

ASTOUNDING DEVELOPMENTS!!!

BLACK MAIL STILL RAMPANT!!

READ AND TREMBLE!

The *Colonist*, in an able article has exposed the hideous espionage attempted to be established in Toronto. Ever since the publication of that withering attack, clothed as it was in all the horrors of typography, we have been on the alert for further revelations and we have not searched in vain. We thought at first that it would be but fair to our contemporary to give him the raw material and allow him to work it up in his usual Plutonic style, but reflecting that the sanity of many of his readers is not beyond dispute, we felt compelled to take up the matter ourselves rather than jeopardize the nerves of any of the Partington patronizers of the *Colonist*.

Imagine then, gentle readers, our columns draped in editorial mourning, (as our neighbor's were, seemingly to deplore the loss of his senses) and the most diabolic of black letter headings making our goodly sheet hideous, and all will be as it should be. The following portion of the black mail books was picked up in Colborne Street yesterday morning:

Mr. AUGUSTUS SNOOKS—Born at Botany Bay, lost fifty marbles while playing with Cooper, a pal of his; embarked as a cabin boy in a man-of-war, and lost his hat in a gale. Married a tinsmith's daughter, and won a prize in a lottery. Set up an Everton Toffee establishment and failed—liabilities £2; assets, 3½d. A dangerous customer.

Mr. ABRAHAM ABRAHAM—A lineal descendant of Shylock, not through Jessica, but a step-sister by the Jew's twentieth wife. Had his beard cut off while inspecting a thrashing machine. Walks on Front Street about once a month, with a basket on his arm, and stay-laces hanging over its side.—Worth about 2s. 6d.

JOE JONES—Born at the village of Botvilvo, in the State of New York, on 29th February, 1804, at ten minutes before three p. m. His mother was a little lame, but whether in the right or left leg we have not yet ascertained. Had the small pox three years ago, and cut his finger the day before yesterday. Was once seen in church, but left before the sermon.

TIM MCGURKE—An Irishman from Clonmel. The first thing he did after his birth was to apply the tip of his thumb to his nose and stretch out his fingers when his nurse was dressing him. Her name is Margery, and she is now living in County Kerry. Came to this country in 1844, and has been engaged as a Policeman for some years, a sort of sinecure in this barbarous country. He may be trusted, for he's sure not to leave a situation in which he is well paid and clothed and has nothing to do.

What will our readers think of the above? Is it not enough to make one's whiskers assume an erect position? We do not wonder at the *Colonist's* strong opposition to the Commercial Agency, for who would like to have one's history so minutely told, especially if one had jumped Jim Crow a dozen times, or was in the market for the highest bidder, or wanted credit when there was no prospect of pay.

No, the thing should be put down. Mr. Alexander the man who is promoting an opposition institution, and the Editor of the *Colonist*, should be thanked for their efforts to crush this diabolical inquisition, which presumes to afford protection to honest and solvent men, and an effective barrier to the machinations of dishonest and unworthy traders. It has never been needed in Canada; English merchants have never lost anything on this side of the water, and our own dealers have never encountered dishonest or unworthy creditors. No, it should be crushed, and the *Colonist's* the man to do it.

FARCE PERFORMED IN THE CITY HALL, 1858.

(After Addition—a long way.)

Nov. 6th, 1859.

Students of history, especially that portion of them who have endeavoured to gain a correct idea of the feelings and sentiments, the passions and prejudices of those who have gone before us; have always received much assistance from the perusal of old plays, which are to a certain extent pictures of the times. It has been our good fortune to alight upon a piece performed in the City Hall of Toronto just one hundred years ago. The object of the farce, for force it is, appears to have been to ridicule the municipal institutions of the period, and all with which they had to deal. There is no plot in the piece, no denouement, notwithstanding which defects, the interest of the audience continues by numerous little incidents to be excited to the end. The Mayor (dressed in all the paraphernalia of the period) in the presence of the City Council, charges the head of the police, a man named Sherwood, with insubordination, and with liberating three thieves without an order from a magistrate. It is unnecessary to enter any further into an explanation of this matter, because it has little to do with the farce which follows; the author in pursuance of his task as a delineator of olden times, having represented the members of the Corporation as ignoring the real point at issue, in order that they may indulge in personalities of the most degrading kind. We have, too, a representation of the audience wont to congregate in the Council Chamber, and which perhaps may be taken as a sample of the electors of the period. The matter which formed the basis of the play was of great importance to the thieves, rogues, and vagabonds of the city, who collected together in considerable numbers to see what would be the fate of their friend and protector. These men frequently interrupt, by their noisy plaudits, the advocates of disorder and dishonesty. A character, represented by Mr. Ramsay, supports the bill of indictment preferred against the Chief, in a speech of some length, ignorance and impudence being its foremost characteristics. He talks much about law and order, but as was the case with members of the Corporation in those days, he is well represented by the author as knowing nothing of either. Such knowledge was no more to be expected of him, than it was likely one of the police who he helped to appoint, would catch a thief unless forced to do so. The next character is that taken by Mr. Craig, and he supported it well. As soon as he began to speak, a lusty bulldog is hurled from the chamber, it being anticipated that the poor animal, already giving signs of

weakness, would be irretrievably ruined by the excruciating torture this man always inflicted upon his hearers. On the occasion in question he seems to have exceeded his former efforts; his speech is worthy of the cause he undertakes to defend. His principal efforts seem directed to the reduction of all around him to his own level, a task which, bad as many of them seem to have been, was too herculean to succeed. His sagacity is wonderful, the beautiful cannot escape him, neither can the truth! Gall and wormwood course through his veins, for sure the warm life blood that animates the breasts of other men must have been unknown to the system of that creature who would drag private griefs before the public eye. *Appropos*, about this time we read something about a deficiency of lunatic asylums accommodation. To this fact alone we can attribute it, that if such a character as Craig ever existed, he was not placed in confinement, instead of being elected to the City Council unless indeed "all the men were mad as he." Sad indeed must have been the condition of our forefathers when they could choose such representatives.

The character performed by Councilman Craig, is to a great extent a counterpart of the others. One man, Alderman Carr, seems to have been placed in the Council for the express purpose of demonstrating that good clothes do not make a gentleman. The scene in which several members rise together, and indulge in mature recrimination, bawling across the table, and shaking their fists in one another's face, is highly amusing, though we must think somewhat exaggerated; the grossest language being used, order and decency being set at defiance.

The author, that he might the better bring out in relief the great degradation of the Corporation in general, has placed in the mouths of the Mayor and of Ald. Mowat, two able and logical speeches; in which the point in question is fully and closely discussed. From the stage directions given, we are enabled to appreciate the effect these speeches would produce upon such an audience; blinded for the most part by partisan feeling, if not by ignorance. The consequence is that the faces of the gentlemen round the board assume a complete blank; they can understand nothing but abuse, relish nothing but low personalities. The most pointed logic finds no entrance through their thick skulls;—they are dead to all sense of respectability. Among the men of this class who stand prominently forward, is a Councilman Smith. So great an adept was he considered in those qualifications which were thought necessary for the complete City Councillor, that the friends of Alderman Mowat proposed that he should take lessons off this individual. The end of the farce is that the Chief of Police is sustained, and the Mayor, disgusted at the admiration of his colleagues for a nincompoop, resigns his office.

The latter fact shows that although the Municipal institutions of those days had ceased to be useful, there was still some sense of decency left; the germs of future good. Altogether, we think our readers will from the above remarks, be able to gain a pretty accurate idea of the state of affairs, though it will ever be a matter of wonder, how society could exist amidst so much rascality, ignorance and corruption.