Miscellaneous and General News.

THE PRESIDENT AND THE PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION.

On Saturday afternoon, Aug. 18, the Committee appointed by the Philadelphia Convention waited upon the President at the White House for the purpose of presenting to him an official copy of the proceedings of the Convention. The proceedings were presented by the Hon. Reverdy Johnston, of Maryland, accompanied by an able and eloquent address from that gentleman When Mr. Johnston had concluded, the President said:—

MR. CHAIRMAN, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE:—Language is inadequate to express the emotions and feelings excited by this occasion. Perhaps I could express more by permitting silence to speak, and you to infer what I ought to say. I confess that notwithstanding the experience I have had in public life, and the assurance I have addressed this occasion and this assemblage are well calculated to try and do overwhelm me. As I have said, I have not language to convey adequately my present feelings and sentiments. In listening to the address which you (to speak and distinguished chairman) have just delivered, the proceedings of the Convention, as they transpired, rushed to my mind. Seemingly I catch not the inspiration that prevailed in the Convention when I received a despatch sent by one of its distinguished members, conveying in terms the scene which has just been described of South Carolina and Massachusetts, men in arms, mingling in that assemblage, and thus giving evidence that the two extremes had come together, and that for the future they were united as they had been in the past, for the preservation of the Union. When the despatches informed me that in that vast body of men, distinguished for intellect and wisdom, scarcely one was unfused with tears on beholding the scene, I could not finish reading the despatch to one assembled with me in the office, for my own feelings overcame me. (Cheers.) I think we may justly conclude we are moving under a proper inspiration, and that we need not be mistaken that the finger of an overruling and unerring Providence has in the matter. (Loud cheers) The nation is in peril. We have just passed through a mighty, a bloody, a momentous ordeal, yet do not find ourselves free from the difficulties and dangers that at first surrounded us. While our brave men have performed their duties, both officers and men (turning to General Grant, who stood at his right), while they have won laurels imperishable, there are still greater and more important duties to perform; and while we have had their co-operation in the field, we now need their support in our efforts to perpetuate peace. (Loud cheers) So far as the Executive Department of the Government is concerned, the effort has been made to restore the Union, to heal the breach, to pour oil into the wounds which were consequent upon the struggle, and, to speak in common phrase, to prepare, as the learned and wise physician would, a plaster, healing in character and co-extensive with the wound. (Loud cheers.) We thought, and yet think, that we had partially succeeded, but as the work progressed, as reconciliation seemed to be taking place, and the country becoming united, we found a disturbing and marring element opposing us. In alluding to that element I shall go no further than your Convention and the distinguished gentlemen who have delivered to me the report of the proceedings. I shall make no reference to it which I do not believe the time and occasion justify. We have witnessed in one department of the Government every effort, as it were, to prevent the restoration of peace and harmony in the Union. We have seen hanging upon the verge of the Government, as it were, a body called, or which assumes to be, the Congress of the United States—but, in fact, a Congress of only a part of the States. We have seen this Congress appear and pretend to be for the Union, when its every step and act tended to perpetuate disunion and make a dismemberment of the States inevitable. Instead of promoting reconciliation and harmony, its legislation has partaken of the character of penalties, retaliation and revenge. This has been the course and the policy of one department of your Government. The humble individual who is now addressing you stands the representative of another department of the Government. The manner in which he was called upon to occupy that position I shall not allude to on this occasion; suffice it to say that he is here under the constitution of the country, and being here by virtue of its provisions, he takes his stand upon the charter of our liberties as the great rampart of civil and religious liberty. (Prolonged cheers.) Having been taught in my early life to hold it sacred, and having practised upon it during my whole public career, I shall ever continue to reverence that Constitution—the Constitution of the Fathers of our country—and to make it my guide. (Enthusiastic cheers.) I know it has been said, and I must be permitted to indulge in the reference, that the executive department of the Government has been tyrannical. Let me ask this audience of distinguished gentlemen around me here to-day to point to a vote I ever gave, to a speech I ever made, to a single act of my whole public life that has not been against tyranny and despotism. What position have I ever occupied, what ground have I ever assumed, when it can be truthfully charged that I failed to advocate the amelioration and elevation of the great masses of my countrymen? (Cries of "Never," and great applause.) So far as charges of that kind are concerned, I will say that they are simply intended to deceive and delude the public mind into the belief that there is some one in power who is usurping and trampling upon the rights and perverting the principles of the constitution. It is done by those who make such charges for the purpose of covering their own acts. (Cries of "That's so," and cheers.) I have felt it my duty, in vindication of principle and the constitution of my country, to call attention to these proceedings. When we came to examine who has been playing the tyrant, by whom do we find that despotism has been exercised? As to myself, the elements of my nature, the pursuits of my life, have not made me, either in principle or in practice, aggressive. My nature, on the contrary, is rather defensive in its character, but I will say that, having taken my stand upon the broad principles of liberty and the constitution, there is not power enough on earth to drive me from it. (Prolonged cheering.) Having placed myself on that broad platform, I have not been awed, dismayed, or intimidated by either threats or encroachments, but have stood there, in conjunction with patriotic spirits, sounding the tocsin of alarm whenever I deemed the citadel of liberty in danger. (Great applause.) I said on a previous occasion, and repeat now, that all that was necessary in the great struggle against tyranny and despotism was, that the struggle should be sufficiently audible for the American people to hear and properly understand. They did hear, and looking on and seeing who the contestants were and what that struggle was about, they determined that they would settle this question on the side of the constitution and of principle.—(Cries of "That's so," and applause.) I proclaim here to-day, as I have on other occasions, that my faith is abiding in the great mass of the people. In the darkest moment of the struggle, when the clouds seemed to be most lowering, my faith, instead of giving way, loomed up through the dark clouds far beyond—I saw that all would be safe in the end. (Cheers.) My countrymen, we all know that, in the language of Thomas Jefferson, "tyranny and despotism even can be exercised and exerted more effectually by the many than the one." We have seen a Congress gradually encroach, step by step, upon constitutional rights, and violate, day after day, and month after month, the fundamental principles of the Government. (Cries of "That's so.") We have seen a Congress that seemed to forget that there was a limit to the sphere and scope of legislation. (Hooped cries of "That's so.") We have seen a Congress in a minority assume to exercise powers which, if allowed to be carried out, would result in despotism or monarchy itself. (Cries of "That's so," and enthusiastic cheers given for the President.) This is truth; and because others, as well as myself, have seen proper to appeal to the patriotism and republican feeling of the country, we have been denounced in the most severe terms. Slander upon slander, vituperation upon vituperation, of the most villainous character has made its way through the public press.

What, my countrymen, has been your action in this? Where has been the cause of our country in danger that you do not dare to stand by the constitution of your country? [illegible] (Applause.) [illegible]

The President here approached the spot where Senator Johnston was standing, and said: I consider the proceedings of this Convention, sir, as more important than those of any convention that ever assembled in the United States. (Great applause.) When I look with my mind's eye upon that collection of citizens coming together voluntarily, and sitting in council with ideas, with principles and views commensurate with all the States, and co-extensive with the whole people, and contrast it with the collection of gentlemen who are trying to destroy the country, I regard it as more important than any convention that has sat at least since 1787. (Loud cheers.) I think I may say also that the declarations that were there made are equal with the Declaration of Independence itself, and here to-day I pronounce it a second Declaration of Independence. (Cries of "Glorious," and most enthusiastic and prolonged applause.) Your address and declarations are nothing more nor less than a reaffirmation of the Constitution of the United States. (Cries of "Good!" and cheers.) Yes, I will go further, and say that the declarations you have made, that the principles you have enunciated in your address, are a second proclamation of emancipation to the people of the United States—(renewed applause)—for in proclaiming and reproclaiming these great truths, you have laid down a constitutional platform upon which all can make common cause, and stand together for the restoration of the States and the preservation of the country without reference to party.—(Cheers.) The question only lifts the location of the country, for our country rises above all party considerations or influences. (Cries of "Good," and cheers.) How many are in the United States that now require to be free?—that have the shackles upon their limbs, and are bound as rigidly as though they were in fact in slavery? I repeat, then, that your declaration is the second proclamation of emancipation to the people of the United States, and offers a common ground upon which all patriots can stand. (Loud cheers.) Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen: Let me, in this connection, ask you what have I to gain more than the advancement of the public welfare? I am as much opposed to the indulgence of egotism as any one, but here, in a conversational manner, while formally receiving the proceedings of this Convention, I may be permitted again to ask—"What have I to gain, constituting human ambition, more than I have, except in one thing?" My race is nearly run. I have been placed in the high office which I occupy under the Constitution of the country, and I may say I have held, from lowest to highest, almost every position to which a man may attain in our Government. I have passed through every position, from an alderman of a village to the Presidency of the United States, and surely, gentlemen, this should be enough to gratify a reasonable ambition. If I wanted authority, or if I wished to perpetuate my own power, how easy it would have been to hold and wield that which was placed in my hands by the measures called the "Freedmen's Bureau Bill." [Laughter and applause.] With an army which it placed at my discretion, I could have remained at the capital of the nation, and with its fifty or sixty millions of appropriations at my disposal, with the machinery to be worked by my own hands, with my satraps and dependents in every town and village, and then with the "Civil Rights Bill" following as an auxiliary—[laughter]—in connection with all the other appliances of the Government, I could have proclaimed myself Dictator! [Cries of "That's true," and "Three cheers for the President."] But, gentlemen, my pride and ambition have been to occupy that position which retains all power in the hands of the people.—[Great cheering.] It is upon that I have always relied; is upon that I rely now. [A voice—"And the people will not disappoint you."] And I repeat, that neither the taunts nor jeers of Congress, nor of a subsidized, calumniating press, can drive me from my purpose. [Great applause.] I acknowledge no superior except my God, the author of my existence, and the people of the United States. [Prolonged and enthusiastic cheering.] For the one, I try to obey all His commands as best I can compatible with my poor humanity; for the other, in a political and representative sense, the high behests of the people have always been obeyed by me. [Loud cheers.] Mr. Chairman, I have said more than I intended to say. For the kind allusions to myself contained in your address, and in the resolutions adopted by the Convention, let me remark that, in this crisis, and at this period of my public life, I hold above all price, and shall ever recur with feelings of profound gratification to the last resolution containing the endorsement of a Convention emanating spontaneously from the great mass of the people. [Loud cheers.] I trust and hope that my future action may be such that you and the Convention may not regret the assurance of confidence you have expressed of me. [Cries of "We are sure of it."] Before separating, my friends, one and all, committee and strangers, please accept my sincere thanks for the kind manifestations of regard and respect you have exhibited on this occasion. I repeat I shall always continue to be guided by a firm and conscientious conviction of duty, and that always gives one courage under the Constitution, which I make my guide.

At the conclusion of the President's remarks, three cheers were enthusiastically given for Andrew Johnston, and three more for General Grant. The President and General Grant then retired arm-in-arm, and the Committee and the audience commenced to disperse.

A CLERICAL SCANDAL.—A YOUNG GIRL SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN LED ASTRAY BY AN AGED MINISTER.—About one month ago a young lady of respectable connexions disappeared from her parental home under circumstances which have caused the public to believe that she has been the victim of false confidence, and eloped with a clergyman, who might have been her grandfather, to parts unknown. The young lady in question resided on the Davenport road, about five miles from this city, and was generally admired, not only for her beauty, but her talents and lady-like manner. Some time ago the clergyman came on a visit to the house of her parents, and remained there for several weeks, during which time he had ample opportunities of forming an acquaintance with the young lady, to whom he imparted knowledge in the classics and history, to which it is feared a little romance added. Her parents never suspecting, from the respectable rank which their visitor held in society, that any plot was brooding for the purpose of destroying their happiness, used to permit the young lady to take walks in the country with her instructor, and on his leaving a few weeks afterwards, pressed him to remain longer with them, as they found his company so pleasing and agreeable to their daughter. This he declined, alleging, as an excuse, that his ministerial avocations called him away to his parish. The day after he left, a letter was received by the young lady which, from the handwriting on the envelope, there is little doubt came from the Revd. gentleman. Her parents were in town that day; she took advantage of the opportunity, and has not since been heard from. Although her parents have made enquiry in Toronto and the vicinity, after the missing ones, no clue has been traced as to their whereabouts. It is suspected that they succeeded that evening in reaching the land of the free and enlightened citizens, where no doubt the bond of Hymen soon placed them beyond the pale of parental interference.—*Toronto paper.*

MEXICO.

As our readers know, we have never gone with those who have, for some time past, demanded an armed interference in Mexican affairs. We contented ourselves with recording our conviction that the form of government and the qualifications of the rulers were matters that ought to be left to the Mexicans themselves. It was plain, from the first, that Maximilian would not in the long run prove acceptable to the people; and his cavalier treatment of the Mexican prelacy, much as it endeared him to North and South American Protestants, revealed the Josephine policy on which he expected to consolidate his throne. This assumption, that the clergy are mere agents of the King, and have really no other status than that which Cæsar assigns to them, may seem a brilliant thought, but it has never served to found a state, and never will. Maximilian will leave Mexico a prey, perhaps, to anarchy, but the principles on which he chose to rest his Temporalities were quite as anarchical as the favorite codes of the "champions of freedom." Yet in all this, even admitting that the Mexican throne was a usurpation, we would allow to many of our people could imagine that the course of the Republican Administration was a weak one, and that a more summary proceeding would have been not only more successful, but more "dignified." Mr. Seward, we think, has in this respect, as in almost every other, adopted the wisest method of enforcing national rights—that is, to be clear first about the justice of our case, and secondly to pursue the claim peacefully and diplomatically rather than resort to the last remedy of the rough politicians.

There seems to be nothing left now but to let the Mexican people discover that they cannot "govern themselves." And as they needs must be governed, they will gradually come to look upon the Restored Republic as the Master whom it is an honor to serve.

Under our mild and equitable sway, the Church, now impoverished by chronic spoliations, perhaps inseparable from abortive revolutions, will expand wide at least the confidence that her new acquirements will be scrupulously protected by our simple policy of Impartial Fair-play.

We trust that [illegible] no part in the war. Messrs. Stevens and Sumner would not refuse the New States their representation in Congress. And we see more wit in a friendly waiting for a request for admission than in kindling that inclination by quarrelling with the want of it. Above all, we see enough in Europe of emancipation-wars, and would rather leave the entrance door hospitably open than compel the bashful stranger to come in.—*N. Y. Tablet.*

WHAT THE FENIANS ARE DOING.

The Toronto correspondent of the Toronto *Globe* furnishes the following interesting information:—

"What the plan of the next campaign will be has not yet come to light. I have heard one talking of it, but must await further developments before I speak positively about it. There is one fact, however, of which the authorities will do well to take note. There are at present several hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of Fenian spies in the Province. They are loitering about all the large towns and cities, living quietly among themselves, taking observations and preparing for a rising. Their numbers are constantly increasing, and yet they move into the country so cautiously, in twos and threes, that no notice is taken of them. In addition to this, large quantities of arms are being smuggled in at various places and stowed away for future use. From the information I have gleaned, I have no doubt that at the present moment there are hundreds of these men and guns in the city of Toronto. There are now here attending this Congress several of those spies, who have come for the purpose of reporting progress. From this and other whispers I have heard it beyond doubt a part of the programme that a rising is to be made in your very midst. The armories and military stores are to be seized whenever they are poorly guarded, and even in some instances towns are to be fired in half-a-dozen places at one time, and in the confusion that ensues the Fenians will make a rising. Toronto is one of the places doomed to this fate. This is no fancy sketch, wild and foolish as it may seem. I have it from authority that cannot be doubted, though what that authority is I dare not state until such time as I get back to Canada. In the meantime, if there are many suspicious-looking strangers around the city, it will be well for the police to keep a sharp eye upon them. They cannot be too closely watched. I do not wish to create any unnecessary alarm, but I am as certain that there are such men in Toronto, and every other important town in the Province, as I am that I myself am this day sitting down here in Troy. The fact that there are some of those ruffians here for the purpose of reporting progress, is sufficient proof of the correctness of what I have stated."

PROPOSED NATIONAL MEMORIAL OF ROBERT BURNS.

The fact of Burns' birth-place being for sale, has suggested to some patriotic Scot the advisability of its purchase by Scotland, or by the nation as a natural memorial of the great poet. We welcome the suggestion heartily, and hope it may bear good fruit.

Burns is not only beloved for his genius and independence, and for the mirror-like reflection in his writings of all that is good, brave, and true, in the character of his countrymen, but for the very fault which the "uncogind and the rigidly righteous" once strove to cast away his memory. We all know, or should know, that we are human at the best, and that the failings of a good man should not be remembered by good men in an evil spirit. For this reason the world deals tenderly with the failings of Robert Burns. His countrymen deal more tenderly still, for they remember, in the language of the bard himself, that

The light that led astray was light from Heaven,

and that his weakness, like those of King David, whose character so closely resembled his own—and who, like him, was both a peasant and a poet—linked him to humanity, and, by the sufferings which they occasioned, touched his heart until it gushed into a finer poetry than any common joy or common sorrow could have produced.

Burns excelled in every department of poetry. Had he not been cut off in the very prime and flower of his wide-reaching intellect, it is impossible to say to what great heights of poetic achievement he might not have attained. He was master of every string of the lyre. If it suited his purpose to make a new song, he made a better song than any Scotchman ever made before. If it suited him to take up the fragment of an old song of Allan Ramsay, or any inferior hand—the waif or stray of a perishing literature, a little worthless fragment lying by the road-side—the magic of his touch converted it into a jewel of immortal beauty, and fixed it forever in the remembrance of the world.

For patriotic sentiment and fervour, what can surpass the magnificent ode, "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled"? or the "Vision," in which he so vividly and surely predicts his own future fame? For true piety, combined with a faithful portraiture of Scottish life, what can be more exquisite than "The Cotter's Saturday Night"? As the expression of ardent, innocent love, surviving in heaven the loss of the beloved one on earth, what can equal the mournful beauty and solemnity of his song "To Mary in Heaven"? As the expression of love in all its moods, playful, tender, or sorrowful, what can equal the other songs which he scattered over the world in genial profusion—masterpieces which throw all other love songs into the shade? For melancholy, yet true philosophy, couched in language which moves every heart, is there anything in literature which can surpass those twin gems, the addresses "To a Daisy," and "To a Mouse"? For manly dignity, where is the composition that can be named side by side with "A man's a man for a' that"?

For wisdom, chastened by adversity, but not soured, where shall we find anything superor to the "Epistle to a Young Friend"? If it has any equal in English literature, it is only to be found in the advice of Polonius to his son, in "Hamlet," containing, like the unstudied composition of the Scottish Bard, a whole code of sound sense and true morality. For conviviality, fresh, frank and frolicsome, good-humored and good-hearted, where can we find such good songs as "Willie brew'd a peck o' maut," "Auld Lang Syne," and "Scotch Drink"? For satire, well barbed, well aimed, and well hit, what satirist, Greek, Roman, French or English, has transcended "Holy Willie," "The Holy Fair," "Death and Dr. Hornbrook," and "The Twa Dogs"? For wit and humor, mingled with pathos, as the truest and highest wit always is, what poem in any language is superior to the "Address to the Deil"? and to that most matchless of all his poems, the delight of the learned and the unlearned, "Tam o' Shanter"?

But this is not the place for a disquisition upon the literary merits of one whose genius is unquestioned, and whose fame—not local—as it appears to a few Southern critics who are still more local than he—extends in an ever-widening circle to regions unknown to, and undreamed of by, his muse—regions peopled by the daring youth of his own country, and who bear the name and fame of Scotland to every corner of the earth where enterprise can find a foothold—to Australia, to New Zealand, to the Far West of the United States, to Columbia, and, above all, to Canada, where the Scotch are, if possible, more Scottish than those they have left behind.

There should be then, no difficulty at all in securing the cottage, depicted by us as a memorial of Burns. Its fate under the hands of Scotland's poet is described by the Ayrshire Post:—

"The cottage—literally a clay-built, thatched hut—remains in much the same condition in which it was left by the poet's father, built with his own hands in December, 1757, thirteen months before the birth of his illustrious son; but since that time two rooms and a large hall have been added, communicating with the cottage. The elder Burns had seven acres of land adjoining the house, on which he intended carrying on business as a nursery man, but, after one years' occupation, he sold the property for £120. The land connected with the cottage is now curtailed to five acres, and a sum of £3000 is asked for the whole. The rent is nominally £70 a year; but the last two tenants were, we believe, both bankrupt. One tenant went deranged, and another shot himself. For about sixty years the cottage has been kept as an alehouse. Burns, the Irish orator, visited it in 1810. "We found," he says, "the keeper of it tipsy." He pointed to the corner on one side of the fire, and, with a most mal-a-propos laugh, observed, "There is the very spot where Robert Burns was born!" The genius and the fate of the man were already heavy on my heart; but the drunken laugh of the landlord gave me such a view of the rock on which he foundered, I could not stand it, but burst into tears." We should be glad to see this classic little property fall into the hands of some respectable person, instead of being continued as a low tippling-house, the disgust of the neighborhood and of all strangers visiting a spot hallowed by so many interesting and affecting associations. Some persons, we hear, are willing to give about £2000 for the house and land, in order that they may be kept in a creditable manner, and that the cottage of the pious father of the 'Cotter's Saturday Night' may be saved from further depredation. England has lately secured for the present age and for posterity the birth-place of Shakspeare—could not Scotland do the same for Burns? The banks of the Avon are not holier ground than the banks of the Ayr or the Doon."—*London paper.*

THE FENIAN CONGRESS.

The Fenian Congress adjourned *sine die* at eight o'clock this morning. Except an intermission of two hours it has been in session since yesterday morning.

President Roberts was unanimously re-elected President. He delivered an eloquent response, urging the Brotherhood to make renewed exertions for the final effort in behalf of Ireland. His re-election gives great satisfaction to the delegates.

Although it is Sabbath morning, the cheering previous to the final adjournment was loud and long.

The following are the Senators elect:—P. J. Meehan, New York; William Fleming, Troy; F. B. Gallagher, Buffalo; A. L. Morrison, Missouri; James Gibbons, Philadelphia; J. C. O'Brien, Rochester; William McQuirck, New Haven, Conn.; John Carleton, New Jersey; Thomas Redmond, Indiana. President of the Senate, P. J. Meehan. Speaker of the House, J. W. Fitzgerald, Cincinnatti, Ohio; Clerk, G. G. Carroll, Geneva, N. Y.

General Sweeney has been deposed as Secretary-of War, and his friends are very much excited in consequence. His successor is not named. Rumor says it will be either General Sheridan or General Logan. General O'Neill positively declined the position.

The resolution of thanks to General Banks and Congress was adopted.

The final proceedings of the Congress were very harmonious. Radical changes were made in the government of the organization, the constitution being changed so as to give the Senate more control of affairs.

Sweeney's accounts were satisfactory, but he was believed to be incompetent.

Roberts and several delegates leave for New York this afternoon. Before leaving the President appointed General O'Neill Inspector General of the Fenian army, and Colonel Michael Bailey, of Buffalo, Chief Military Organizer. The latter was wounded at Limestone Ridge.

The best of feeling seems to prevail among the delegates, although much sympathy is expressed for General Sweeney. He promptly resigned his position on fault being found with his subordinates.

It is quite evident that a bid has been made to the Congress by the radicals. The majority of the members of the Senate are inclined to favor the radical party.

D. O'Sullivan, William J. Hynes, and James Brennan have been retained as Organizers.

Sweeney's separation from the Brotherhood, it is feared, will have a most injurious effect throughout the country. The other military leaders were bitterly opposed to him and were at the bottom of the scheme which led to his dismissal. General O'Neill was unanimously tendered his place, but declined, saying that he was not competent for it. It is presumed that Johnson's quarrel with General Sheridan will compel the latter to resign from the army, in which event he will be tendered the military leadership of the Brotherhood. He is known to be in sympathy with the movement.

It is acknowledged that several of the highest civil and military dignitaries in Canada are in active communication with the agents of the Brotherhood. More than six members of the Canadian Parliament are organizing Circles in Canada at present.

Should the financial returns of the Brotherhood continue to increase for the next month or two, another movement will undoubtedly be made on Canadian soil the coming fall. All here are thoroughly in earnest.—*N. Y. Herald.*

THE FALSE STORY OF MURDER OF A SHIPWRECKED CREW.

The contradiction and exposure by this journal, a short time since, of the absurd story of the murder of two shipwrecked crews at Cape St. George, N. F., has had the effect of "stirring the bile" of one Joseph McVane, of Bothwell, (wherever that is,) who endeavours in a rambling column of excuses, and inconsistent statements *from hearsay*, lately published in the *Islander*, to shift the responsibility—occasioned by his old-maidish desire of making public some "cabin-gossip" picked up on the Labrador—on the shoulders of Capt. James Jeffry, of the schr. "J. R. Stewart" and Edward Stewart, seaman of the same vessel.—An affidavit is also published by the last named person to the effect that he was *informed* in July last on the Labrador by the crew of the schr. "Delitris" of Nova Scotia, Capt. Anderson, that the captain and crew of the "Sirocco" were murdered at Cape St. George last December, after having suffered shipwreck.

In view of the clear and lucid statements of Capts. Shaw and Messervey, (both residing in the vicinity of the wreck) published by us, it is rather astonishing that "*ampler evidence than has yet been adduced*" should be required, but we suppose due allowance should be made for persons of weak, excitable temperaments, and great powers of imagination, as they are more readily imposed upon than plain every day matter-of-fact people.

Possibly this Joseph McVane, of Bothwell, may be a little "soft," nay, "easily gulled," not to put too fine a point upon it, and, not improbably, as fond of a bit of gossip as any veteran spinster that ever sipped Bohea, and it may charitably be concluded, that had he further been informed by Captain Jeffrey or Edward Stewart, A. B., or "any other man," that the unfortunate crew of the "Sirocco" were roasted and eaten by the fishermen of Newfoundland, "many of whom," to quote his own words, "are but one remove from savages;" this "Bothwell celebrity," like the ghost in Hamlet, might

"A tale unfold, whose lightest word
"Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood;
"Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres;
"Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
"And each particular hair to stand on end
"Like the quills upon fretful porcupine.

But seriously whether this Joseph McVane had a hidden *motive* in making this extraordinary slander in the absence of more authentic information, or whether from officiousness, or an overweening sense of self-importance he circulated it, the result is the same to the unfortunate individuals thus publicly accused of the basest of crimes. And we have reason to know that although "only fishermen" in a remote district, and in humble circumstances, and from their isolated position, debarred from ready access to any of the usual modes of redress for gross defamation such as they have been subjected to, yet they feel the indignity attempted to be put upon them, just as keenly, and perhaps more so than would Joseph McVane, of Bothwell, Captain Jeffrey, Captain Anderson, or Edward Stewart, under the same circumstances.—[Halifax Express.

The Herald.

Wednesday, September 26, 1866.

THE MILITIA LAW.

SINCE our last issue, we learn that the apothecaries' apprentices who were appointed on the Medical Staff of the Militia, have been removed in disgrace; and some of the parties who failed to attend muster, after being duly notified, were fined. One gentleman offered, in mitigation of the fine, the conscientious plea that the military duties required of him were opposed to his religious principles; but the court could not "see it." So far, so good. We hope, however, that all parties who refuse to take the oath of allegiance will not be overlooked.

We shall now proceed to give an outline of this Law, with such comments thereon as the exceptionable sections may suggest. Section Two provides that the Militia shall consist of all the male inhabitants of the Island, of the age of sixteen years and upwards, and under sixty. This force is divided into two classes, namely, Active Militia and Sedentary Militia; and the Active Militia is again subdivided into two other classes: Volunteer Militia and Regular Militia. The Active or Regular Militia comprises all males between the ages of 16 and 45 years; and the Sedentary Militia all males between the ages of 45 and 60 years. Those who are exempt from service are Clergymen, Judges of the Supreme Court, the Master of the Rolls and the Professors of any College. The following persons, although enrolled, are also exempt from attending muster, except in case of war or invasion: the Sedentary Militia, Members of the Executive and Legislative Councils, and of the House of Assembly; Colonial Secretary and Assistant Secretary, all civil officers appointed to any civil office in this Island under the Great Seal, doctors, half-pay officers, school masters, telegraph operators, Postmasters, mail carriers, ferrymen, one miller for every run of stones in every Grist Mill, all persons disabled by bodily infirmity. In the Militia Laws of the neighboring Provinces, all persons belonging to and forming Fire Engine Companies, are exempted from military duty. This is nothing but fair, and we think the same exemption ought to be extended to members of Fire Engine Companies in this Island. The Lieutenant Governor, who is also Commander-in-Chief, can divide the Counties into as many Regimental Districts, and each Regimental District into as many Company Districts as he may think proper, and each Regimental District is to furnish one Militia Regiment, and each Company District to furnish one Regular and one Sedentary Company of Militia. Elsewhere, in the organization of a Volunteer and Militia force, the practice of allowing men to elect their own officers as high as the rank of Captain, has been found to work well; but the reverse of this system is held in the Law under consideration, and unlimited power is placed in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief. By Section Eleven he is to grant *all* commissions of officers in the Militia, and by Section Twelve he has the full power to appoint a staff of commissioned and non-commissioned officers of the Active Militia *during pleasure*. This, although it may not be abused by the Commander-in-Chief, is a most unlimited and dangerous power to place in the hands of any one man. The appointment of all non-commissioned officers is given to officers commanding their respective Battalions or Regiments. No officer who has not, since the passing of this Act, undergone an examination as to efficiency before a Board of three officers appointed by the Commander-in-Chief, or who shall not be able to obtain a certificate of competency from the commandant of the Military School, shall be appointed or promoted to the Active Force. Promotion is to go by seniority, except in cases of capacity and incapacity, when the Commander-in-Chief can use his own discretion. A scale of prices, ranging from five to twenty-five shillings, must be paid to the Adjutant General for commissions issued from Ensign up to Colonel. Within two months after the passing of this Act, (the 11th of May last), all Volunteer Companies were to have been mustered by their Captains, the Militia Act explained to them, and the taking of the Oath of Allegiance complied with. Three months are allowed to the officers commanding Regimental Districts in the *Regular* Militia for the performance of the same duties. Any volunteer can retire from his company by giving three months notice of his intention to his commanding officer, and new volunteer corps may be formed under the operations of this Act, and subject to such regulations as the Commander-in-Chief may decree. The Commander-in-Chief has the power to disband, whenever he pleases, any Regiment, Battalion, or Company of Militia, and he can also prescribe the qualifications of effective membership of Volunteer Militia, one of which qualifications is that each Volunteer shall have attended drill, duly armed and accoutred not less than sixteen times during the year, each drill not to be less than an hour and a-half in duration. After the first enrollment, every Militiaman who shall remove from the limits of one company district into another, must, under pain of a penalty not exceeding two pounds, give notice thereof in writing to the Captains of both Districts within one month after such removal; and every man, after the first enrollment, must give in his name to the Captain of his Company within one month after he becomes liable, in defiance or neglect of which notice, he is liable to a fine not exceeding two pounds. The Volunteers are to have the privilege of arms and equipment in case there is not a sufficient supply for the Regular Militia as well, and each Volunteer is to be allowed twenty shillings a year towards clothing himself. The Regular Militia, which comprises the great bulk of the Active