

for incurables), huddled together in an apartment shamefully crowded and ill-ventilated. Such as can leave their beds, are discussing the last remnants of a breakfast miserably inadequate to their wants. Others are bed-ridden. Others are vainly trying to snatch an hour's slumber after a feverish, sleepless night. Others, strong, and able-bodied, are bandying ribald jests, and hideous obscenities, by the bedside of one upon whose forehead the destroying angel has already laid his clammy hand. Such an one may, or may not, be afforded the religious consolation, eagerly sought for by most men at the hour of death;—but this depends upon circumstances. Some one is heard speaking without,—the oaths suddenly cease, and the ward is hushed and still, for—the doctor is expected. An operation is deemed necessary, and the breakfast table forthwith becomes an operating board. Yes—within sight of the bed-ridden and the dying—in the middle of the ward, wherein all classes are indiscriminately mixed up,—the surgeon bares his blade and makes ready for his ghastly work. We will not distress our readers by contemplating the effect which all this is likely to have upon the sick and the dying. If the sight of human blood blanches the cheek of many a strong man in robust health, what effect must the sight of blood and torture, produce upon the minds of those enfeebled by disease, or it may be, in the last struggle with death? But, no matter—they are paupers.

It is not, we believe, generally known, that the poor-house is likewise a Lunatic Asylum. Such however is the case. Within its walls, at the present moment, are some twenty or thirty lunatics, kept in good behaviour by threats of a black hole. The Asylum can, with moderate comfort, accommodate about 250 people. The number of its present inmates is 330; in winter it receives something over 500,—the able-bodied, and the bed-ridden, the healthy and the dying, being huddled together indiscriminately. There is no proper library for the paupers, nor is the cleanliness of the pauper children in any way looked after. Those who are sick nearly unto death (i.e. the "incurables") fare very little better than those in the enjoyment of sound health; indeed, the dietary in general is miserably poor and scanty. For the female occupants, no suitable employment is provided, and that portion of the establishment, known, in bitter irony, as "the virgins' hall," is a disgrace to civilized humanity. As an instance of the utter rottenness which pervades everything connected with the management of the poor-house, we may mention that the paupers are constantly employed as menials, without receiving any compensation whatever; this vicious system being not only winked at, but encouraged by the Commissioners, one of whom (if we are informed aright) had his shoes blacked—his washing done—and his garden looked after—all for nothing! But we have said enough—at least for the present. If our readers our satisfied that matters should continue as at present—well and good. If not, we shall return to the subject again, and again until the present abominations are overthrown. We have boasted about our city pretty often of late—let us make our vaunting true.

#### A VOICE FROM THE AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS.

A Nova Scotian lately writing from the United States advises his countrymen to blow and brag as the best way of increasing our Provincial importance and prosperity. This patriotic writer has probably been long an exile. He is either ignorant of our achievements in the boasting line during recent years, or he is traitorously coaxing us to emulate the frog in the fable and blow till we burst.

Every boy knows how a Batrachian band stop their music on the approach of danger. One chorister after another dives out of sight and closes his pipes with *honk*\*. The press of Nova Scotia has been as assiduous as her frogs in singing her praises, and the end of the music has in like manner been *honk*. We have laboured to make our Province great among Nations—great in men, productions, and resources. If a Nova Scotian is known to have taken part in a fight *by sea or land* in defence of his country, and to have exhibited a Briton actuated even by a sense

*Honk* is the last note in frog music—endless and in Batrachian language is *Syn-*

once loudly claimed as a Native and made illustrious. Prosentations are awarded—monuments erected, and his name emblazoned on our rolls of historic fame. Thus, we have to our satisfaction settled the fact that little Nova Scotia has already contributed more than her proportion of warriors to the British Empire. Every true born Blue Nose has a secret but firm conviction that were Westminster Abbey in Halifax, we could have deposited more celebrities in its vaults in 25 years than our slowgoing forefathers have done in three centuries.

Many second and third rate towns in Britain are each of more intrinsic value and natural importance than Nova Scotia and her contents; yet the newspapers of Liverpool, Manchester, or Glasgow, are not incessantly boasting of being the birth-place of every Officer who happens to die a Vice-Admiral or a Major-General. Many well informed gentlemen might be puzzled to name the native town of WELLINGTON or CLYDE; but if it would add to Provincial fame our press could soon furnish the birth-place and pedigree of every rabbit in Nova Scotia. It is very much to our taste to magnify the Province in every possible way; and just as conveniently can we at times make her small in order that some of our men, pigs, squashes, or other productions, may be thought very big for such a little Country.

The "Nova Scotian abroad" is a favourite heading in the columns of our press. Any vagrant coming under this description receives honorable notice—from the *Witness* down to the *Casket*. No where else are reflex honors from fellow-countrymen more jealously treasured up, unless in an adjoining Island, whose inhabitants still mourn the loss of HICKEY.

And these honors are well guarded. The Supervision is more than Provincial. It extends to every section, so that when Antigonish assumed the chapel awarded to a gaunt Highlander for race-running, the *Eastern Chronicle* promptly exposed the fraud on the ground that though the barn of this Gaelic PHIDIPIDES might be in Antigonish, yet his house is on the Pictou side of the County line.

As we have generally enough of this kind of business to settle among ourselves, it is fortunate that as a Province we have no disputes with other Countries about the honors or ownership of our natives. Foreign powers have kindly allowed us to take all the credit to ourselves.

As a Province, we have also aspired to literary distinction. But it has been up-hill work, chiefly for want of encouragement. Several productions have appeared as first volumes, and one edition has supplied the demand. It is unusual yet in this Province to issue a second edition of any work which was completed in the first volume. But we reserve the right as respects our Colonial literature of falling back on our resources in this manner.

Another department to which the press gives great space and attention consists of Agricultural and Horticultural productions. The Metropolitan papers prefer the latter. If Mr. Sty has an enormous hog, or Mr. Fodderan an overgrown ox, the event is of course chronicled. But the full flood of enthusiasm is reserved for Flowers, Fruits, and Tropical ducks. To displays of this sort, freed from the hodge like vulgarity connected with wheat, oats, and roots, all the wealth, beauty, and fashion repair. The presence of strangers is specially agreeable, as they see our land in its most attractive form. Grapes, figs, peaches, and pumpkins, are ostentatiously paraded as proofs of a fine climate and fertility of soil. The discerning stranger, though civil and flattering, is not deceived. In his eye, ten acres of superior wheat would outweigh all such displays, but he is forced to conclude that such a field is not to be found. He sees it stated in reference to the Bridgetown Exhibition, in celebrated Annapolis, that "cereals were far from superior," and that "the exhibition of roots was meagre." Besides, he is plainly told that we never think of raising much wheat, but depend upon Canada and the States for that article. If the production of forced exotics were evidence of climate, Labrador, and even Iceland, might acquire a reputation. When, however, the stranger within a few weeks after the Bridgetown Exhibition, sees, whilst travelling Eastward, some poor moorland Celt on the top of Ephraim or Mount Tom, pulling up his green oats through a foot of snow, his ideas of our agricultural capabilities become rather confused. A few gentlemen may amuse themselves by forcing fruits indigenous to sunnier climes, but we all know