nothing about ships or boats, rushed into the papers with practical suggestions. As usual, nothing was done to prevent recurrence of similar accidents; seeing which a Pharisaical friend, who kept a kind of show-shop called the "Ensign" on — Street, announced that, at the suggestion of "friends," he had been induced to open a subscription for a granulated cork mattress, to be used in cases of wreck. It would be called the "Ensign" Mattress. The mattress cost \$20; the showman contributed nothing. The thing was not meant for an advertisement, of course.

In crossing the ocean, some years since, on board the "Fulton," bound from New York to Havre, I fell in with a young Italian Count and his wife, returning to their country from a visit to the United States. Sunday is a dreary day aboard ship, and to kill the time, the Count and wife began a game of dominoes, in a retired part of the cabin. Great scandal among the passengers. Complaint being made to the captain, he politely but firmly requested the couple to abandon their game. The Count, who saw me smiling, said, with an inimitable shrug: "Che fanno questi Americani nel Sabbato?" I answered: "Niente ch'andare facendo loro prossimo." The Count could not help laughing, and went off, muttering something about "Sepoleri dealbati."

Our fathers had a way of measuring a man by the size of his tankard. If that rule were observed to-day, I think we should have fewer drunkards. The Pharisee has increased the number of inebriates by the diminutive shape and false bottoms of his cups. The glass is no larger than a lady's thimble, but it can be filled often and filled secretly. The worse is that Jemima and Clorinda have learned to drink as well as Jeremy and Jonathan. If you mean to drink, better take your girl openly upon your knee, as Rembrandt did his, and raise high the long stemmed goblet where your lips are to meet. No hypocrisy. Bassompierre broke the small glasses that were presented him, and, in jolly sarcasm, filling his great cavalry boot with Burgundy, drained it to the health of the thirteen Cantons.

I believe there is no love which has not some artifice in it. This does not affect its sincerity; it adds piquancy to its fervor. Victor Hugo's description of Marius promending up and down the Luxembourg gardens, in his best suit, in order to attract the attention of Cosette, is an admirable portraiture of the Pharisaical lover. The fellow thought more of himself than he did of the girl, and more of his clothes than of either. The type is not a flattering one.