

RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS

JOSEPH HOWE AND HIS TIMES.

And Incidental References to Some of His Prominent Public Contemporaries.

By "Historicus," Fredericton, N. B.

NO. 8.

Mr. Howe's Stomach. But the time now seemed to have arrived (1832) for the end of Mr. Howe's career. He was stricken down with fever brought on by over-exertion and over-heating in the Garrison Raquet Court, and his death was hourly looked for. Mr. Howe, like his brother William before referred to, was a fine player, but of course inferior to him as such. A game had been previously arranged; the players were Captain Canning, H. N., son of England's great Premier, Captain Norcott, Rifle Brigade, and another officer whose name I am unable to recall, and Mr. Howe. The day was warm, and the playing was lively, both sides determining to win, and it was kept up for several hours. That night Mr. Howe was prostrated, and the next morning alarming symptoms supervened, and he steadily grew worse as the day advanced. Dr. Hoffman and Dr. Gregor were his attendant physicians—both of whom pronounced his case very critical. His family and friends gathered around his bed, anxious and expectant; but having a vigorous constitution he rallied and gradually grew better. Had he passed away at that time it is questionable whether Nova Scotia would not have been doomed for many years longer, and not obtained the reforms for which Mr. Howe so stoutly contended. There was certainly no public man at the time of equal nerve and ability, to cope with the existing state of things—or with aggressive powers to storm the enemy in his stronghold, and do as Howe did, batter down the stout walls behind which the officials were so firmly entrenched.

Mr. Howe, the Proprietor of the Cunard Line of Steamers. It may be new to many persons when informed that it is mainly due to Mr. Howe that the line of Atlantic steamers known as "the Cunarders," came into existence in 1840. In 1838, in company with C. H. Haliburton (Sam Slick), Mr. Howe visited England and many parts of the Continent. When off Ireland the steamer *Cyprus*, one of the pioneer steamers, came in sight, and the captain was ordered to come to him—for the sailing vessel (with Howe and his friend on board) was a man-of-war, and her captain was supreme on the seas. From the *Cyprus* captain much nautical information was obtained—regarding the behavior of the vessel in rough weather—(Dr. Lardner having predicted that steam in a storm was impracticable, as the rolling of the vessel would prevent a steady generation of steam)—the working of the compass—whether steam could be depended upon without sails—the amount of coal consumed in a day—how many days out from New York, &c. &c. Messrs. Howe, Haliburton and the captain were attentive listeners, and profited by the information. The captain returned to his steamer and was quickly out of sight, while the gun floated like a log in a dead calm, unable to move, with her sails idly flapping against the masts. The thought struck Mr. Howe—how why not have steamers like this to carry the mails from England to Halifax, and thus instead of being two or three months making the passage from land to land, cross over in one quarter of the time, as the *Cyprus* had done? Here was proof of the feasibility of the project. Accordingly, when in London, Mr. Howe interviewed Hon. Mr. Crane, then on mission to the Colonial Office, in the interests of New Brunswick, upon a certain political issue which had bitterly divided parties in and out of the Legislature. The result of this interview was the drawing up of a Memorial to the Colonial Secretary—(Lord Glenelg)—(whose portrait, by the way, hangs upon the walls of our House of Assembly, obtained at the expense of the Province (1,000 guineas) in commemoration of the services he rendered to New Brunswick in connection with the "quit rents" question and through which the Liberals (then known as Liberals) gained a great victory) setting forth in an able manner the great possibilities of steam communication between England and America, in the saving of time, &c., and their suggestions were enforced through the personal observations they had on the high seas in the case of the *Cyprus*. To this Memorial his Lordship made a very encouraging reply. (I have all the documents before me.) The seeds thus sown soon began to bear fruit, for in a short time after this Mr. Cunard (a most enterprising merchant of Halifax) having got a hint, proceeded to England, and in connection with Messrs. Melver, Burns and Co., of Glasgow, all of whom no doubt had considerable influence at the Colonial Office, a Company was formed to carry out the project of building a line of steamers for carrying Her Majesty's mails, and for which service heavy yearly subsidies were granted by the English Government. Fifty years have since rolled away, and the Cunard Steamers and their officers are to-day looked upon with as much respect as those composing any one of the minor European Navies, if not England's Navy. So that it appears to me, if it was through Mr. Cunard's enterprise and energy that the world is indebted for this very successful venture, the mode of praise is no less due to Mr. Howe's foresight and advocacy in "setting the ball in motion."

The Halifax Hotel. When the Cunard steamers commenced their trips, it was supposed that the ports of departure and arrival were to be Liverpool and Halifax. So sensible of this were the people of the latter place, that a Company was formed for the erection of a Hotel large and grand enough for the accommodation of the great influx of transatlantic visitors calculated upon. Capital enough was subscribed and the Hotel was built—but alas "the best laid plans of mice and men gang ails apace"—for after a few trips Halifax was regarded by the Company as suitable only as a *touching* place, while Boston was selected as the *stopping* point. The Hotel, if not its owners, at once took sick and languished, and went of patronage. At all events its doors were closed, while the stockholders divided the profits and losses among them, "share and share alike"—and so it remained closed for years, when the next I heard of it was as an Officers' Quarters, a sort of barracks for Her Majesty's officers to smoke cigars in the open windows, and throw the stumps on to the street. On the retirement of the troops the building was resuscitated as an Hotel, under the management of Mr. Healin (if I mistake not) and since his death has been conducted by his sons. The first lessees in 1841, were two American gentlemen, Messrs. Parker & Hincley, most excellent caterers and calculations in regard to the great business to be done through an increase of the Cunard population failed to realize. Although the Hotel has of late been renovated and modernized, so much changed in fact in its interior and exterior fittings that its first patrons would now scarcely know it, still the old dining room remains intact, or occupied today as it was fifty years ago, but is much handsomer in its appointments.



SIR SAMUEL CUNARD.

"The Prince's Lodge." As near as I can learn Prince Edward (in a few years afterwards created Duke of Kent) came out from England in 1791 to join the Halifax Garrison, prior to being appointed Commander in Chief of British North America. He was a young man about 28 years of age. His town residence was afterwards converted into the Military Hospital, situated at the base of the Citadel, and nearly on the edge of the road leading to the parapet, after turning in from Cogswell street a short distance. The present Military Hospital is a modern affair. In the summer he resided at "the Lodge," six miles above town, on the margin of Bedford Basin. The house was built and occupied by the Wentworth family some years before this, but extensively enlarged and improved in every way after the Prince became the lessee. Grottoes and mimic temples, artificial lakes and winding walks through the woods in all directions and long distances, were built and laid out at considerable expense. To this end, and for work continually going on from year to year, there were carpenters, masons, blacksmiths' forges, stone-cars, yards, painters' shops, and in short, such other facilities for doing everything upon the premises necessary, that the place represented a miniature town of mechanical industry. This busy hive was situated a few hundred yards above the Lodge, and from twenty to thirty men were employed at a time during six months of the year. Near the dwelling was the telegraph station, a wooden structure about 20 feet in height, containing a flag staff and yard arms, for the purpose of communicating with the telegraph station on Citadel Hill, six miles distant, by means of flags and balls—at that time the only system of telegraph known—and yet the interchange of words was as correct though slow as it is at the present day under the electric system. The Prince spent most of his time at the Lodge, and went in and out among the workmen, clad in homely attire, with the same ease and freedom as any country gentleman who takes pleasure in the attractions of a country life, and interest in seeing his men busy at work, and making free with them in conversation without fuss or formality. As a disciplinarian and tartar persuasion among his troops, several companies of which he had quartered in a barracks called Rockingham, afterwards turned into an inn, a short distance above the Lodge, on the margin of the Basin, the still to be seen. Between the Lodge and the barracks it was a pleasant walk, and the Commander was often upon his men in the grey of the morning, for he was an early riser, when they little expected him, and who betide the officer in charge and his subordinates, if anything was not in

prime order, and ready for a march or parade. Among his civilian workmen he was all affability, but the troops had to stand clear if anything went wrong with his digestive arrangements, for at such times he would proceed to Rockingham and there explode in his own peculiar language. I have the names of most of the leading workmen who one hundred years ago toiled in the presence and under the direct patronage of Royalty, but like their royal master, they have long since gone to their rest. As their descendants now move out of the tradesman's rut, and among "the fashionables," it would not do to stir up burned embers and fan them into a flame *Requiescat in pace!*

During the Prince's residence at the Lodge, the Duke of Orleans (afterwards Louis Philippe, King of France) paid him a visit. The Duke was in exile after the French Revolution in 1799 (?), and he spent a whole summer, going in and out with the Prince, and moved about among the workmen on the grounds with all the ease and politeness of a Frenchman. When his son, the Prince de Joinville, visited Halifax in the *Bella Poule*, just after conveying the remains of the Emperor Napoleon from St. Helena to Paris, upon advice of his father and in company with Lord Falkland, then Governor (1841), he drove out to visit the ruins of the old Lodge, where the King (Louis Philippe) had spent so many happy days; and when the Prince of Wales visited Halifax in 1860, he did likewise, and took in the old home of his grandfather, the Duke of Kent. Again, every royal visitor to Halifax since has done the same—viz: Prince Alfred, Prince Arthur and Princess Louise. Truly this has been a royal spot, and is deserving of no other spot in the world. I believe no other spot in the world, in Princes' residences, is so much associated with royalty as this.

[It may not be out of place here to say that the above account of the Lodge, &c., is made on the authority of "one who was present" but now no more—a direct communication, as it were, between the past and present generations.]

(Continuation of Lodge article next week.)

The Etiquette of Titles. In speaking of her husband a woman never makes a mistake if she calls him "Mr." or "my husband." It is difficult to decide, when the husband has a title, just what the wife should do with it. This is the severest rule. In speaking of her husband she should not say "General A." or "Dr. B.," but "Mr. A.," "Mr. B." No matter what he is—judge, governor, captain—to her he is and should be called "Mr. B." Mrs. Grant never, even when her husband was president, spoke to him as other than Mr. Grant, though it is the custom of the president's wife to speak of him as "the president."

The one exception to this rule of ignoring husband's official or professional titles is when the wife presents him to any one else. Then she says, "my husband, Senator Smith," or simply, "Dr. Jones." The reason for this is evident. It gives the proper clue to the stranger, who would wish, of course, to address the new acquaintance with the proper title. Last of all, let any wife take heed how she wears her husband's title and allows herself to be spoken of as "Mrs. Governor Jones" or "Mrs. Secretary Smith." No matter what title her husband has, she has no more right to wear it than she has to wear his shoes.

MILLER BROS.'S EXHIBIT.

It contained the Best Pianos and Organs and was well Admired.

At the recent exhibition, says the Halifax Mail, Miller Bros. (Crawford street) occupied a large space (nearly the whole of the south end gallery), and their show presented a fine appearance. It was all enclosed by a nice neat railing (of turned banisters) and the place raised about eight inches, while all was covered by a nice carpet, the walls and ceiling being nicely papered, and suspended from the ceiling were three electric lights, and their whole place tastefully and richly draped and some nice paintings hung. They showed fifteen fine organs and pianos. The Karn organ in church and parlor styles, some of which are very fine in both appearance and tone, ranging in price from \$75 to \$450. Also some fine Karn pianos in mahogany, walnut and rosewood finish. The Evans Bros. piano in mahogany, walnut and rosewood finish; both of these makes of pianos are becoming very popular. Prices of pianos shown ranged from \$350 to \$600. Occasionally some very sweet music could be heard from their department, while all was put to the music ten of the celebrated Raymond sewing machines in different styles of oak and walnut. Among them was a very fine cabinet machine, which attracted much attention, it being so simple to open and close and to operate; and when closed having the appearance of a writing desk. This machine has become of late years a general favorite with the public. This firm deserves credit for going to the trouble and expense they did in making so fine an exhibit. They received three diplomas on their organs and pianos. The highest award given, no prizes were offered. They have now been in business over twenty years and during that time have worked up a very large business in the lower provinces, which territory they control.

The monthly concerts at the school for the blind have been resumed. The first of these took place on Wednesday afternoon in the assembly hall of the institution. The visitors were conducted to different parts of the buildings, and were loud in their praises of the arrangement of the music rooms. Through the plate glass doors of each of these rooms a pupil could be seen practising upon one of the new Evans Bros. or Karn pianos recently put in by Miller Bros. of the city, who are the sole agents. Their pianofortes are particularly fine in tone and are giving every satisfaction.

MILLER BROS., Granville street, at the recent exhibition, received three diplomas on their organ and piano exhibition.

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