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Guelph Evening Mercury
 OFFICE:.....MACDONNELL STREET.
 TUESDAY EV'NG, FEB. 25, 1868.

The Maiden's Choice
 OR, THE LADY OF BIRKENLEUCH.

A Tale of the Covenanters.

"My daughter Helen your wife? he slowly repeated.

"Ay, why shouldn't I? She's pretty, good-natured, well-mannered, and I have her. So, look at her and yours. She will be raised to a high station; be the mistress of a fine mansion; and have everything she can desire at command. We will have money to your heart's content. First of all, you will get the hundred pounds left by Lady Barton, for, of course, I won't touch it. Then you will be my father-in-law, you know, and I will give you a good round sum now and then. Why, man, in a few years that iron box will be full to the brim with gold, and you will be able to bury your ancestors in it to the elbows."

Cringan's eyes glittered with intense delight. Then all in a moment he put on a look of intense disappointment.

"Alas!" he murmured, "it cannot be. Helen is engaged to be married to the youth called Richard Wayland."

"Engaged is she? Is the matter gone so far? But I tell you, old man, were she engaged to ten Waylands she must still be mine; and you must find means to put an end to the engagement."

Cringan shook his head dolefully. "Helen won't listen to it. I am sure she won't. No, even to be mistress of Birkenleuch won't tempt her to cast off Wayland, for she loves him. Ay, loves him, Captain Allan, as I love gold. More fool she; but so it is, and I haven't authority enough with her to change her purpose."

"Can't you accomplish it by stratagem?" suggested Allan. "Come, man, has the golden prospect no power to quicken your invention? Think what you will gain by it. This fellow Wayland, no doubt, knows what he is about. He'll not give up the legacy, depend upon it."

"I know he won't. I know he won't," groaned the miser. "I am ready to do anything—anything possible—to get her to marry you. Could you get the youth out of the way? You have power, Captain. Make him out a Covenantor, and have him murdered in the Bass, or—strung up in the Grassmarket."

"Fshaw, you forget that he is a protegee of that meddlesome fool of a Baronet, whose influence, curse him, is greater than mine. It is even rumored that this Wayland is his son—the fruit of an early amour—and, egad, there's nothing more likely, for we all know that he never had parents to own him, that he was laid, when an infant, at one of the lodge gates, and the way Sir Gilbert and Lady Barton took to him argued a closer relationship than they cared to admit. So it will not do, you see, to go on that track. Cunning and craft are the things wanted, Cringan, and you have both. So set your wits to work, and remember the golden reward you will have."

There was little need for Allan to refresh the miser's memory with the temptation presented. It had taken hold of his one passion with consuming intensity, and if his subtle and scheming brain, quickened to its greatest power of action by the potent influence of his thirst for gold, could not devise a method of separating Helen and Richard, then no scheme could be hit upon by another, and the case was hopeless. But even as Allan spoke, his remarks regarding the unknown but suspected parentage of Wayland brought a suggestion into Cringan's mind, dim enough and vague enough, but which he wildly seized, and, in a state of almost frantic excitement, he hurried the Captain away, that he might have an opportunity to ponder it over and work it out into practical shape.

"You have thought of something then?" said Charlie, as he passed out. "I thought you would. But can't you give me a hint of what it is?"

"Not now—not now," exclaimed Cringan. "Lord love you, Captain, leave me—leave me to think about it, and come back to-morrow."

Very well, I'll trot over from Birkenleuch in the morning, and will then expect to hear of something feasible.

No sooner had Charlie crossed the threshold than Cringan locked and barred it. It was past sunset now, and the summer twilight was descending on the hills and valleys. In Jabez Cringan's chamber there was deep darkness, for the soft light of the June night could not come in any measure. In common circumstances the miser would have at this hour retired to rest, for artificial light, either in the shape of fire or candle, was an extravagance which he never indulged.

But this night he did not retire to rest. He walked to and fro on the earthen floor of his room, brooding over the dark, cruel, hellish thought that had at first in shapelessness formed across his mind. And, oh, most hellish it was; for the only fit origin it could have was the pit of perdition. Neither, most surely, had it come, if the human belief is well founded that diabolical influence is at work in the hearts of evil men. We call such thoughts suggestions of Satan, but do not let us charge the Devil with too much of the blame. He succeeds with men only as far as men permit. When he is resisted he fears. The chains which he is so ready to make last and sure are forged, not by him, but by the victims of his power. He gets at men through the medium of the particular passion to which they give themselves up.

Through most of that summer night Jabez Cringan paced his chamber, musing on the details of the infamous falsehood he meditated, as these required much careful study and particularity of invention. But Charlie Allan was right in believing that his cunning brain, quickened by the golden reward in prospect, would prove equal to the task; for by sunrise his black and dastardly lie was coined, had rounded and finished off, and with it he was certain he should make an effectual separation between Helen and Richard Wayland. This done, the ultimate purpose was in a fair way of accomplishment, and he trusted to time and certain persuasive influences to bring it about.

At an early hour in the day, Charlie Allan made his appearance, and to him Cringan detailed the falsehood he had invented, and the plausible appearances which to the mind of Helen would give it support. Allan heard it with unbounded satisfaction, and urged Jabez to go at once to Brankwood, and, delivering it there, let it have its full effect.

"But," said Charlie, "art sure that Helen won't repeat to Wayland what you tell her? If it comes to the Baronet's ears the bubble will burst, and our plan miscarry."

"She won't—I know the nature of the girl and she won't. But, to make sure, I'll make her swear beforehand to keep the secret."

"Away then," returned Allan. "You can't get them parted too soon. I'll come again at night and learn the result."

Under the sweltering heat of the mid-day sun, Jabez Cringan made his way across the upland to Brankwood, a place which he had seldom visited, and that not for years. We have not yet particularly described him to the reader, and scarcely require to do so. We know his character pretty thoroughly now, and his appearance was strikingly in accordance with it. We can all fancy it—a thin, croaking figure, long flat feet, with heels protruding behind, spindle legs and spindle arms, high shoulders, concave chest, a long sharp, pinched face, large file-like teeth, big eyes in hollow sockets, and a moderate crop of iron-grey hair. The skin of his face was dry, like old parchment, and something approaching to it in colour, and the expression of it was had as granite. We need not add that his dress was such as fitly matched his ungainly and unlovely figure.

Helen Cringan was excessively surprised when told by a fellow-servant that her father had come to see her, and was waiting for her in her own little room. A visit from him at Guelph was an extraordinary occurrence,

but inasmuch as she had seen him only the previous evening, his coming was all the more wonderful, and she could not but imagine that something very unusual had occurred. It was with a rather anxious expectation, therefore, that she ran down stairs and went to her own room—a pretty pleasant room, which looked out upon a part of the lawn.

TO BE CONTINUED.

SEQUEL TO THE ANGOLA DISASTER.—It is said that Mrs. Green, the wife of the Malden murderer, was to have been married on Christmas, and that her affianced became one of the victims of the shocking Buffalo and Erie catastrophe, while on his way east to be married. What adds a melancholy interest to the story is the fact that it is the same gentleman to whom she was engaged previous to her marriage with Green. It may be remembered that it was proved that Green intercepted the letters between them, leading her to suppose that he had deserted her. It seems that this gentleman afterwards married Mrs. Green's sister, who subsequently died. A short time since, she buried her daughter, a bright and beautiful child, so that her cup of sorrow seems to be filled to the brim. Another sorrowful story is connected with the bunch of keys which were found. The gentleman to whom they belonged was a lawyer of ability and promise, who, after long years of study, had succeeded in establishing his business and position in Cincinnati. He was on his way home to be married to a very beautiful and accomplished young lady, lately a teacher in Dean Academy at Franklin, Massachusetts. Before starting on his journey, he obtained an accident-policy for her benefit for \$5,000. The bunch of keys bearing his name was the only clue to his sad fate.

By latest accounts there was a rumour to the effect that the British Government was about to create an "Educational Minister," and that the post would be offered to Mr. Lowe, with a seat in the Cabinet.

DIED.
 Young—In Guelph, on Monday, the 24th inst., Harriet S., the wife of Mr. James A. Thorp.

The funeral will take place from the residence of her husband, Woodbine street, on Wednesday next, at 3 p.m. Friends and acquaintances are invited to attend without further notice.

COMMERCIAL.

The Guelph Markets.
 MERCURY OFFICE, GUELPH, February 25, 1868.

Flour, 100 lbs	3 75	4 00
Fall Wheat, 1 bush	1 65	1 88
Spring Wheat 1 bush	1 52	1 67
Oats 1 bush	0 55	0 57
Peas do	0 75	0 80
Barley do	1 00	1 10
Hay 1 ton	11 00	13 00
Straw 400	4 00	5 00
Shingles, 1/2 square	1 00	1 50
Wood, 1 cord	3 00	3 50
Tank do	0 27	0 20
Eggs, 1/2 dozen	0 14	0 15
Butter, firkin, 1/2 b	0 13	0 18
Grease, each	0 25	0 30
Turkeys each	0 50	0 60
Chickens, 1/2 pair	0 20	0 28
Ducks do	0 20	0 20
Potatoes	0 60	0 70
Apples, 1/2 barrel	2 00	2 00
Lamb, 1/2 b	0 60	0 60
Beef	4 50	6 00
Butter, 1/2 b	0 05	0 06
Pork, 1/2 b	0 05	0 05
Sheep Pelts, each	0 50	0 75
Lambskins	0 40	0 45
Hides	6 00	6 00

Money Market.
 JACKSON'S EXCHANGE OFFICE, Guelph, February 25, 1868.

100s bond at 104 to 105; Sold at 107 to 108.
 50s bond at 41 to 42; Sold at 44 to 45.
 Upper Canada Bank Bills bought at 95 to 100.
 Commercial Bank Bills bought at 95 to 98; full rate in silver.

MONTREAL MARKETS.
 Kirkwood, Livingstone & Co's report by Special Telegram to 'Evening Mercury,' February 25, 1868.

Flour—Fancy, \$7.00 to \$7.75; Superior No. 1, \$7.45 to \$7.60; Welland Canal, \$7.00. Bag flour, \$7.00 to \$7.75. Oats 46c to 47c. Barley 95c to \$1.00. Butter—dairy 15c to 20c; store packed 15c to 20c. Eggs—1/2 doz 15c to 18c; 1 doz 25c to 30c. Peas—\$5.50 to \$5.85.

Flour—Rates small, no transactions to note, but generally unchanged. Canadian rates generally unchanged. No change in other articles.

TORONTO, February 22, 1868.

Flour—Receipts, 100 bbls.; No. 1, at \$7.00 to \$7.10; Fall Wheat—\$1.70; Spring Wheat—\$1.60 to \$1.62; Oats—50c; Barley \$1.24 to \$1.52; Peas—\$5.

HAMILTON, February 24, 1868.

Fall wheat, \$1.70 to \$1.77; spring do, \$1.55 to \$1.60 per bushel. Barley—\$1.15 to \$1.25; Oats—45c to 50c; Peas—\$5.00 to \$5.50.

GUELPH LUMBER MARKET.
 (Corrected by Messrs Gowdy & Stewart, of Wellington Lumber Yard.)

Clear 11 and 2 inch Plank from \$20.00 to \$25.00
1 inch Boards 12 to 14 10 to 16 00
11 " Flooring 15 00 to 18 00
Common 11 and 13 in. Flooring 14 00 to 16 00
1 in. Boards and 2 in. Plank 9 00 to 10 00
Sawing all sizes up to 16 feet 10 00 to 14 00
and Joisting from 5 to 20" 12 00 to 14 00
Shingles No. 1 Sawed 1 50 to 2 00
" Cut 1 70 to 1 75
" 2 Cut and Sawed 1 10 to 1 25
" Split 1 50 to 1 75
Laths 6 feet 0 40 to 0 45
Water Line per barrel 1 50 to 1 60
Plaster (Cedrine) 4 50 to 5 50

Guelph, Jan. 30, 1868.

UPHOLSTERY
OHAS. FIRESTONE
 Quebec-st., near Howard and Jones.
 Prepared to execute orders for all kinds of Upholstering in a neat and expeditious manner.

SOFAS, LOUNGES,
 Chairs, &c., re-stuffed, Church Seats re-trimmed, Picture Hanging, &c., on short notice, and at moderate rates.

Remember the place—Quebec-st., Guelph, Guelph, 16th Feb, 1868.

CASH. CASH. CASH!
 Our reasons for adhering to the Cash System are:

- 1st—Systematic Credit has nothing to do with Goods purchased for our own Consumption.
- 2nd—The Cash System gives the rich no advantage over the poor.
- 3rd—It is wrong to charge profits to those who pay to balance the loss of those who don't pay.
- 4th—A large proportion cannot or will not pay when they agree to; feel no rose when asked to pay, cross to the other side of the street when they see their creditors coming, lose self-respect, feel and are demoralized.
- 5th—It is worth fifteen per cent. to collect small bills.
- 6th—It is wrong to indulge customers in lush—miserable economy.
- 7th—It is wrong to do any such thing.

If you want to see the largest, best and cheapest stock of Boots and Shoes West of Montreal, call at the Montreal Boot and Shoe Store, Wyndham-st., Guelph.

JOHN McNEIL.
 Guelph, 18th Feb, 1868.

MERCURY PRINTING HOUSE!
 MACDONNELL STREET, GUELPH.
 CHEAP, NEAT AND TASTY

PRINTING!

FOR THE CHEAPEST AND BEST
Book and Job Printing
 Go to the Mercury Printing House, Macdonnell-st.

McLAGAN & INNES

HAVE spared neither labor nor expense in fitting up their extensive premises on Macdonnell-st., (East of the Guelph Locks), with EVERY MODERN IMPROVEMENT requisite to the successful carrying out of one of the largest Printing Houses in the Dominion.

OUR JOB DEPARTMENT
 We have supplied with the most Elegant and

The Newest Styles of Type
 AND THE LATEST AND MOST

IMPROVED JOB PRESSES!
 Enabling us to turn out specimens of work justly considered models of Typographical Beauty. In NEW PRESSES we have Machines from all the celebrated makers, such as

Hoe's Railway Cylinder Press.
Hoe's Hand Press.
 Gordon's celebrated Segment Job Press, and Gordon's Card and Bill Head Press,

A novelty, and acknowledged to be the NE PLUS ULTRA of Treadle Presses. In addition to the above valuable and highly improved Printing Machines, we have a very large and complete assortment of

BOOK & JOB TYPE
 Comprising every known Style, Size and Variety,

And are constantly receiving from Type Foundries in Great Britain and the United States such new and useful, Plain and Ornamental faces as correct taste and enlightened experience may dictate, and are therefore prepared to execute all orders entrusted to us

From the Finest and most Delicate Card to the Attractive and Mammoth Poster.

MORE PROMPTLY, NEATLY, AND

AT CHEAPER RATES!

Than can be done by any other establishment in the County. Being practical Printers of lengthened experience, and having a thorough knowledge of the wants of the community of this section, employing none but

The very Best of Workmen!
 AND USING THE BEST OF MATERIAL.

We are in a position to turn out work in

THE HIGHEST STYLE OF THE ART!
 And at such Prices as set competition completely at defiance.

LETTER PRESS PRINTING!
 We can Supply on the Shortest Notice:

BUSINESS CARDS, BLANK AND TAG CARDS, NOTE AND LETTER HEADINGS, CIRCULARS AND BILL HEADS, PROGRAMMES, BALL TICKETS, PAMPHLETS, RECEIPTS, LAW BLANKS, BRIEFS, CATALOGUES, BILLS OF FARE, POSTERS, HAND BILLS, LABELS, BY-LAWS, CHARTERS, CERTIFICATES, CONSTITUTIONS,

AND ALL KINDS AND STYLES OF

McLAGAN & INNES,
 Guelph, 21st February, 1868.

IMPORTANT NOTICE!
 GREAT REDUCTION IN PRICE of the **AMERICAN WATCH**

THE American Watch Company of Waltham, Mass., being determined to place their several grades of Watches at prices within the reach of all parties, and to effectually shut out all Swiss counterfeits, have decided from this date to supply their Watches in the Dominion of Canada at the net Gold value of American Currency. The Company by thus paying all duty, costs and charges on their Watches into Canada, will supply to the people of the Dominion the

Cheapest Watches in the World.
 The Watches are of all grades, from the finest gold watch made, adapted to any climate from the Tropics to the Poles, at a price to suit the wealthy connoisseur or for presentation, to the Cheap Silver Lever, strong and serviceable, regulated to minutes, suitable to the Mechanic and Farmer, and still as low in price as any moderate quality Swiss Watch. Our greatest Extra Heavy Cases—Watches for Railway Engineers and Lumbermen deserve particular attention in Canada, as nothing can equal them for the purpose. Our leading Watches in 18 Carat Gold Cases for Ladies and Private Gentlemen, at medium prices, will also be found very desirable. We are frequently asked why we don't advertise prices. We reply that we only supply the trade and as our Watches are now kept by most respectable dealers, the public can rely on being served at a fair advance on the Manufacturer's List. Our trade marks are AMERICAN WATCH CO., APPLETON, TRACY & CO., WALTHAM WATCH CO., P. S. HARTLEY, W. ELLERY, HOME WATCH CO., APPLETON. Guaranteed in all cases by special certificate (except the Home Co., which is warranted by the seller. The purchaser should always require the guarantee, as there are Swiss counterfeits for sale in some places.

**ROBBINS & APPLETON, New York, } General Agents.
 ROBERT WILKES, Toronto and Montreal, }
 D. SAVAGE, Agent, Guelph.**

December 10th, 1867

Commercial Union Assurance Co'y.
 STATEMENT IN COMPLIANCE WITH ACT OF PARLIAMENT, 23rd Vict., Cap. 33, Section 11.

THE Capital of this Company is £2,500,000 sterling, divided into 50,000 shares of £50 each. The number of shares issued is 20,000. Calls to the amount of £5 per share have been made, under which the sum of £250,000 have been received.

THE LIABILITIES of the Company on the 1st day of July, 1867, were:

On Notes and Bills	£ 25 14 3d
On Estimated Liabilities, including Duty, Fire, Life, and Marine Losses	20,000 0s 0d
	£20,25 14 3d

The ASSETS of the Company on that day were:

Government Securities	£58,787 13 4	£54,682 0 0
Consols	35,000 0 0	31,560 17 11
New 3 per cents		86,212 18 5
Bills (drafts not matured)		418,193 8 3
Cash at bankers and office		7,800 4 3
Stamps in hand		482 15 9
On deposit at bankers, &c.		23,000 0 0
		44,482 5 6

Other Securities—

Madras Railway Debentures	£ 9,000 0 0
Lancashire and Yorkshire Debentures	2,780 3 3
Delhi Railway Stock	15,358 9 0
Capital Company's Debentures	10,000 0 0
Great Southern of India Railway Shares	20,875 5 7
Canada 5 per cent. Stock (described)	10,000 0 0
	78,000 10 7

Freshhold Offices in Canada 65,863 00 0 |

Due from Agents, &c. 38,720 14 8 |

Loans on Mortgage, &c. 174,070 0 0 |

£487,914 12 2

Amount of Losses due and unpaid £12,805 0 0 |

do do on suspense nil |

Payment retained 800 0 0 |

Amount of Premiums—

Earned during the Year	£32,750 8 1
Unearned	35,000 0 0
	87,750 17 7

J. JAMES ROSE, of the City of Montreal, merchant, one of the General Agents for Canada of the Commercial Union Assurance Company do hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the foregoing statement is correct and true.

Sworn before me, at the City of Montreal, this 30th day of January, 1868.
 A. M. HUBBLE, J. P.
 Agents for Guelph, McLAGAN & INNES.
 Guelph, Feb. 12th, 1868.

PLASTER, PLASTER
 THE SUBSCRIBERS HAVE AT PRESENT A FULL SUPPLY OF

GROUND PLASTER
 And while sleighing is good, farmers should get their supplies. By advices from Paris, York and California, we learn that all that can be produced is already engaged, and that the demand will far exceed the supply. We have been able to secure only

300 TONS,
 Instead of 500, and we would therefore advise those requiring it to purchase early.

A small lot of very fine Clover Seed on hand
JAS. MASSIE & CO.
 Guelph, 17th January, 1868.

GREAT CLEARING SALE
 The Great Clearing Sale of

DRY GOODS!
 IS STILL GOING ON AT

WM. STEWART'S,
 Guelph 11th December, 1867.

Gold & Silver Plating
A. HOWIE & CO.
 Royal Hotel Buildings, James-st., HAMILTON.

Watches, Chains, Rings, Penell Cases, and all kinds of Jewelry
 Plated in Gold.
 Tea Sets, Cake Baskets, Knives, Forks, Spoons, &c., Plated at reasonable rates.

Also, Door Plates & Carriage Trimmings

of every description done to order with neatness and despatch.
 Orders from a distance punctually attended to. Hamilton, November 28 1867. 3mdw

Funerals, Funerals!
 NATHAN TOVELL has to intimate that Collins always on hand. Hearse to hire. His Steam Plating Mill is in constant operation. All kinds of lumber, sashes, doors, blinds, mouldings, &c. He solicits a share of public patronage.

NATHAN TOVELL
 Guelph, 27th Aug, 1867.
 Nelson Crescent

GEORGE PALMER
 BARRISTER AND ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, Solicitor in Chancery, Notary Public and Conveyancer. Office, No. 1, Day's Block Guelph.