

# THE SATURDAY READER.

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Continued from week to week, THE NEW STORY, "HALF A MILLION OF MONEY,"

written by the author of "Barbara's History" for *All the Year Round*, edited by CHARLES DICKENS.

**CITY SUBSCRIBERS.**—Several persons have written complaining of irregularity in the delivery of the READER. This has been occasioned by the great difficulty we have experienced in getting a proper staff of boys. We had no idea when the READER was started that the subscription list would run up to over five thousand copies in a couple of weeks; hence our *delivery arrangements* were altogether inadequate. We hope our subscribers will bear with any irregularity which may occur for a few weeks yet. We are doing all we can to have the evil remedied.

## A COLONIAL GOVERNOR ON CONFEDERATION.

WE were told on high authority, that the country that has no history is blest. We doubt the general truth of the aphorism. The abundance or scarcity of food, in the shape of hyenas, entrails, and locusts, constitutes the annals of a Kraal of Hottentots; the *memorabilia* of a Turkish Province, consists of the daily pipes smoked, and the infliction of the bastinado on delinquent rayahs unable or unwilling to satisfy the exactions of their masters. Neither of these offers a fitting theme for the historic muse; yet few will regard the condition of the Hottentot Kraal, or the Turkish Province as one of happiness. As the solitude which the sword makes is not peace but desolation, so the calm of inaction is not enjoyment but apathy. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are now in the non-historic period, with no desire, apparently, to awake from the repose in which they indulge, and to find themselves famous. They have mines which they will not work; they have fish which they will not catch; they have harbours unvisited by commerce; they have riches which they will not gather; and they refuse the fellowship and alliance of those who would make these gifts of Providence available to them. And all this is the more deplorable, as nobody who really knows our friends of the sea-board will seriously

deny that physically and intellectually they are inferior to no people or race on this continent.

Lieutenant Governor Sir Richard Graves Macdonnell has recently attempted to arouse the Nova Scotians to a sense of the duty they owe to themselves and the empire. He was about to leave the Province, having been appointed Governor of Hong-Kong; and, in answering an address presented to him by the citizens of Truro, he embraced the opportunity to give them and their fellow-subjects of the Lower Provinces some out-spoken advice on the subject of the contemplated union of British North America. Sir Richard is a clever man, we believe an able man, although he has had but little room for the display of his talents during his brief rule in Nova Scotia. He has seldom given utterance to his opinions on public affairs; but when he did speak, he always said something that was worth remembering. He told the people of Truro that he was at first opposed to Confederation, and in favour of a Legislative union of the Provinces, until he found that the leading Provincial statesmen and the English Government and people were all but unanimous in advocating the adoption of the Confederate system. He remarks: "I was among the first to hope to see a new Britain of the West arise on this side of the Atlantic, formed not by a mere convention of different Provinces, but by the amalgamation of all in one nation, with one common legislature resembling the English parliament, and by the obliteration of all Provincial boundaries. I am aware now, how unpopular such opinions are in these Provinces, where the great majority are disposed, above all things, to cling to their own local legislatures." Individually, Sir Richard Macdonnell retains his old opinion on the question; but he bows to the inevitable; and because he cannot attain what is desirable, would consider it unwise to reject the next best thing that is possible. There are many persons exactly in the same position, even among the most prominent partizans of Confederation. Washington and Hamilton could not resist petty local interests in the introduction of dangerous elements into the Constitution of the United States; and in the present British Provinces, the same evil exists, and must bear the same bitter fruit that it did among our neighbours. We had an instance of it in Canada in the long struggle about the seat of Government.

There is another portion of Sir Richard Macdonnell's speech which we must not pass over without a few words, inasmuch as it is destined, we suspect, to be the cause of much discussion, both here and in the other Provinces. He declared that England had not only the right to advise, but to exert "her just authority" in the matter of Confederation. This will be a strong card in the hands of the anti-unionists—this interference, as they will call it, of the British Government with the local rights of the people. Now, we cannot see how the constitutional or other rights of any one whatever can be said to be involved in the affair. It is simply as it bears

on the future defence of the whole of our North American possessions, that England is interested in the scheme of Confederation. Her statesmen think that these possessions would be more effectually and easily defended, if they were united under one government than when broken up into a congeries of small States, with scarcely a bond of connection between them, but standing in the position of foreign countries to each other. Surely if we require England to protect us in the event of war, we cannot be surprised, if, while admitting her liability and willingness to do so, she should insist upon our doing, on our part, what she believes to be necessary for our own safety, and to save her from expense, defeat, and disgrace. This is the entire case. There is no attempt by the Metropolitan Government to enforce on the Provinces terms or conditions inconsistent with the constitutional rights of people or parliament. They only tell us that while the mother country agrees to do certain things, we also should agree to do certain things. There is nothing unfair in this, and we must avoid being misled into a contrary belief. The people of British North America will not, we trust, be deluded into the mistake of raising false issues on such a question.

## DEATH OF "SAM SLICK."

THE latest British paper announce the death of Mr. Justice Haliburton, better known throughout Europe and America as "Sam Slick." He died at his residence, Gordon House, Ilworth, on the 27th ult., aged 68. As most of our readers are aware, Mr. Haliburton resigned his position as Judge in Nova Scotia some eight years ago, and took up his residence in England. Taking sides with the Tory party there, the influence of the Carlton Club was used to get him elected to Parliament, and he sat for the borough of Lauceston for six years. Mr. Haliburton was born in Nova Scotia the year before the Irish rebellion, when the United States had hardly attained the years that in England constitute a legal majority; and having studied at various places, he was called to the colonial bar, and practised for some years with considerable success. In 1835 he commenced the literary works on which his fame will rest, by the contribution to the columns of a Halifax weekly newspaper, of a series of amusing papers, depicting the acute angles and sharp knobs of the Yankee character. So successful were these papers that two years later they were revised, published and brought under the notice of the general reading public, who gave "Sam Slick the Clock-maker," an enthusiastic reception. The success of this book naturally induced the publication of a second series in 1837, and a third in 1840. But "Sam Slick" was not exhausted, for "The Attaché," on account of Sam's experience in London as one of the members of the United States embassy, was equally popular with the preceding volumes, and went through several editions in a few months. These were succeeded at intervals by "Bubbles of Canada," "An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia," "The Old Judge," "Traits of American Humour," "Yankee Stories," "Nature and Human Nature," &c., all of which, however, it is no disparagement to them to say, are less effective than the author's first works. Mr. Haliburton's career in the House of Commons was not so brilliant as some of his friends had hoped. When he spoke his voice was so weak that many good things which amused the members immediately around him were lost to the bulk of the House, and were totally inaudible in the reporters' gallery.