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THE PROVINCIAL.

HALIFAX, N. S., SEPTEMBER, 1853.

A GOSSIP ABOUT LITERATURE.

LITERATURE, like all other things on this changeful globe, has its seasons and its aspects. Time, which brings the moss to the tree and the furrow to the brow, though it does not bring a shade or a weariness to that ever green plant of imagination and reason, yecept literature, yet bestows upon it in passing a shadow as it were of the age in which it exists, and colours and changes it to suit the period and the customs around it. It is not that literature is of such impressible nature, that habit or improvement can tincture it with their own hues or novelty, but as it is the production of men's minds, and the food for our highest capabilities, so, like the new moon, it has its changes and its phases, enduring only in a steady aspect for a season, and leaving more surely than aught else in our changeful world, unbroken reflection of a past state of society, the moveable mirror in which the thoughts and feelings, with the tastes and prejudices of a bygone generation, are daguerreotyped for all time. But like the fashions in manner or dress, which reign for a time and then are laid upon the shelf, only to be revived after all who once approved and adopted them have long been low in the dust, so a certain style of literature is admired and pursued by a multitude, until the fashion again changes and another novelty in style or sentiment usurps the place of the former. This, with another, and still another, follow in succession, and have their day, until when the world is an age or two older, a class of men prefer rather to study the literature of the past than that of their own day, and consequently are tinctured with the spirit of the works they peruse, until admiration is succeeded by action, and they set to work in the same spirit, and transfer for their own age in their own words, copies of the original which so delighted a past generation. And thus while the world apparently goes forward in wisdom and improvement, we find that though our higher and deeper faculties are developed and exercised, our tastes are essentially the same as were our forefathers, that we have only parted with the coarseness and absurdity which disfigured their productions, but that we are no more keenly alive to the spirit of genius and wit than they were. Our humour may be less broad, our senti-

ment more strong and manly in expression, our wit divested of obscurity or scurrility, but we are the same in tastes and passions as they. The germ or pith of what has been handed down to us as the really estimable in the literature of the past, has the same charms for us that it had for them, proving incontrovertibly the truth that true genius has no age or locality for its own, but sparkled as radiantly when time and creation wore their infant robes, as now when the world has grown older and wiser, when the very elements minister to the use of mankind, when highways are mapped out on the ocean, and the stars of the firmament classified and called by familiar names.

The inhabitants of the present day have unquestionably imbibed the spirit that animated the eighteenth century with regard to the prevalent tone of literature. We allude to the pathetic humorous style which pervaded the writings of the literati at that time, as witnessed in the works of Fielding, Smollet, Richardson, Sterne, Swift, and a number of others, whose names are familiar to the student of English literature. This taste has been revived by the popular authors of our own time, as exemplified in the works of Dickens, Hood, Thackeray, Jerrold, and a host of lesser lights, whose productions overstock the market, and give their admirers full opportunity to satiate their appetites for the ridiculous and absurd. This spirit not only tinctures the vast majority of books that are written, but it also guides the pencil—and caricature is even as abundant and popular as written jests. A *Punch* and a *Diogenes* can boast among their contributors some of the brightest minds of the nineteenth century, and who shall say what good has resulted from the weapons which these publications have used against the crimes and follies of mankind. Laughter loving, and jesting periodicals, though these but profess to be, there is a deeper meaning beneath their sallies which strikes home to the root of evil and artifice, not only laying bare the motives of those in high places but effectually eradicating the vices they ridicule, for there are few that can withstand that potent power. Where sin and folly thrive abundantly in the face of right and example and conscience, they shrink back abashed before the arrows of ridicule. Pun and jest and epigram, have greater force even with the evil disposed, than the soundest argument, and when these are heightened by the illustrative caricature, official burdens sit heavily on the men who have made it the business of a life time to secure them. But while ridicule has its uses, like all other good gifts it is subject to its abuses; and the same taste which publicly manifests its predilections by encouraging publications whose pages are devoted to the exposure of the weak points of mankind, will carry itself into private, and transform the social circle into a quick-witted company, ever on the alert to point an arrow or ward off a home thrust, thereby producing unpleasant feelings and destroying the charm of friendly intercourse. Who does not watch with regret the growth of this spirit, developing itself in the youth of the present day. Is there a young man

gifted with the ordinary powers of understanding and education, who does not manifest it to be his first wish to seem smart, to say funny things, to win a character for humour, and blaze away in his small world of dotting connexions and simple young ladies, as a comet whose every movement results in a shower of sparks as brilliant as they are numerous. Who has not been annoyed, when met with other friends to enjoy a few hours of rational and instructive conversation at the attempts of these would-be-wits, who have studied Joe Miller and endeavoured to understand Punch, and in virtue of their acquaintance with these publications endeavour to pass off the reflection of the masters they have studied as their own natural lucubrations, and annoy all, who otherwise compassionate their folly, by their smart sayings, bad puns, and weak imitations of long exploded wit. These young men are the nuisances of society, and we regret to say their example is sometimes followed by young ladies also, who destroy the enjoyment of others by their mutual sharpshooting, and rehash of absurdities which have disfigured the variety column of some daily print. We regret to see this disposition on the increase, and think it is in a measure excited by the unqualified admiration which has been awarded to the humourists who now write for the public. When weak witty sayings are applauded in print, we must only expect them to be imitated by punsters of a lesser growth. If each one of Dickens' mawkish and overdone absurdities is lauded as the ne plus ultra of good things, we need not marvel that our budding men should take their cue from his works, and win a similar admiration in a more contracted sphere. We wish that some one of our real humourists, such as Jerrold or Thackeray, would devote an hour or two to the exposure of those soaring youths; after the dissection these writers could give them, the keen lashing by pen, ink, and paper, if not too case-hardened to know their own characters when faithfully represented, we doubt much if the jackdaw plumage would again be stirred, or the old marvel of Balaam's ass be rehearsed for our benefit.

It seems no difficult task to guide the public taste, if we may judge from the few instances we could easily point to, of persons who, while not even propounding a new system, manage by the manner in which they convey their own peculiar style of sentiment to the world, to secure the plaudits and attention of a wide class of readers. As a proof we would cite Dickens, whose popularity in literature is perhaps unprecedented. Fortunately for himself he fell in with the popular humour. Eschewing the more important and more erudite themes which improve and benefit mankind, he chose to draw upon the comicalities of life, and clothing them in language quaint and at times most forcible, has succeeded in building up for himself a reputation whose value altogether depends upon the merit people choose to attribute to his style. Those who look upon life as one holiday time in which to laugh and revel as we may, who think the meanest puerilities and the broadest allusions worth

the exercise of our faculties, who prefer a mawkish sensibility and a strain of childish pathos to the strong, manly common-sense which ever distinguishes the self-reliant, large hearted man of intellect, are those who have built up for Mr. Dickens the reputation which he now wears so exultingly—can we say securely? Will not those who succeed us some fifty years hence, should our rugged old earth then be standing to shelter her children, marvel at the tastes of their forefathers, and ask if it were really possible that men in the boasted enlightenment of the nineteenth century could sit down and write calmly such reviews as may be found in many a periodical and newspaper of the works of Charles Dickens, ascribing to them unlimited humour, melting pathos, and intellectual grandeur! terming him a giant in literature—the mightiest scribe of a modern day? Mankind will grow weaker in mental as well as physical strength, if this is not their decision. Not that we would by this opinion detract from Mr. Dickens' real merit. We believe him to be a clever man, with considerable humour and a kindly nature. His first productions were written in a style very different from anything that had preceded them in his own age. There was a piquancy about them, an originality and drollery that opened up a new vein of ideas, and made 'Boz' immensely popular. 'The Old Curiosity Shop' has some bursts of genuine, exquisite pathos; passages that thrill the heart's purest feelings by their very truthfulness to nature. There is a comicality too, with which the commonest things of life are invested, a minuteness in speaking of every-day household affairs, which strikes us at the first recital as irresistibly droll and amusing. But it is only in the detail of these common-places that Dickens is natural. When he attempts character he fails miserably. True, he can draw a consistent imbecile, miser, or oddity; but, good or bad, they are all caricatures, mocking pictures of human nature. In each character that he depicts we may find one or more traits peculiar to some individual with whom we associate, but otherwise the picture is overdrawn, a phantom without any type of humanity. Indeed were mankind composed of such characters as those with which Mr. Dickens peoples his imaginary world, would not we who have known a better state of things shrink back in horror and dismay. His pattern people, his Cheerybles, and Noggs, and Peggottys, with all their immense good nature and unheard of love, say and do the silliest things that even Charles Dickens' brain can imagine, and that is saying a good deal; and then the monotonous moonstruck nonsense that his men and women talk, the pages of mawkish sentiment and moralizing, interspersed amid the story, the never ceasing recurrence to some sentence which his characters think fit to utter, such as Uriah Heep's 'I am 'umble,' and Mr. Jarndyce's idea that 'the wind was in the east,' grow more tiresome and disgusting, until at last they seem like an insult to the understanding and the good taste of his readers.

In *Nicholas Nickleby* more than in any of his other works, with the exception of *Oliver Twist*, and it may be his yet unfinished story of *'Bleak*

House,' Dickens seems to have some definite aim in view and labours to accomplish it. His pictures of the miserable condition of children at school as depicted in life at 'Dotheboys Hall,' though exaggerated, are inimitable. That he struck deep at the root of the matter, was proved by the excitement his book occasioned among the Yorkshire teachers, and the great improvement that has taken place in schools in that district. The author doubtless, if he did not actually experience some of the miseries he has related, encountered them accidentally or heard of them from those who were living witnesses of their enormity and cruelty. More than the admirers of the author of 'Nicholas Nickleby' testify that that publication had great influence in ameliorating the condition of those who were sent to receive their education in the sequestered parts of England. That it caused enquiry to be made into their state by those in authority and that such abuses can no longer exist. If so then in the name of gentle innocent childhood we thank Charles Dickens from our heart. We honour him for the bold manly spirit that dared to strike a blow for poor and wronged children, who were helpless to succour themselves, and we even forgive him for much of the nonsense with which he has since surfeited us. It was a worthy effort in a noble cause, and his rapidly succeeding work 'Oliver Twist' stands upon the same ground and has the same merit. Mr. Dickens has made the overseers of alms and workhouses ashamed of themselves as far as one human pen could do. By the cutting lash of ridicule he has held them up to contempt; and the generous, the humane, and the merciful have come forward to see that such iniquities as he points at shall not be practised in a christian land. In the name of little children, again, we thank Mr. Dickens—he has been a friend to the friendless—leaving obsequiousness and flattery toward dignitaries with those who could so demean themselves, he has acted the part of a man and a christian. A father himself, he felt and wrote for those helpless and injured children whom God had deprived of their natural protectors, and had Mr. Dickens yet pursued the same course, had he gone on still toiling for his suffering brethren, endeavoring to root out wrong wherever it existed—using alike the weapons of pathos and ridicule until he had accomplished his end, we would have been the last to write a word in his disfavour. But he has turned away from his lofty and legitimate calling. In his endeavour to be witty he has forgotten to be wise, and unless his latest work 'Bleak House' shew that he is again in earnest in endeavouring to strike at the root of some great abuse, and bringing his whole energy to bear against it, we think so surely will the author of 'Oliver Twist' lose character as a philanthropist, and descend to the ordinary level of a commonplace humourist, who thinks more of his own profit than the sufferings of his fellow beings. We trust this will not be the case—that he will return to his former good intention ere the breath of flattery and luxuriousness of wealth have spoiled him forever.

Before concluding these remarks, we must not forget to allude to his

'Christmas Carol,' one of the sweetest prose poems we ever read—written with a truly charitable purpose—the proceeds we believe being devoted to his suffering brethren, its author excelled himself, and left us the simplest and withal the most touching lesson that has been heard below since the angels sung 'Peace on earth and good will towards men.' It spoke genuine, kindly charity for the poor and suffering, and the effort had its reward in the plaudits of an answering multitude. It was worthy of the season, and can we give it greater praise? But his other Christmas stories 'The Cricket on the Hearth,' 'The Battle of Life,' 'The Haunted Man,' and several others, what shall we say of them? It is indeed rank heterodoxy to fly in the face of a world's opinion and condemn these as peevish, fantastic and unmeaning, but we think so and honestly declare our opinion. They were unworthy of the author of 'Nicholas Nickleby' and the 'Christmas Carol.' Wild unmeaning conceits, with here and there a beautiful thought, frequently a droll comicality, at which we were forced to laugh, though compelled to wade through so much that was tedious to obtain it. There are pages in many of Dickens' works that would even do discredit to the composition of a child and yet there are found learned and sensible men and women who will and do admire them. Taste we are aware cannot be controlled, but we think there should be some rules to guide the judgment of the wise and reflective. We think Dickens must be ashamed if he ever peruses his own works to think that he has imposed upon the public such columns of tiresome nonsense.

Martin Chuzzlewit, Dombey and Son and David Copperfield are all subject to the same censure. Written without any definite aim, mere caricatures in general of low life and broad vulgarisms, they required some bold stroke of genius to make them reflect credit on the pen of any author. Dickens was either not willing or unable to embellish them with the necessary intellect, and though each differs in plot from the next, in language, character and detail, one is but the copy of the other. Each has the same revolting scenes, the same dark, low, unscrupulous villains, the same simple and confiding men and women, the same wild plots, eccentric extravagance and improbable issues. We pass over 'Martin Chuzzlewit' not caring to chronicle our opinion of it, to the merits of 'Dombey and Son' the best of the three we have enumerated. Little Paul is a bright image—a forerunner of Mrs. Stowe's 'Eva,' one that we know exists but in the ideal, but which has power to charm us from its very purity and beauty. Walter and Florence are rather commonplace, but old Captain Cuttle is 'the Kohinoor' caricatured, a very jewel among men. It is long since we read the book, and our impressions of its scenes and characters are becoming faint, but we still remember the cold, stony Dombey, and the still more unnatural Edith. Carker, too, with his diabolical villany and horrible end, still make one shudder in recollection, while Toots and Miss Nipper, even in memory, make one laugh. Bunsby and his 'opinions' were perfect in their

way, all the better because they were not introduced too frequently. We have 'made an effort' to recal these characters, and as the book comes up once more before us, we are willing to award to the author a degree of power in the execution of his story which would have been well employed in a better service. It is at best but a delineation of the good and evil passions of our nature, the evil predominating and disgusting us in their details. It, however, did more for its author's repute, to our thinking, than did that voluminous mass of sameness and extravagance—'David Copperfield,' pronounced by many critics to be his best, and the more interesting because it was a correct autobiography of Dickens himself. This statement may or may not be correct; we have heard it brought forward with equal assurance at the appearance of every work of his, and as he could not have been at once an ill-treated schoolboy, a charity child, and an ill-used stepson, with aunt and other attached friends to take care of him, we must reject the truth of the latter assertion as well as the preceding ones, and believe that the author draws more upon his own imagination than his matter of fact admirers imagine him to do. We are indeed trenching upon untried ground, when we presume to pass such disapproval upon Davy Copperfield. Before we read it, except in detached portions, we heard it lauded by a multitude, many in their extravagant praise going so far as to envy any one who had such a pleasure in store as the perusal of it. But we were not so sanguine, we were slightly acquainted with it from reading snatches here and there in some chance newspaper, and were not anxious to attempt the task. But in an idle week, far away in the country, amid bright scenery of land and water, where occupations were few and books at a premium, we encountered David Copperfield 'complete in one volume,' as the booksellers say, and thought it a good opportunity to begin a task long contemplated. It was finished at last, but now when a few more years have shewn how impatient even trifles can make us, we wonder at the courage that enabled us to read from beginning to end. Had there been a dozen chapters instead of the ponderous Alexandrine mass through which we waded, the book would have been good, but a dozen chapters would have embodied the whole pith and merit of the story. David's mere personal history is interesting and well told, a few of the characters he encounters are eccentric and amusing, but the majority of them—Heep, Dartle, Micawber, and others, are blots and obstructions to the work. We never were so tired of any book that came within our reach, and even now when we recal the weary way in which we spent that long bright summer day in one of the loveliest portions of Nova Scotia, poring over a book wherein we were eager to find something to admire, we are almost ready to retract what we have written in favour of its author, so strong is the recollection even of the ennui we experienced. We care not for the measure of indignation we shall meet for holding such opinions. They are, however, the honest convictions of an unprejudiced mind, and we are only

sorry that among those who admire David Copperfield are some of the most literary and learned of our friends.

Mr. Dickens' later productions published in the 'Household Words,' of which he is the Editor, have done him much credit. His 'Child's History of England,' first given to the public in that periodical, is perhaps one of the best histories ever compiled for the young. It is written in such a clear, honest manner, and yet with all the interest of narrative or romance, that the child is unwilling to lay down the book, and the more experienced reader marvels, how the dry facts of history can be rendered so interesting; it is a volume that should be in the possession of every child.

Some of his other contributions to 'Household Words' have also been eminently beautiful, adding other corroboration to the assertion that whenever Mr. Dickens has a practical or useful end in view, his compositions are meritorious and successful in the truest degree.

Thackeray is another leader in the department of humour, and to our thinking, more justly entitled to the laurel than any other. It has been urged by his opponents that he looks upon the world with a cynical eye, that he never sees a beam without a blemish, and would make us believe that all on earth, and sea, and sky, wear a jaundiced colour. We cannot discern this spirit in his writings. True, there is much that is severe and even bitter when he applies his pen to the follies and hypocrisies of the world, but why should it not be so. It is not enough merely to laugh at what is wrong, it should be lashed as well; and this Thackeray does most effectually. Why should he not batter the fortress of the Becky Sharpe's, (and their name is legion) with the artillery of his most caustic wit; he only laughs at the clumsiness of a Dobbin; he does well to scarify the multitude of Sedleys.

Thackeray is perhaps more of a satirist than a humourist, but he has many of the attributes that belong to both. He has also a blunt, honest style of pathos, that seems to come warm from the heart, and affects with similar emotions those who read his pages. The Irish 'Sketch Book' is inimitable—the quiet vein of humour that runs through the whole is irresistible. Wandering through that fair land, for which nature has done so much and education and government so little—he rarely pauses to satirize, he indulges his laughter-loving and his pitying spirit to its utmost, and gives us beautiful pictures of peasant life and scenery, at which we laugh and wonder and sigh—such power has he over the flexible chords of the feelings—and if he does now and then let the lash of his satirical propensities descend, it is only upon those in high places who have merited the infliction.

His Sketches of Life in Paris do not merit the same commendation, though necessarily an interesting work, from the pen of such a writer, still it lacks spirit, and does not bear comparison with the Irish Sketch Book. With so much in Paris to satirize and ridicule, it seems as if his talent deserted him,

and with less straw in Ireland, Thackeray makes infinitely better bricks.

As a lecturer, this author is extremely popular, although there are many who endeavour to detract from his merit and impartiality in this department. As we have not read the lately published volume of his lectures on the Humourists of the Eighteenth century, we cannot join with his opponents or his friends, but are disposed to think he has argued on the side of justice and virtue, that he has only dipped his pen in satire when exposing the follies or vices of Jonathan Swift and others of a like calibre—men who with genius sufficient to guide a world, were yet destitute of that moral honesty and right principle which can only make intellect truly effective. Mr. Thackeray may perhaps have gone too far, but in his manly indignation at all things mean and insincere, he strikes bravely and manfully, believing that public men and writers are the property of all generations, and without being a desecrator, he will not let the grave atone for vices which deserve the scorn and infamy of the world.

From his latest lecture in America, delivered before a Charitable Society, we can see that whatever his hostility to the dead, he is more than generous to the living. His warm eulogium of Dickens, shows him to be unbiassed by envy or prejudice. It is doubtful whether 'Boz' would award such generous tribute to any living author.

Douglas Jerrold is better known as a contributor to the magazines and a writer for Punch than in any other capacity. He is full of fun and drollery. Scotchmen call him a mass of conceit and bitterness, and by his warfare upon them he is entitled to much of the latter quality. But he has provoked more merriment than many of his compeers, and though we are not sufficiently acquainted with his writings to pass judgment upon them, we believe he is entitled to a high place among the humourists of the nineteenth century.

The best and most profound of this class of writers that have shed lustre upon the age, was the early-taken and still lamented Thomas Hood. We use the word profound, because he rarely wrote without a deeper meaning than light jesting words betokened. We are told that melancholy and mirth are of near kindred, and never were the two more closely connected than in the author of 'The Song of the Shirt.' There was a tenderness and agony even amid his gayest jests and lightest fancies, that told one how he suffered, but he played with the lightnings of sorrow, and as he could not control them, determined to laugh at them. It was good philosophy, but in poor Hood's case it only extended to his writings. The cares and trials of the world pressed too heavily upon the heart, that had such playthings of wit to amuse his fellows, and he sunk early into an untimely but an honoured grave! Few have ever contributed more real wit or left more abiding proof of genius as a legacy to the world than Hood, and the good that he did by his powerful appeals to the justice and sympathy of those in authority, will make his name

remembered long after many of higher pretensions are forgotten. Of all the loveable, gentle-hearted men, though a wit and a humourist, Hood was the most so. In every page, amid all his quips and quirks of fun and frolic, shines out the large-hearted philanthropist, the benevolent christian, the sympathizing man. We owe him gratitude for the laughter he has afforded us, for the unsullied fountain of amusement he created for us, and we owe him still more for his sympathy with the suffering and his efforts to relieve them. Who, that has read his matchless poem, 'The Bridge of Sighs,' and lingered with emotion over the quaintest and yet the deepest expression of human feeling and sorrow which these lines embody; who that will not drop a tear to the memory of poor Tom Hood, and believe that the recording angel has long ere this read to him a higher paudit in view of the register of his noble efforts for the relief and benefit of suffering humanity.

OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

WE would call attention in this article to several communications that want of space induced us to pass over in our last notice, as well as to one or two later ones, which being entitled from their ability to a place in our pages are inserted under this heading, because from their brevity they are unsuited to appear as separate articles.

We have received from our correspondent O. a brief account of some wild animals of Nova Scotia. We shall be glad to give insertion at any time to information upon the natural history of our Provinces, and would hope to have the series continued. A description of our birds, flowers, and other natural productions would likewise be acceptable.

WILD ANIMALS OF NOVA SCOTIA.—No. 1.

THE MOOSE—*Cervus Alces*—AMERICAN FAUN.

This majestic animal is probably the largest in Nova Scotia; length, upwards of six feet, and above five feet in height; head, one foot six inches; neck, the same; ears, nine inches; blackish brown color; head, large and elongated. In the winter its color becomes almost black in the superior parts, lighter below.

This animal is also found in the northern parts of New York, Vermont and New Hampshire, and a quarter of a century ago it resorted to Massachusetts also.

Moose means in the Indian language, wood-eater. It peels trees, feeds on the bark, and in summer resorts to swamps and marshy grounds, and near lakes and ponds. It lives also upon the striped maple and other young trees, and on coarse grass and the leaves of the water lily. When snow is on the

ground, moose herd eight or ten together, resorting to places in which twigs and the branches and bark of trees can be obtained. With their long trot and wide spread hoofs, they will penetrate the thick coverts, and scamper among rough windfalls.

In smelling and hearing, the moose is very acute, but not so with its sight. The hopes of the huntsman chiefly lie in the tenderness of their feet, as they cannot very far continue their speed.

THE COMMON WOLF—*Canis Lupus*.

Its usual dimensions are—from three to three and one half feet in length; two and one half feet high; tail, one foot; head, nine or ten inches. It acquires this size in three years. In the years 1844 and 1845 numbers of these animals were observed, and several captured, in various parts of this Province, and the fears of the public were excited as to their probable increase. The variety of sounds uttered by this animal, sometimes lead to the belief that a pack, instead of a single intruder, are at hand.

THE CARIBOU, OR REINDEER—*Cervus Tarantus*.

As compared with the moose, this animal is much smaller, less clumsy in shape, and swifter; its form is thicker and legs shorter, even in proportion. Its winter coat is thick, and has brown fur mixed with it. Five and one half feet long; fore legs three feet in height.

It now appears neither in Massachusetts, Vermont, or New Hampshire.

The horns of the Caribou are placed further from the eyes than they are in the moose; the skull is longer, in proportion; the nose is more prolonged; its antlers are fixed into a base, which project upward and backward, but in the moose sideways.

O.

July, 1853.

The same correspondent indulges in contrast. He has made a transition from the wild and fierce in nature to those beautiful beings of the imagination of olden time, 'Fairies, midsummer fairies.' Idle and unreal as are those spirits, we must yet confess to a love for them, implanted in childhood and not yet eradicated by the harsh realities of life. We give below our correspondent's apostrophe to the brightest creation of poet land:

FAIRIES.

Who is there that has not treasured in his memory the outlines—sometimes, perhaps, indistinct and undefined—of the fairy tales which when time to him was young, enlivened his spirits, or added to his gaiety?

Poets have ever claimed intimacy with 'the king and queen of spirits,' and the followers in their train.

Have we not been, by our own Shakespeare, introduced to King Oberon and Titania his Queen? Read again, how with his own sweet eloquence, the poet opens to us how the tiny queen refused to yield up to Oberon, the little changeling boy, whom 'his own kingdom could buy not.' Then, how harmonious is the lullaby, with which the fairies sung their queen asleep.

Ariel, is he not the very chief of spirits? A little mischievous, to be sure, for his pleasure in tormenting the monster Calliban, is transparent enough, but yet he most faithfully performed his charge, and did his work most bravely,

his spiriting most gently. How ready too, to believe that the repentance of the King of Naples and the false Antonio was sincere, and though a spirit, how Ariel did pity them.

And now that our summer, so bright and yet so brief, is hastening on, we may well cheer ourselves with the fairy songs that of ten appear before us, and sweetly ask for our attention and our welcome.

And what a sweet song is one written by Mrs. Hemans. It is written too by her whom nature loved, and who so intensely loved nature, in her works and ways, and she called it thus :

WATER LILIES.

A FAIRY SONG.

Come away, Elves ! while the dew is sweet,
Come to the dingles where fairies meet ;
Know that the lilies have spread their bells,
O'er all the pools in our forest dells ;
Stilly and lightly their vases rest,
On the quivering sleep of the water's breast,
Catching the sunshine through leaves that throw
To their scented bosoms an emerald glow ;
And a star from the depth of each pearly cup,
A golden star unto heaven looks up,
As if seeking its kindred where bright they lie,
Set in the blue of the summer sky.

And again, some fair writer still more recently, thus writes about the Fairies :

"How sprightly, o'er the spiral grass,
With giddy grace, the fairies glide :
A dew-drop is their looking glass,
Their mirror is the sleeping tide.

When morning ope's her cloudless eye,
The fairies seek their mossy cell :
There in soft smiling slumbers lie,
Till wakened by the evening bell."

U.

June, 1853.

We have next some verses entitled 'For my Brother's birth-day,' the work apparently of a very inexperienced writer ; as they bear evidence, however, of a more poetic excellence than is usually discernable in the composition of young contributors we give them insertion, suggesting at the same time to the writer, that it is better to versify more general subjects when writing for a periodical. Birthdays and similar anniversaries possess interest only for the limited home circle, and thoughts and allusions which charm those who understand their application, are often tiresome and common-place to the general reader.

To-day, fair childhood's portals you have passed,
Behind you cast one longing look—the last ;
Fancy displays the future, colored fair,
Unfolds life's flowers, but hides the growing care.
No more with me Lulave's fair fields you'll roam :
Henceforth another scene must be your home ;
Those precious hours, the jewels of the past !
How mem'ry stores them in her treasury vast ;
When each fair flower, that deck'd the fruitful soil,
Inspired delight, repaid our childish toil.
Each shrub, in copse or grove, we loved to mark,
As bees, industrious, sprightly as the lark ;
And when the day had hid its golden crest,
We launched our bark upon the streams calm breast :
And by destructive arts, sometime we'd lure
The finny tribe to death and ruin sure ;

E'en storms had charms and nature's mimic strife,
 Heedless that thus was shadowed forth our life.
 Breezes were balm, music the wild bird's song,
 Enchantment breathed from all the forest throng.
 And are these joys all fled? can life no more
 Display one sunny isle, one verdant shore?
 Has youth no joys, and can the expanding mind
 Elsewhere no source of harmless pleasure find?
 O yes! but tune the manly mind aright,
 The 'chords' can vibrate still with deep delight;
 Can find companion-ship, altho' alone,
 And where its God is, there can feel at home!
 And O may this philosophy divine,
 The art of happiness henceforth be thine.
 This, this alone can trust bliss impart,
 Can make the mind a landmaid to the heart;
 And while it still endears our early hours,
 Can clothe the waste with more than earthly flowers.

SARAH.

A correspondent has favoured us with an extract from an essay on the writings and genius of Byron, written by one who is now no more, but whose genius while living was among the brightest that ever irradiated our land. Some of his posthumous papers will yet, we hope, adorn the 'Provincial;' but in the meantime some brief remarks on Byron will be perused with pleasure by our readers:

SOME REMARKS ON BYRON.

—
 CHILDE HAROLD.

We are not of those who think that Byron has, generally speaking, been very successful in his use of the Spenserian stanza. We see a constant inflection, sometimes a total alteration of the idea, to suit this complicated form.

In Don Juan we discern long passages, and these often not the best in the poem, which owe their origin to a single word adopted for metrical purposes. And even in this poem which is more carefully wrought, and to whose nature such digressions were foreign, we occasionally remark the same defect.

Byron's grandiose style was not the best suited to the ode—he there resembles the giant of the Persian tales shut up in a box. His odes and minor poems (a few excepted) do not offer the best examples of his peculiar powers. That to *Lanthe* is one of the least faulty—nothing could be finer than the lines:

"Oh let that eye which wild as the gazelle's,
 Now brightly hold or beautifully shy,
 Wins as it wanders, dazzles where it dwells,
 Glance o'er this page."—

Among the minor blemishes is that adoption of Spenser's language, which ought not to have been adopted, or being so, not rejected at the close of the first few stanzas.

While on the score of faults, we may censure the most glaring one in the poem, viz. : the constant mixture and the constant jar between the real and the ideal. Byron did well to tear off this veil in the latter cantos.

Moore has shewn how Byron, under his assumed character, has exaggerated his own misdemeanours. He refers this to the tenderness of Byron's conscience. We refer it to that love for effect which characterized every action of his life, and rendered him ever willing to pass for a worse man than he was, provided he could pass for a more remarkable.

If he thought of himself when writing the following passage he greatly mistook his own character:

" His was not that open, artless soul,
That feels relief by bidding sorrow flow ;
Nor sought he friend to counsel or console
Whate'er his grief mote be."

No man was more communicative than Byron, and none less choice as to his confidants or confidences—indeed the whole world was his confidant. How very early he thought or affected to think ill of the fair sex :

" Maidens like moths are ever caught by glare
And Mammon wins his way where seraphs might despair."

We consider the first thirteen stanzas nearly perfect of their kind. Few of the other parts of the poem present us with such elegance of diction or such ease.

He is much in the habit of repeating his sentiments : one of his favorite ones is the contrast between God's bounty and the use man makes of it.

Those passages where there is an attempt at wit by an allusion to mean subjects, such as the description of a London Sabbath, have been most justly remarked on as foul blots on the rest of the work.

As a sketch of nature nothing could be finer than stanza xix.

The union of the two qualities, an enthusiastic love of nature with the talent of portraying her in all her aspects, and his masterly knowledge of the heart form a combination, to parallel which we must go as far as Shakespeare.

Another of his most common sentiments is the brevity and vanity of fame ; he has presented it under every possible form and throughout all his works. It is hard to say whether he speaks his feelings most lively when he stirs up the warrior, or when he sneers over his rotting carcase and jeers at the gilded lies for which he cast himself away.

" There shall they rot—ambition's honour'd fools !
Yes, honour decks the turf that wraps their clay ;
Vain sophistry ! in these behold the tools,
The broken tools that tyrants cast away
By myriads."—

Enthusiasm and misanthropy, the glow of animation and the withering sneer of unutterable scorn, are in him close companions.

He has already begun the work which he afterwards completed, of confounding good with evil.

" In sooth 'twere sad to thwart their noble aim,
Who strike, blest hirelings ! for their country's good,
And die, that living might have proved her shame."

His mind is already matured to an astonishing degree. His philosophy seems almost complete. In his later works, when he strives to look deeper into things than he has done here, he appears often to lose himself, being vague and obscure where he wished to be profound.

" Ah monarchs ! could ye taste the mirth ye mar,
Not in the toils of glory would ye fret :
The hoarse dull drum would sleep, and man be happy yet."

The following verses, entitled 'No More,' have been sent us by a correspondent, as the production of a Nova Scotian. Though originally published in another Province, yet as they possess superior merit, we cordially give them insertion.

" *Les années qui me sont determinees s'en vont, et j'entre dans un sentier d'ou je ne reviendrai plus.*"

" 'No more'—Oh ! what unuttered grief
Dwells in those chill prophetic words,

The Tomb of every warm belief,
 They strike upon the heart's deep chord—
 Like the faint warning of a dream—
 The shadows from some mystic Shore,
 Where Jewels flash—where Roses gleam—
 We hear the wailing tones—' No more !'

' No more '—The Summer Founts may throw
 Their silvery music on the air;
 The Sunset lend its Opal glow
 To skies that seemed before so fair!
 And such a flood of liquid Light
 May rest on Mount, and Sea, and Shore,
 As bathed old Ida's classic height;
 Yet some low voice shall say—' No more !'

' No more '—Throughout the boundless Earth
 They blend with Hope's fallacious dream;
 They echo thro' the haunts of Mirth,
 A whisper of the Past they seem:
 Who hath not heard 'mid Light and Song,
 'Mid Pageantry, and Pride, and Power—
 Those Spirit-voices round him throng,
 That mock the glittering Festal Hour!

The Heart is but a wasting Mine—
 An altar for some Idol kept;
 'Till o'er the desecrated Shrine
 The Storm-gust hath too rudely swept:
 A Pedestal too wildly placed,
 Flooded by every passing wave—
 Recording vows so soon effaced;
 A Temple reared upon the Grave!

The Pest-worm feeds upon the Rose,
 The Violet bears no deathless bloom,
 What tints our Morning-skies disclose!
 What Darkness lingers round the tomb!
 What Memories of buried Love!
 What earnest Tones forever fled!
 What yearnings for the World above!
 What lonely Vigils with the Dead!

Our Dead!—Can such a voice arise
 In Rebel-grief upon the air—
 The Hosts that fill th' Eternal skies,—
 What can they know of Woe or Care!
 Our Dead—Oh! who shall say our Dead!
 Released from this dark Charnel-shore—
 Hath not th' Immortal Spirit fled
 To live—when ' Time shall be no more.'

—

To our next contribution, entitled ' Casual Conversations of Timothy Grass, Esq.,' we would call particular attention, as the beginning of a series embodying a subject of peculiar interest to Nova Scotians, viz. : the importance and advancement of their country, as only to be achieved by their own united endeavours. The want of self reliance, which characterizes us as a people, is happily hit off in the following sketch, and so truthfully that we think it must come home to the hearts of all who give a preference to other lands over their own, and who, instead of trying to raise their birthplace in the eyes of strangers, lose no opportunity in degrading it as a poor country undeserving of their affection and energy. We are always glad when some true son of the soil exposes their want of spirit and patriotism. We welcome our acute correspondent's favor; his clever sketches will plead their own cause :

CASUAL CONVERSATIONS.—No. 1.

SCENE I.—*Morley's Hotel, Trafalgar Square, London.*

Mr. Timothy Grass reading the newspaper. Enter Mr. Longshore Fish.

MR. FISH.—Ha, my dear Mr. Grass, how are you? Pray how long have you been home? And how did you leave all at home, eh?

MR. GRASS.—Really, Mr. Fish, this is a pleasure, to meet such a friend as you in this big metropolis, where one feels all alone in the crowd and turmoil. But do tell me how it happens that such a notorious stay-at-home as our own Fish, has managed to get away from what he calls business?

F.—Accident, my dear sir, pure accident. The truth is some foreign fellows have been poaching on my preserve, and finding there was no power to stop them in our Colonial Courts, I came home to beg the intervention of the authorities here.

G.—Stay a moment. It appears to me we are talking in a mist—a regular Nova Scotia fog. Of course there are no fogs in London or Liverpool, and the thick orange vapour that seems to us to fill the square without, is nothing but an optical illusion. You ask me how long I have been home, and say you came home yourself on a matter of business. Now, my home is Milkfields, Nova Scotia, British North America, and in crossing the Atlantic I came *from* home. And so presume that you likewise have not come *home*, but *from home*.

F.—Well, well, Mr. Grass, you have always some queer crotchet of that sort. But you know very well that we Colonists constantly speak of England as 'home.'

G.—To be sure I do, and the more's the pity, for no country can flourish when the inhabitants don't give it the principal share in their affections, apply to it the most endearing names, and devote their best energies towards developing its capabilities. Why, just consider the mischief of always thinking and speaking of another home remote from our own. If my neighbour loses a crop of wheat by some mischance of the weather, 'oh,' he cries at once, 'this is no country for wheat,' having all the while some vague notion in his head that there are no such vicissitudes where his fathers came from. A poor creature gets his feet frost-bitten from being out of a stormy winter's night in the woods, 'dear me,' groans everybody, 'what a terrible climate we have.' A young Sampson is summoned for a few days drill in the militia, as boldly as any lion he demands of you 'what there is in this Province worth fighting for,' and anon takes up his musket looking like a very sheep, at the thought of being laughed at for *aping the military*. Is it not so?

F.—True enough; but, sir, you don't pretend to say that Nova Scotia is equal in any respect to the mother country?

G.—Yes, but I do though. Not equal certainly as man has made England, but quite equal, and in many respects superior, as regards the gifts of nature. For many centuries, reaching back long before the discovery of America, this country has been the abode of civilised races, viz., our forefathers, who literally put their own shoulders to the wheel throughout the length and breadth of the land. Do the crops never fail here? If not then the *Thunderer* or *Blunderer*—the newspaper I hold in my hand, tells many a false tale, more than it gets credit for. But the people don't whine and talk nonsense, they 'try again and hope for better luck next time.' Then about the cold, why this same paper told us of at least half a dozen persons frozen to death here last winter.

When you came in, I happened to be reading about the militia, and of how short a time it took the —— regiment to elicit the encomiums of the General commanding the district, for their skilful evolutions, good order, and discipline. For ourselves we are unfortunate in always having *too high a standard of excellence* before our eyes. Though no judge of such matters, I have heard that the small army of England is the best disciplined in the world. When our awkward squads turn out, of course they feel doubly awkward from such a contrast.

F.—Then you think it a disadvantage to have too high a standard of excellence?

G.—Yes, provided you don't see how it can be reached. A modern architect despairs of building a pyramid, because all knowledge of the machinery employed by the Egyptians has been lost in the ocean of time. And so, between our real and our imaginary home, there is a great salt-water ocean, which allows results to be transmitted to us without our understanding the means of their accomplishment. Come to the window, and look at this gay Sergeant going along with half a dozen ragamuffins of all heights and figures at his heels. He is recruiting for the army, and those are the raw material of which soldiers are made. Look in a few months time and you would not know them again in the erect, self-possessed, regulars, warning you off Queen Victoria's palings, or mounting guard in the barrack squares. Well, everybody here is familiar with these sights, and therefore no ridicule attaches to embryo attempts, whether in soldiering or *militiaing*—to coin a word.

F.—I see plainly what you are coming to. You are in one of your Socratic humours, and by and bye will be forcing me, after one concession and another, to allow that I ought to have protected my own property, and only appealed to Hercules as a last resource.

G.—You have it exactly. The truth is, sir, I am ashamed to see our wealthy Provincials imposing all this little local police work on the imperial authorities. Who is to know the value of your property as well as yourself, and if you grudge paying the expense of a few keepers, is it likely that people three thousand miles off will care to risk much for your advantage?

F.—But now let me ask you a question. Pray what is it that brings you home—pardon me, I mean *from* home, so often lately?

G.—I come to *learn*, to visit some of my former friends, to attend the agricultural shows. In order to get the whole theory of British farming into the briefest compass, it is probable this time I shall take out a ticket for Professor ——'s lectures; and if I am spared a few years, and fail to make Milkfields as lovely a spot as any on this side of the water, you shall be at liberty to say *home* or *from home*, just as you please.

We have now nearly exhausted the present contents of our drawer, and warmly thanking our correspondents for their efforts in behalf of the 'Provincial,' we take leave of them for a time with the insertion of the following interesting communication which will explain itself:

To the Editor of the Provincial,—

In those days, when from our vast capability in words, and our extreme inefficiency in actions, we Nova Scotians are well known and proportionally esteemed as a little people by our neighbours, I rejoice to see that in your journal you pursue a laudable method of resuscitating the praiseworthy deeds of

our countrymen in days gone by. You thus show what the country has produced—like those who in Central America exhume the gigantic skeletons of an extinct race of Indians. It will be well if the rising generation, here, like their contemporaries in Italy or Greece, shall learn to overlook those who immediately precede them, and draw their examples of energy and unity of purpose from those who trod the stage of action in a more remote period.

In the last, and at the beginning of the present century, Nova Scotians were well known, (even as many of those are now, who leave their native land,) for loyalty, integrity, energy, enterprise, and indeed for all the active virtues which form the character of the good subject and the useful citizen. As an instance of native bravery, and readiness and energy of action, I take the liberty of forwarding to you the following extract from the *Naval Chronicle* for February, 1801. Captain Godfrey, the hero of the tale, is well remembered by many persons living in Queen's County, and not long ago an old gentleman who was personally acquainted with him gave me the benefit of his reminiscences. He described him as a man considerably beyond the ordinary size, of an exceedingly quiet demeanour, and modest and retiring disposition. This will also appear from the 'plain unvarnished' account which he gives of a most gallant action, as well as from the fact that he declined the command of a vessel of war, which was offered him by His Majesty's Government, not long after the action which he describes took place. At the close of the war he disarmed his privateer and entered into the fish and lumber trade, between Liverpool, N. S., and the West Indies. In the year 1803, he died of yellow fever, and was buried near Kingston, Jamaica. No stone marks the spot where 'the hero lies sleeping,' and yet many a man immeasurably his inferior has been honoured by 'storied urn and animated bust,' and enshrined as a hero by the poet and the historian.

NAVAL ENGAGEMENT.

Our readers should be informed that the loyal Province of Nova Scotia (America), having suffered most severely in the early part of the war, from the cruisers of the enemy, fitted out a number of privateers in order to retaliate on, and to extort compensation from the foe. Within these four years, twelve or fifteen private ships of war have been fitted out by the Nova Scotians, and of this number *one half* are owned by the little village of Liverpool, which boasts the honour of having launched the brig *Rover*, the hero of our present relation.

We have been favoured with the following extract of a letter, dated Liverpool, October 17, from Captain Godfrey of the armed brig *Rover*, which contains a very modest relation of a gallant action, that reflects the highest honour on Capt. Godfrey, and the brave men under his command:

'The brig *Rover*, mounting fourteen four pounders, was the present year built and fitted for war at Liverpool in this Province; she sailed under my command the 4th of June last on a cruise against the enemies of Great Britain, being commissioned by his Excellency Sir John Wentworth, Bart. Our crew consisted of fifty-five men and boys, including myself and officers, and was principally composed of fishermen.

On the 17th of the same month in the latitude of 23° N. and longitude 54° W. we fell in with six sail of vessels, whom we soon discovered to be enemies, one being a ship, with four brigs and a schooner; the schooner and one brig shewed sixteen the other six guns. These six vessels drew up together, apparently with an intention of engaging us. On consulting with my ship's company, we determined to bear down and attack them, but so soon as the enemy perceived our intentions, they by signal from the schooner, dispersed, each taking a different course before we got within gun-shot of them. After a few hours chase we took possession of the ship and one of the brigs; the ship proved an American bound

from the South seas and laden with oil, and the brig an American, laden with wine, from Madeira; from them we learned that they had been captured a short time before by a French privateer, which was the schooner in company; that she mounted 16 guns, two of which were nine-pounders and the rest sixes, and carried 155 men; and the other three were American vessels which she had taken, one of which was from the East Indies. Night coming on we were prevented from taking any more of them. On the 10th of September, being cruising near to Cape Blanco, on the Spanish Main, we chased a Spanish schooner on shore and destroyed her. Being close in with the land, and becalmed, we discovered a schooner and three gun-boats under Spanish colours making for us; a light breeze springing up we were enabled to get clear of the land, when it fell calm, which enabled the schooner and gun-boats, by the help of a number of oars, to gain fast upon us, keeping up at the same time a constant fire from their bow guns, which we returned from two guns pointed from our stern; one of the gun-boats did not advance to attack us. As the enemy drew near, we engaged them with muskets and pistols, keeping with oars the stern of the Rover towards them, and having all our guns well loaded with great and small shot, ready against we should come to close quarters. When we heard the commander of the schooner give orders to the two gun-boats to board us one on our larboard bow, and the other on our larboard waist, I suffered them to advance in that position until they came within about fifteen yards, still firing on them with small arms and stern guns; I then manned the oars on the larboard side, and pulled the Rover round so as to bring her starboard broadside to bear athwart the schooners bow, and poured into her a whole broadside of great and small shot, which raked her deck fore and aft while it was full of men ready for boarding. I instantly shifted over on the other side and raked both gun-boats in the same manner, which must have killed and wounded a great number of those on board of them, and done great damage to their boats. I then commenced a close action with the schooner which lasted three glasses, and having disabled her sails and rigging much, and finding her fire grew slack, I took advantage of a slight air of wind to back my head sails, which brought my stern on board of the schooner, by which we were enabled to board her, at which time the gun-boats shoved off, apparently in a very shattered condition. We found her to be the Santa Ritta, mounting ten six-pounders and two twelve-pound carronades, with 125 men. She was fitted out the day before for the express purpose of taking us; every officer on board of her was killed except the officers who commanded a party of twenty-five soldiers; there were fourteen men dead on her deck when we boarded her, and seventeen wounded; the prisoners, included the wounded, amounted to seventy-one. My ship's company, including officers and boys, was only 45 in number, and behaved with that courage and spirit which British seamen always shew when fighting the enemies of their country. It is with infinite pleasure I add that I had not a man hurt; but from the best account I could obtain, the enemy lost 54 men. The prisoners being too numerous to be kept on board, on the 14th ult. I landed them all except eight, taking an obligation from them not to serve against His Majesty until regularly exchanged. I arrived with my ship's company in safety this day at Liverpool, having taken, during my cruise the before mentioned vessels, together with a sloop under American colors bound to Caracoa, a Spanish schooner bound to Porto Cavallo, which have all arrived in this Province, besides which I destroyed some Spanish launches on the coast.

Such records as the above compose the elements of a country's history. We shall be happy to make our Journal the medium of conveying to the future historian, those incidents of bye-gone days which marked that more eventful, because warlike period, that ushered in the peaceful era which distinguishes our own times.

THE CHANNEL ISLANDS.

CHAPTER VII.

THE constitution of the Island of Guernsey is very similar to that of Jersey. It is divided into ten parishes (forming a deanery in the diocese of Winchester). The states consists of twelve jurats, eight rectors, and two constables of each parish, and one hundred and thirty-two douzaniers. The Royal Court has jurisdiction over all the Channel Islands, except Jersey. It was established by King John ; it tries all causes arising in the Island, subject to appeal to the Queen in Council. The Legislative power is in the hands of the States, which are divided into the Administrative States and the Elective States. The former is a general council of the Island, wherein every inhabitant is supposed to be represented. It is composed of the bailiff and twelve jurats, the rectors of parishes, or beneficed clergy, the King's procureur, and a constable from each parish, and is convened by a written notice issued by the bailiff. The Elective States are a body whose duty it is to elect the jurats and the King's Sheriff. The jurats are elected for life and cannot resign. They are chosen from amongst 'the most distinguished, discreet, wise, loyal, and rich of the inhabitants.' Of course during our short stay in Guernsey there was no opportunity of observing the working of its political institutions. We came and went where we pleased, every one seemed industrious and thriving, nobody ever breathed a syllable about politics, and yet see what a great authority says of its political constitution :

'There is no political institution more absurd, unjust, and defective, than the Administrative States of Guernsey. St. Peter's Port possessing two-thirds of the wealth of the Island, has only one vote, and is placed on an equality with the insignificant parish of Torteval. This system requires a deep and searching reform ; the oligarchical character must be annihilated and the States extensively popularised. The best interests of the Island have been sacrificed by the concentration of Legislative power in the hands of the Court and Clergy, whose union drowns the general voice. Guernseymen profess themselves lovers of liberty, but the majority seem enamoured rather of its shadow than its substance.'

From the above it would seem that the Sixties get more than their share of political power. And the officer styled the Bailiff, the President of the Royal Court, seems to hold a power that is next to kingly. I quote again from Duncan's History of Guernsey :

'The Administrative States are summoned by the Bailiff's notice or *billet d'etat*. This notice lays down, not only in the most literal terms, the subject of deliberation and the proposition to be decided, but general remarks and arguments by the Bailiff, who of course advocates and enforces his own particular views. With him every proposition originates, and *no amendment can be proposed*. The members of the State are thus bound totally to adopt or reject whatever emanates from his initiative. The more effectually to stifle the

public voice, the Constables do not give their own personal vote, but that of their respective *douzaines*, a parochial committee, who meet in their own parishes and there resolve on the course to be pursued. This absurd custom strips the States of the character of a deliberative assembly, for though new facts may be stated and arguments brought forward which convince the constables that their *douzainers* have come to an erroneous conclusion, they are bound to record the vote they have given. Under such a system eloquence and reason would be useless, hence it follows that not the slightest approach to oratory is ever detected in the senate of Guernsey.'

Mr. Duncan writes feelingly, and there seems to be a good deal in what he says, for it appears that the people must take just what the Bailiff thinks good for them, or go without anything. I do not think we should like that style of thing in Nova Scotia, but still it is, except in a historical point of view, a profitless waste of time to discourse upon the political condition of other countries. We are very apt to pity the people of foreign states, and to compassionate them for being subject to bad laws and vexatious institutions, while all the time these same people having been born in these laws, and grown up under and accustomed to these institutions, find no fault with them, or perhaps even go so far as to be perfectly satisfied with them, and to have a little pity to spare for us in return. We speak with horror of a despotism, the word always conjuring up to our mind's eye the idea of an hereditary tyrant whose will is supreme over the lives and liberties of his subjects—a sort of 'King Pippin,' whose daily amusement is to ride forth with a spear and impale a dozen or so of common people. Yet countries subject to these 'despots' flourish and improve, their commerce expands, the arts and sciences attain high perfection, and really when you go among the people you meet with happy faces and hear very few chains clanking. Nay some of them might perhaps retort that it was true their sovereign had a little more power than was right, but other countries have their tyrants whose power was not as beneficently wielded as that of their monarch. The hereditary sovereign, sure of his position, though he likes to have his own way, and now and then when his digestion goes wrong is too fond of the tune of 'clar de kitchen,' yet generally finds it to his interest to improve the condition of his subjects, to increase his revenues by fostering trade, to adorn his capital, to encourage art. But the countries which flatter themselves upon their wonderful freedom may frequently be seen held in bondage by a demagogue or a mob, whose thralldom is the more galling because the interests of the faction clash decidedly with those of the people at large. The Romans were slaves under Imperial Augustus; yet Rome grew in size and in importance. Brick gave way to marble within the city, and abroad the Roman name was feared more than it had ever been in times of greater internal freedom. The respect they inspired abroad atoned greatly for the want of free action at home. Russia is despotically governed, and Siberia is doubtless not the sort of place one would like to be compelled to

reside in whenever the Czar told one to go, especially if one's constitution was rickety. But though now and then the Czar may take [it into] his imperial head to give a few of his subjects a personal and practical mining education, still on the whole he finds it his interest to encourage his people, to foster the arts and sciences, and to promote the well-being of those around him.

Far be it from me to say that I think a despotism a good form of government, that is unless I was Emperor or Czar myself, in which case no doubt my virtuous principles would introduce a sort of millenium, and when I died my regretful subjects would erect a statue to me in the market place, inscribed to 'the Good King.' But supposing ordinary sort of people to occupy the throne, I admit that despotisms are improper forms of government; at the same time I maintain that we waste a great deal of pity on people that do not stand in need of it. I doubt much whether many a Russian or Austrian would not deem the control of his Emperor much more endurable than the bullying of a demagogue. And many of the Anglo-Saxon institutions, of which Englishmen and their descendants and offshoots are so proud, would cause a revolution if attempted to be introduced among the 'poor enslaved people' of the European Continent. The people themselves for whose benefit the attempt was made spurning them as unsuited to their nature.

Thus Mr. Duncan in his history from which I have made the above extracts, excites himself because the Guernsey people *will* be contented. Like Canning's Knifegrinder they are 'sordid, degraded, reprobate, unfeeling,' because they have 'no story to tell.' No one will deny that the constitution of the Channel Islands appears sufficiently ridiculous; but he would be a foolish British Minister who would venture to go further than to privately express his opinion upon it. Those little gallant bantams would rather give up their lives than that same absurd constitution. Not many years ago they had a stand up fight with England, upon the question of whether the writ of Habeas Corpus 'ran' into the Island of Jersey. Though as thoroughly English as if forming part of England's own soil, they will not now after centuries of loyalty on one side and protection on the other, after hundreds of years of mutual intercourse and intermarriage, adopt the British jurisprudence, or even the British language in their public assemblies and Legislatures. The following passage from Duncan's History shews that the bulk of the people still adhere to the French language in private life, and that the introduction of the English language among certain classes of society so far from tending to Anglicise the laws and institutions, has as yet only had the effect of excluding themselves from a share in the management of public affairs:

'The conducting of the proceedings both of the State and Royal Court in the French language is becoming annually more adverse to the election as jurats of many of the principal inhabitants, who, receiving their education in England, do not speak French with sufficient fluency to enable them to sit on

the bench, although perhaps they may be better qualified than others who are elected. This is an evil which must continue to increase, English being now entirely the language of the upper classes in their families; indeed it is almost generally spoken by all ranks in the town of St. Peter's Port.'

I have observed that in Jersey the French language is spoken by the upper classes equally with English, and that it is not at all an unfrequent thing to hear a sentence begun in one language and finished in the other, and a remark addressed in English answered in French, or *vice versa*. In Guernsey we never noticed this. English was universally spoken among the 'Sixties' and so far I can corroborate the historian. But among the body of the people the French language or rather the Channel Island *patois* prevails, and the Anglo-Saxon agitator mourns as he sees a happy and a thriving people, who turn up their noses at British institutions, cling with affection to their own absurd laws and customs, and will persist even now in the nineteenth century in calling a hat a *chapeau*. How disheartening it must be to this benevolent agitator to see a people so lost as to be happy under such degrading circumstances! What must be his feelings of shame for his fellow men; how he must long to set up a free press and put things right when he reads such a paragraph as the following:

'In the Anglo Norman Isles feudal tenure, civil as well as military, still exists, and although much modified, imbues their institutions with a degree of romantic interest, not a little heightened by the strict conservation of superannuated names, forms and observances. The *Seigneur* is still designated by the territorial title of his *fief*, still collects his rents from *franc tenants*, *bordiers*, and other holders of land by the intervention of his *grangier*, and still holds his petty feudal court, his *seneschal* presiding over 'eleven *vavasseurs* together with a *sergent*, a *greffier*, and three *prévôts*,' receiving homage, hearing pleas, and framing quaint old ordinances in pure old Norman dialect, as though the era of the conquest were an affair of yesterday.'

The language of the Channel Islanders is said to be 'a good old dialect, which during the last century at least has proceeded in a steady course of gathering like a rolling snow-ball, from everything it encountered, and increasing its vocabulary by compounds of Latin, Welsh, Scotch, English, Italian, added to the original stock, which was Norman French, making altogether a very expressive and by no means an inharmonious *patois*.' A student fresh from the classes of the latest Parisian master, who might flatter himself that by the aid of a moustache, full-bosomed waistcoats, long-waisted coats and plaited trousers, he 'could pass anywhere as a Frenchman,' would find himself at a loss among the natives of Guernsey or Jersey. If he sat down at the humble board of one of the farmers, it may be doubted whether the lessons of his Parisian master would enable him to comprehend that he was asked for a piece of pudding if his host addressed him with '*Horle me un gobbin de chet houichepott la*,' nor if requested to *Frume l' use*, would he with all his politeness be likely to get up and 'shut the door.' A writer on this subject gives the following Guernsey words, which he pronounces very *comprehensive*:

Un bad' la goule.	A chatter box.
La bedi bédoue.	Stomach ache.
Cod pouagnair.	To thump.
Chafernaeux.	Squeamish.
Guerlair.	To squall.
Equagshie.	Stiff-bruised.
Declaquinair.	To hurry off.
Deroequair.	To fall down.
Dedjougliai.	Out of order.

It is to be feared that the French masters and mistresses who visit Nova Scotia do not teach the language perfectly, if such words as the above are to be admitted into the vocabulary. The writer speaks of them as 'comprehensive,' meaning, I suppose, that their sound is peculiarly expressive of their meaning. Well, I fear that a man might suffer for a long time with his *bedi bedoue* before I should think of getting him a little burnt brandy, nor if another individual complained that he had been *cod pouagnair-ed* and felt *equagshie*, do I think I should know what remedy, legal, moral, or physical, to recommend. It may be doubted whether the *πολυλοισβιο θαλασσις* of old Homer does not far exceed in comprehensiveness and expressiveness the uncouth and strange looking jargon of the Channel Island peasantry.

Occasionally in losing our way, or wishing to obtain some information from persons whom we met in the country on our walks, we would put a question or two in French, but never could we understand the answer. If we were really in want of information, as for instance in regard to our route, the only course to pursue was to put the question in a form that would require a simple negative or affirmative. Having obtained this—the no or yes—we let the rest of what the party inquired at chose to add go for nothing, and then put another question so framed as at length, by eliciting simple affirmative or negative answers, to ascertain what we were in search of. Those who are acquainted with the French language (as that term is generally understood) will be able, from the specimens of their *comprehensiveness* given above, to form some idea as to whether it was *our* fault that we could not understand the Guernsey dialect. The following list of Guernsey phrases and words will still further assist in the development of that idea. I shall give the 'true French' by the side of the Guernesiais, so that even those who understand neither may see by the eye that they are tolerably dissimilar :

GUERNESIAIS.	FRENCH.	ENGLISH.
Remouque tē.	Depeche toi.	Make haste.
Kique tu fais ilot.	Que fais tu la.	What are you doing.
Vi t'en agniet.	Viens aujourd'hui.	Come to-day.
Amarre mē chunna.	Attache-moi cela.	Tie this for me.
Echippe mē chunna.	Iette moi cela.	Throw me that.
Ah que t'es geurgi pountant	" "	How cross you are.
Ché nott lavin agniet.	" "	It is our washing-day.
Aiguichier le bec.	Se faire un appetit.	To get an appetite.

Aguiet.	Anjoindhui.	'To-day.
Abimair.	Gronder.	To scold.
Bragi.	Ivre.	Drunk.
Blliaze.	Brme.	Fog.
Bouket.	Sean.	Bucket.
Brioche.	Couteau a chasse.	Claspknife.
Crastillair.	Etinceler.	'To sparkle.
Cauches.	Bas.	Stockings.
Chtinchin.	Celui-ci.	This one.
Devantè	'Tablier.	Apron.
Drissair.	Glisser.	To slide.
Etrain.	Paille.	Straw.
Garce.	Fille.	Girl.
Gauche.	Gateau.	Cake.
Guervai.	Faché.	Vexed.
Glliannair.	Cucillir.	'To gather flowers.
Haistair.	Hisser.	To hoist.
Kerouin.	Vaurieu.	Rascal.

And so on through the alphabet, through which I could go if not afraid of wearying my readers too much, and if they are half as tired of this article as I am myself, there is some fear of their patience being overstrained. It may be said perhaps with reference to many words given above, that although they do not appear to correspond with their French synonyms, still it may be that there *are* few French words with which they do not correspond, for instance that though the Guernsey word *brïoche* is properly represented by the French *couteau a' chasse*, still there may be a French word *brïoche* moreover; but French scholars will know that this is not the case in any of the expressions given above. The Guernsey words do not exist in the pure French language; many of them are of local coinage, some are corrupt French, and many it is easy to see are only Frenchified English. Thus *bouket* is evidently the English *bucket*. *Haistair* is merely *hoist* with a French termination. *Houiche-pott* for puddings comes from *hotchpot*, as we elegantly and not inexpressively term it *hodgepodge* and affectionately for shortness *hodge*,—and it is said that a person describing an apology made to him by an offending neighbour said “A'vint en *flag-a-truce* me le dire.”

At the risk of fatiguing those of my readers who not understanding French cannot compare the pure idiom with its Guernsey offshoot, I shall give some rhymes, taken, I believe, from the only book printed in Guernsesiais. They contain a sketch of a parish meeting, convened in the Town Church, to take into consideration the proposed plan of pulling down old Fountain Street and building the present one. The old one was so narrow that in some parts the people could shake hands across the street from the upper story. Those who understand French will, I think, be amused in endeavouring to find the meaning of some of the words, and tracing their connection with the mother tongue. Those who do not, can skip over the ‘poetry,’ or lay it by till they have learnt that beautiful language.

Un matin coum j'étais au marchi(1) dans le skweeze,(2)
 J'œu la kllioque,(3) qui sounait coum si ch'tait pour l'Eglise ;
 J'œu d'ndandit la raison á une femme qui passait,
 ' Ah! mafai,' me dit alle, ' ch'est pour pu que j' n'en sait.'
 Aussitôt j'rencontri un Moussieu d' Guernezi,
 Qui kwarrait(4) coum si l'Gyable(5) étai souventre(6) li.
 ' Mais pourqu'est che done ? jli demande. ' Pourqu'esteche donc tant d' tripo?(7)
 ' Nous dirait qu' ch'est l'allarme, et k' l'ennî est ilo.'(8)
 I' s'arrête un p'tit brin, pour reprendre s'n halaine,
 Et mettant ses dacux mains d' chaque côtai d'sa bedaine;(9)
 ' J'allais scie vous,' m'dit-il, ' et j'y-allais pour vou keure,(10)
 ' Une assembliaie d' Pâresse s'en va s'faire toute al'heure.
 ' Chest pour affairê d'etat, et n'faut pas y manquair,
 ' Jusqu'es vieilles femmes s'en mêlent, et nouz en pâlc au fouar.'(11)
 J'm'en fu donc à l'Eglise vais chu qui s'y passait,
 Et j'y vis bièn des gens qu'étaient là en mouaché;(12)
 Il y avait la Douzaine et les grands connétables ;
 Des Justiciers ossin, et kik autres notabllés.
 I'sàgissait d'abbatre une route,de vieilles maisons,
 Pour élargir la rue a l'endrait, où il sont
 Des langues de tchifouarait qu'aime a s'ouir berdanguair (13)
 Disaient un tas d'niollin(14) coum autant d'ânesbegars ;
 Mais il y avait kikzuns(15) qui pâlait assai bien,
 Et l'avis qu'i donnaient est d'accord auve le mien.
 Pour ki donc démolir tant d'maisons en en kair
 Oú les péres do nos grandpéres magaient leur soupe de lard ?
 Oú toutes les vieilles bouannes gens, d'leux f'nêtre de galtas(16)
 De chaque côtai d'la rue, sans le moindré embarras,
 S'entre donnaient la main — mais che'nést pas d'même acht-heure,
 Chu temps là est passai, et le cœur sensible en pllieure,(17)
 Ah paure Rue d'la Fontaine! j'en sie toute en colêre.
 Adi tous tes rakouâins!(18) Adi ta varvokère!(19)
 Adî tes bicaux parfums, qui regâlerit les passans !
 J'n' les oubllierai jamais, quand je vivrai mes chent ans !
 Et j'abuserai les gens qui t'êront démolie
 En souhaitant leux goule bien stouffai(20) de bouallie.(21)

(1) Marchi, *market*. (2) Skweeze, *crowd*. (3) Kllioque, *bell*. (4) Kwarrait, *running*.
 (5) Gyable, *decil*. (6) Souventre, *after him*. (7) Tripo, *fuss*. (8) Ilo, *there*. (9) Bedaine,
belly. (10) Keure, *to scold*. (11) Fouar, *oven*. (12) Mouache, *numbers*. (13) Berdanguair,
to chatter. (14) Niollin, *nonsense*. (15) Kikzuns, *some people*. (16) Enkair, *entirely*.
 (17) Galtas, *garret*. (18) Pllieure, *iceps*. (19) Rakouains, *corners*. (20) Varvokere, *mire*.
 (21) Stouffai, *stuffed*. (22) Bouallie, *pap*.

TALES OF OUR VILLAGE.—No. 8.

CHAPTER IV.

MAJOR T. on obtaining his promotion, with additional means, felt still more inclined to pursue his pleasures, which for a brief period he had given up,

partly from obedience to custom and partly from necessary family duties. As, however, his domestic concerns required more superintendence than he was willing to devote to them, he engaged the services and installed as house-keeper the young buxom widow of a sergeant in his own regiment. Mary Ann Taylor at the time of her husband's death was only eighteen; possessed of that vulgar beauty (if such a term may be applied to beauty) which consists in bright eyes, red and white complexion, and a rounded and healthful form—the beauty that attracts men without the purer feelings of refinement and poetry—those who care not for soul in the countenance or aught of that speaking levelness which often illuminates the plainest face. Irish by birth, and speaking the brogue of her native isle, with a warmth and richness that would have gratified the most patriotic of her countrymen, Mary Taylor was somewhat of a belle in the regiment, and exulted not a little in her charms and distinction. The husband who had been fortunate enough to secure such a prize, died immediately after their arrival in Barbadoes, and Mary was determined to make better use of her liberty than she had previously done, and look above the ranks for a second partner. While those who observed her new formed ambition marvelled at her accepting such a situation in Major T.'s family, (for with her needle she was able to support herself comfortably in her own lodgings) Mary herself saw but in the acceptance of this post, a dawning of even greater luck than she had ventured to hope for. Women are proverbially quick-witted, and they need not the aid of education or experience to enable them to form their calculations as to the main chance, when their hearts are troubled by no qualms of charity and principle. The sergeant's widow had made but the first move in a dangerous game, whose success was more ominous than its defeat, but she rarely held parley with conscience, so all the warnings of that mysterious monitor, if they were heard, fell unheeded. From the first week of her residence in the Major's family, a great change came over his domestic arrangements. She was a woman of tact, activity, and knowledge of human nature; she had set out with one object in view, and to it she bent all her faculties; she had pondered over the weapons she had to use; she had youth and good looks in her favour, and trusted very implicitly in the adage which briefly comprehends the immovability of her sex—

“When woman wills she will you may depend on 'L.”

And the sequel will prove the truth of her conclusions. But in this early stage of the proceedings, she was only the neat and active housekeeper, devoting herself to the interests of her master and his children, economizing in every department, always keeping a bright room and a well spread table for the Major's return, perhaps pausing oftener than was necessary for one performing the duties of the domestic functionary, to acquaint her master with a report of the day's proceedings, and giving an additional smile or two to heighten the effect of her suggestions. The Major was nothing loth to prolong these con-

versations, he began to think a housekeeper a far better family appendage than a wife; his home never seemed to him so cheerful or pleasant as it had done since the rule of its new mistress. There was always some chance gossip or household incident to which the rich brogue of the widowed Mary gave increased zest, and the Major often found himself thinking that mother wit, or uncultured abilities, gave greater charm to conversation than all the refinements of education or accomplishments. His children were also well attended to, their father's every wish was consulted and gratified with regard to their dress, employment, or amusement, and Major T. soon discovering that the task had fallen into abler hands than his own, gave his new housekeeper unlimited control over themselves and their pursuits; but the power was never abused, the children attached themselves to her, as children ever will to one who cares for their comfort and participates in their troubles or amusements. The wiliest woman of the world never played her cards with more consummate skill and forethought than did Mary Taylor, though she had never got beyond the pages of '*Reading made easy*,' until she entered the family of Major T.

We have lost sight of poor Katrine during this brief description of one who was destined to have an immense influence over her future fate. She remained in the same state as on the first day after the stroke which deprived her of reason. Requiring no compulsory confinement, she preferred solitude, would sit for hours gazing vacantly on the ground, and anon walk up and down her room, uttering broken sentences, which told that thought had wandered to happier days and brought back an echo of things far away. She was perfectly helpless, requiring the amount of care bestowed upon a young child, but she was docile and obedient. Sometimes she would turn over the pages of a book, apparently reading them, but a glance at the listless face told one there was no soul left to enter into communings with other minds. The ritual of her church seemed to afford her the greatest interest, and in solitude she would repeat in a low tone its aves and prayers, and appear comforted by the repetition. She wandered from room to room, or out upon the green lawn, and plucked with childish carelessness the bright flowers, which were thrown down as recklessly. She would walk with her children, and smile vacantly as she watched their sports and heard their merry laughter, though no glance or word gave token of sympathy or affection for them; but she would stand longer and gaze more fixedly at the window from which her child was hurled to his death. It seemed to possess a strange fascination for her—she would stretch out her arms, as if in the endeavour to catch something, and then gaze with a look in which somewhat of interest and agony were blended, down into the depth below, and seem as though she still saw a tiny form struggling with its last foe, and then a low sad wail would rise up from the depths of that darkened heart, but before its sound could die away she would look up once more with her idle smile as if to ask from whom proceeded the lamentation. And

so days and months passed away, and the once bright star of a thousand eyes still passed through life apparently a confirmed imbecile. Major T. was kinder even than in the early days of their wedded life, but the tones that would have brought such happiness then were only heard when it was too late for them to heal or gladden. His words of greeting were returned with a child-like smile, but she retained his hand within her grasp, and seemed delighted with his caresses or conversation. She would lay aside anything he had touched or given her, and she would look sometimes into his face with an awakening glance as if memory had touched some old tune in her heart, whose notes were not altogether forgotten. But she was neither impatient for his coming or grieved at his departure, his presence appeared to gratify her, but further than this the most sanguine could discern no ray of awakening reason. She had only one apparent feeling, that of aversion to her new attendant, Mary Taylor. She seemed to regard her with distrust from her first appearance, was uneasy in her presence, and reluctant to accept service or attention from her. Well aware was the new housekeeper of this only glimpse of reason her mistress evinced, and bitterly did she make her rue her aversion in the days that were to come. But now all was kindness and care, every want anticipated, every comfort attended to. The most affectionate and anxious of her friends had they been there to counsel, could not have desired a more careful or kind attendant, and all who knew anything of her conduct with regard to the inmates of his family, congratulated the Major, on having so valuable an attendant to take charge of his children and administer to the requirements of his wife. The Major was very willing to attest to their truth, and the sagacious widow seemed likely to attain a better character than had ever before been bestowed upon her by those who were acquainted with the discord that had prevailed in the domestic circle of the late Sergeant Taylor.

Things thus went on smoothly and cheerfully with Major T., his children were growing up to amuse him in his home hours, and still the resorts of gaiety and festivity welcomed his coming. The existence of his wife was a matter of indifference to him, as she neither interfered with his plans or made him feel that he was bound to her by a tie that knew no legal severance. His sojourn therefore in the West Indies proved rather agreeable to him than otherwise, with promotion and increased pay, with jolly friends, and a pattern housekeeper at his quarters, Major T. was the envy of his brother officers—benedicts as well as bachelors.

Time passed on and brought little change to the family, until within a few months of the departure of the regiment from Barbadoes, when Bertha, one of the Major's little daughters, contracted the fever of the country and fell a victim to its violence. He was thus deprived one by one of the children whose birth he had looked upon as a cause of irritation, but whom natural feelings of humanity had compelled him to love. It was the saddest proof of

the total aberation of Katrine's mind, to witness the indifference she manifested at the death of her child. She looked on the marble brow and sealed eyes of the little girl lying so still and moveless in her gloomy coffin, but she showed no tokens of recognition of the presence of death, no manifestation of sorrow for the loss she had sustained. No! the once fond, devoted mother, could look calmly and carelessly upon the form of her dead child, nor feel one throb of the agony so tumultuous when called upon to bear similar trial in former years. Only when Mary Taylor, who had been most assiduous in her attention to the child during her illness, came near the coffin and shed tears over the form of its quiet inmate, was anything like feeling manifested, but then Mrs. T. pushed the housekeeper sternly from her place, and assumed for herself the task of watching by her child.

The little girl was laid beneath the green sod of that bright western land, slumbering there far from her other kindred save the infant brother whom the darkest cruelty had hurried to an early tomb. Soft breezes fanned the flowers that grew upon their graves, lovely types of the sleepers beneath.

Soon after the death of his daughter, the corps to which Major T. belonged was ordered home to recruit, and it was with no ordinary feelings of delight that all who belonged to it looked forward to seeing the shores of fair old England again. It was many a year since they had looked upon that blessed land. Major T. had left it little more than a boy, a light-hearted, indolent cadet, fresh from home and the endearments of domestic life, and now he was returning an altered and careworn man; the sport of many an evil passion, with a conscience troubled by many acts of selfishness and sin; yet he was glad indeed to return once more to the scenes of his youth and the friends of his childhood. His birthplace was in the lovely county of Devonshire, and thither he repaired with his wife and children, not omitting his housekeeper also, who now seemed indispensable to his comfort. Time had wrought many changes with his friends, since he last dwelt among them: the dearest had passed away to the better land, the gayest had grown less brilliant, the lightest of heart careworn; but in none was the change so apparent as in himself; he left when a reckless boy, with disposition undeveloped, with passions in abeyance; he returned old in heart, the slave of evil desires, too weak to resist his own bad passions, and consequently an easy prey to the designs and control of others. And his downward course had even already brought its punishment in the loss of the quiet conscience, in the continued upbraiding of his own bitter feelings. But the warm welcome that awaited him from those at home led him back to days of peace and innocence for the time, and in the affectionate greeting his children received from his family, the Major's vanity was soothed and his paternal pride and ambition aroused.

Mary Taylor, however, did not resign any of her influence, she was still retained as an attendant on his children and his wife, who also accompanied

him to his father's home. There she was received with all the kindness and sympathy that could be extended to one in her unhappy situation and as the wife of so near and dear a relative. She continued harmless and unobtrusive, rarely speaking, and when she did, only to sigh in her own German language some faint idea retained from former times, when life to her was Eden without the serpent's trail.

Major T. remained with his regiment for some time in England, but he was again ordered on foreign service, and the place of his destination was Ceylon. For one who cared so little for the things and occupants of his own home, it was an arduous task to think of removing his family to that distant land, and his resolution was soon formed to leave them behind. Arthur was placed at a military school, preparatory to his entering upon his father's profession, and Julia was also left in England for her education, under the watchful superintendance of her paternal relations. The next in order to be disposed of was his wife, and Major T., after consulting with physicians, decided that the best and wisest course would be to leave the unhappy lady in the ward and guardianship of a lunatic asylum. There were few who would not have decided that the course pursued by the man of the world was the most humane, as well as the least troublesome. She took neither pleasure nor interest in things animate or inanimate, she was dead to the voice of affection as to that of censure, and if there were any prospect that her condition could be improved or her mind strengthened, the surest way to ensure such a result was to leave her under the charge of persons skilful and experienced in the treatment of lunacy.

Katrine was therefore transferred from the protection of her husband to that of the nurses and physicians, in a household devoted to the accommodation of persons deprived of reason; and with these preliminaries arranged, and his whole family taken as it were off his hands, by the assistance of others, there was surely no need for him to retain Mary Taylor in his service, but he was persuaded that life would be comfortless without the attention of his house-keeper to brighten it, and, though secretly, he secured her a passage in the frigate with himself, and departed in her society to his East Indian home.

It is a painful task to trace how step by step man sinks from his first high estate until he is plunged in inextricable evil. We have no disposition to trace out the downward course of the unstable Englishman; how with a field clear, and by artful endeavours, Mary Taylor acquired an immense influence over his mind and his affections; how he forgot everything—the pride of birth, the rank of the British officer, the ties of blood and honour, the high principle that ought ever to characterize the gentleman, the truth and virtue that should ever be the guiding stars of our existence, to ally his fate with one his inferior in station, refinement, and birth, to link his future independence and happiness to a coarse vulgar woman, with tact enough to gain her end, but with too little

control over her temper to enjoy her reign unmolested. In an evil hour Major T. yielded to the claims she was beginning to establish on him, and from the hour in which he did so her influence was unbounded and perpetual.

On their arrival at Ceylon, Major T. procured private lodgings and installed Mary Taylor as mistress of them. She had all she required of money and attention; at first he was shy of appearing with her in public, but gradually as her power increased and he grew hardened in evil practice, he threw off all restraint, and she was frequently seen accompanying him in his drives or walks. But this was not enough for her ambitious desires, she not only wished to possess the luxury and care he bestowed upon her, she determined the world should know she enjoyed them. With this in view, soon after their arrival at Ceylon, she hinted to the Major the propriety of disannulling his previous marriage, either by reporting the death of his wife or procuring some legal separation. This request the Major was by no means willing to accede to; marriage had not set so well upon his fancy, and he was not willing to try a second experiment. He was perfectly satisfied with the present arrangement of things, and fancied the would-be Mrs. T. should be the same. But the lady was determined to persevere in her endeavours to reign acknowledged owner of the Major's name, yet her influence was not rivetted securely enough to press matters much further. Though Major T. was infatuated with her, so much so that he would unwillingly have renounced her claims, his was not an acquiescence that was to be won through affection. Like all selfish and unprincipled persons he was powerless before a determined will. He dreaded the sneers of the world far more than the reproach of his own conscience. Once let any one be in possession of a secret that affects the fair name of such a man, and he becomes a slave to the breast of those who own it. Until he acknowledged her to all as his wife, this woman felt she had no absolute power over Major T. He could yet shake her off when he pleased, and consign her to the low position in which he at first found her. She had as yet only persuasion to use, but she looked forward to the day when she could bind him by the strong power of fear and make him her obedient slave in all things. Did the Major explore the country for a few days, she was sure to make it appear that it was necessary she should accompany him, which she accordingly did, and thus step by step she made herself the constant companion of his existence, perpetuating her influence through his very selfishness, to which she continually ministered, until he began to feel that life would be a very poor affair indeed, if he had not the attentions and society of Mary Taylor to brighten it.

We have no inclination to follow her through all her manœuvres and wiles, nor him through the growth and strengthening of evil inclinations, and renunciation of truth and honour. The task would be a painful one, and the recital would be of little interest and less benefit to the reader. A downward career is ever a dangerous one. We will not follow it even in imagination.

Tidings from his English home came at intervals to the Major, during his lengthened residence in the East. His son grew to manhood and entered upon the military profession. Julia was still at school, and from her letters and miniature seemed the type of a good and gentle woman. Sad tidings also came, telling that father and mother had both bidden farewell to earth—that all near ties were diminishing for the far off exile. And perhaps not the least annoying intelligence that came over the blue waters, was, that his forgotten wife, in the quiet home she had learned to like, was in the possession of excellent health, and improving though slightly in mental light. Again the Major imagined himself hardly used by her protracted existence, but he felt nothing of the burning disappointment and rage that filled the heart of her who now completely ruled his every movement. With each fresh account of Mrs. T.'s improvement her indignation increased, and all the evil passions of her ungovernable heart were aroused. Her temper lost the placidity it had assumed in the early days of her acquaintance with the Major, and she now governed him more by the weapons of wrath than those of endearment. Still he rebelled not—a naturally indolent disposition joined to the luxury of the East, the increase of years and their consequent infirmities, gave him little inclination to contest long with such a superior power. Only in one point he would not yield, that of going through the mock ceremony of a marriage with her; he represented to her the disgrace and failure it would entail on both, were the fraud discovered, which it inevitably must be, by those who knew them in the garrison, or had friends at home to enquire into the truth of any assertion; and at last, yielding to the reasonableness of what he urged, she forebore to press him further, but not until she had obtained his solemn promise that after the departure of the regiment from Ceylon, he would retire on half-pay, and seeking some foreign land far from the prying inquiries of old associates, proclaim her to the world as the veritable Mrs. T.

WISE SAWS AND MODERN INSTANCES.—REVIEW.*

JUDGE Halliburton's book has now been for some time before the public, and Englishmen, Americans, and Colonists, have recorded fully and freely their opinion of its merits. As one of the few works written by a Nova Scotian, apart from any excellence of its own, we are bound to notice it, and to furnish those of our readers who have not perused it, with an idea of its wisdom and its worth. The Sayings and Doings of Sam Slick, the Clockmaker, have been

* Sam Slick's Wise Saws and Modern Instances, or What He Said, Did, or Invented. PHILADELPHIA: Blanchard & Lea. 1853.

for many years familiar and popular to the reading world. When the author first conceived the idea of telling plain truths in the quaint and comic language of a Yankee pedlar, the novelty of the plan soon gained for him immense popularity; but, as with other 'modes,' when custom had familiarized the mind with it, a second attempt in the same style was less successful, until at length the sameness wearied, and former admirers gave more of censure than praise. But variety in book-making is easier talked of than attained. When a writer has traced out a peculiar path for himself it is difficult for him to walk in another, and the author of the 'Clockmaker' has proved the truth of this assertion by his imperfect success in works of a graver nature, such as 'The Bubbles of Canada,' 'Rule and Misrule,' and others, which his prolific pen has given to the world within the law few years. He is more at home when metamorphosed into 'Sam Slick,' that keen judge of 'human natur,' and expounder of things wise and witty; and although there may be too much sameness in the style, still to us his books always seem like old friends with new faces, each character serving only to heighten the charm of the others.

In the work now under consideration, 'Wise Saws and Modern Instances,' we have met with much that is original and commendable. Mr. Slick here comes before us in a new character, that of 'Commissioner to report privately to the President of the United States concerning the Fisheries on the shores of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and P. E. Island.' In this capacity he embarks in a vessel connected with the fishing interest, and his book is a detail of what he 'did, said, and invented,' during the time he was occupied in that department. As usual, he hits pretty hard the foibles and shortcomings of his fellow countrymen, as well as mankind in general; but we have to acknowledge that the satire is too often merited; the sting we feel tells us the lash has touched a sore place, and *Bluenoses*, whom even Mr. Slick avers are not 'potatoe headed at any rate,' have the good sense not to show too plainly how sensibly they feel the castigation.

In the chapter entitled 'Our Colonies and Sailors,' we find a great many home truths that might be studied with advantage by both Colonists and Englishmen, aye and it would be better if the author himself would bear in mind and practice his own preaching. Judge Halliburton is too anxious to forget his Colonial birth and connection, when among the literary and aristocratic of Great Britain, taking occasion to deery his native land as unimportant—'a poor country'—from which he would gladly emigrate were it even as a convict. When one of the very few Nova Scotians that are known beyond the borders of their own land, thus wilfully traduces his birth place, and makes it contemptible in the eyes of Englishmen, why should we expect greater consideration from those who are unacquainted with our character or resources, and incapable of appreciating the virtues of the soil or its inhabitants. There is much truth in the paragraph quoted below, but the author,

for the reasons we have mentioned, is not exactly the person from whom such remarks come with efficacy or good grace :

‘ Every Englishman, from a Member of Parliament, that addresses you by letter Halifax, Nova Scotia, Upper Canada, and a Governor that has nothin’ to do now but sign his name to papers and talk of his measures, who has no measure but what he left at his tailor’s in London, down to Jack Tar, says, ‘ *our Colonies,*’ and thinks he is part owner of these possessions, and looks down on the poor outlandish provincials with a condescendin’ air of superiority.

Well, the Colonists look upon all these wiseacres with the same feelings of pity as men, who are not only thick-headed but wrong-headed, but simple people who don’t know what they are talking about. *Such folks with such feelings aint likely to benefit each other.* The organization is wrong. They are two people but not one. *It should’nt be England and her Colonies,* but they should be *integral parts of one great whole*—all counties of Great Britain. There should be no taxes on Colonial produce, and the Colonies should not be allowed to tax British manufactures. All should pass free, as from one town to another in England, the whole of it one vast home market from Hong Kong to Labrador.

They should be represented in Parliament, help to pass English laws, and shew them what laws they wanted themselves. All distinctions should be blotted out forever. It should be no more a bar to a man’s promotion, as it is now, that he lived beyond the seas, than livin’ the other side of the channel : it should be our navy, our army, our nation. That’s a great word, but the English keep it to themselves, and Colonists have no nationality, they are like our free niggers ; they are emancipated, but they haint the same social position as the whites. The fetters are off, but the caste, as they call it, to India, still remains. *Colonists are the pariahs of the Empire.* They have no place, no station, no rank. Honours don’t reach them. Coronations are blank days to them. No brevets go across the water, except to the English officers who are on *foreign service in our Colonies.* No knighthood is known there, no stars, no aristocracy, no nobility. They are a mixed race ; they have no blood, &c.’

It is but natural that this feeling will be manifested by Englishmen, when Colonists like Judge Halliburton acknowledge the *pariah* brand, and forget that a birthplace and a home in one of *our Colonies* is equal to paternity and position in the mother country. Before the learned judge distinguishes himself again at dinners and other public places in England, we would counsel him to reperuse his own wise saws, and teach us by example as well as by precept.

There is one admirable hit at the Yankees in the chapter we have just quoted from. A sailor is conversing with Mr. Slick on his travels and experiences, and mentions the ship Bellerophon, pronounced by him ‘ Billyruffian,’ which, he says, ‘ was christened Billy after King William—God bless him ! who was a sailor to the back bone, and a ruffian to frighten the Frenchmen and Yankees.’

‘ Easily scared the Yankees, aint they ? sais I.’

‘ Well sir, said I, they fight well, but they are like the Irish.’

'How is that? says I, for there is nothing like hearin' what folks have to say. *Its only your friends and your enemies that tell you of your faults.*'

'Well, sir, if three Irishmen get hold of you they fight like devils, one to box you, and two to see fair play, by joinin' him and knockin' you down. And when the Yankees have a ship of heavier metal, and more guns than you, there's no denyin of it, they do fight like men.'

Mr. Slick's favorite hobby is his acquaintance with 'human natur,' and none can read his sayings and doings without feeling that his estimate of himself is only correct. Who that knows anything of society and its impartiality, that will not endorse the following extract :

'Well, said Eldad, there's natur' in all things. Among humans there is three kinds, white natur', nigger natur' and Indjin natur'; then there's fish natur', and horse natur', musquito natur' and snakes natur', and he natur', and she natur', at least that's my logic. Well, its the natur' of porpoises, when a she one gets wounded, that the other porpoises race right arter her, and chase her to death. They show her no mercy. Human natur' is the same as fish natur' in this' particler, and is as scaly too. When a woman gets a wound from an arrow shot out by scandal, envy, or malice, or falsehood, for not keepin her eye on the compass, and shapin' her course as she ought to, men, women, and boys, parsons and their tea goin' gossipin' wives, pious galls and prim old maids, all start off in full cry like a pack of bloodhounds arter her, and tear her to pieces, and if she carths, and has the luck to get safe into a hole fust, they howl and yell round her like so many imps of darkness. Its the race of charity to see what long legged, cantin, billious-lookin critter can be in first at the death. They turn up the white of their eyes like ducks in thunder, at a fox hunt its so wicked; but a gall-hunt they love dearly; its servin' the Lord.'

Cosmopolite as Mr. Slick is in a general way, the book before us abounds with local incidents, and provincial characters, all wearing a comical aspect, though here and there he gives a touch of pathos just to shew that even he looks below the surface. Aunt Thankful, an old lady whom he encounters in one of the back settlements of Nova Scotia, and whose sole treasure from youth to old age has been the memory of having once danced with the Duke of Kent in Halifax, and having her fine eyes honoured by his notice, is well, if not pathetically, pourtrayed in the following words :

'Poor Aunt Thankful, its others that ought to be thankful to you, for your post aint easy. We uncles and aunts have enough to do. Uncle pays for all, and aunt works for all. The children don't mind you like a mother, and the servants don't obey you like the head of the house nother. Is there one of the party to stay at home? its aunt. Is there any one to get up early, and to be the last to lock doors, and to look to fires? its aunty. Is there company to home—who takes charge of the house? why aunty to be sure. If you havn't got money enough for what you want, there is some doubloons still left in the end of Aunt Thankful's stocking—you did'nt return the last three you borrowed—but coax her, she is so good natured and so kind. Get her to tell that story about Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, and her eyes, and say well aunt they must have been beautiful, for they are still so handsome; how near you

came being Duchess of Kent (that's the soft spot with three tender places in it, first, to be married, second, to be a Duchess, third, to be mother of a queen;) go right on without stoppin: Aunt, if you would just lend me one doubloon, you should have it again soon. Ah, you rogue, you didn't pay the last three you got. I'll trust you this once, but mind I never will again. There now, mind its the last time.'

With many other provincial eccentricities, the book of 'Wise Saws and Modern Instances' contains two veritable ghost stories, which our space will not permit us to extract; the scene of one is Sable Island, of the other the town of Liverpool. The author vouches for their authenticity, and though we cannot believe what seems contrary to reason and evidence, they are yet the most singular and credible of any ghostly revelations we ever remember to have seen. They are also the more interesting from being connected with the legends of one of 'our Colonies.'

There is a marked improvement in this latest work of Judge Halliburton in one particular: many of his former jests were broad and often savoured of vulgarity; in the book under review the style is very much modified, scarcely a coarse expression to offend the ear. With the exception of one or two irreverent sentences (which are indeed unnecessarily offensive) there is nothing to shock refinement or delicacy. Blunt and rough invariably, time has brought wisdom, and the joke loses nothing of its point though the drapery that surrounds it is more chaste in its hues.

We cannot follow our gifted countryman further in this article but merely recommend his book to the perusal of our readers, as one that will amuse them and not infrequently instruct. We of the 'Provincial Magazine' owe the learned Judge but little gratitude in his own person, as with much lack of courtesy he has omitted to assist with his pen the pages of the only literary journal in his native land, proving thereby his indifference to the encouragement of any undertaking that might benefit the interests of his birth place and ours. But we are proud of him still, and are willing to acknowledge it. He has brought Nova Scotia into notice by his writings, and we think his last work will not be the least efficient in calling attention to these Colonies. We only wish he would use personal influence in our behalf, and instead of asserting to an assemblage of Englishmen that he represents no country, stand forward as one of a valuable Province whose inhabitants have skill in labour, and appreciation of genius, and who, though somewhat slow in the march of improvement, are yet no unworthy descendants of that great country, whose crown we venerate, and whose virtues and achievements we emulate and admire.



OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP.

DURING the past month the City of Halifax has been honored by the presence of distinguished visitors. On the 1st of August the Earl of Ellesmere and suite arrived in H. M. Steamer Medea, and remained until the 11th. He then took his departure for England in the Leander frigate, which had brought him across the Atlantic as Commissioner to the New York Exhibition.

In the same week the U. S. Steamers Princeton and Fulton arrived in our waters, bearing despatches relating to the fisheries. A salute in their honour was fired from the Flag Ship, and also from the Citadel, and the Commander and officers exchanged civilities with the citizens and the military.

Commodore Shubrick, of the Princeton, is one of the oldest officers in the U. S. Navy, and left a pleasing impression on all who had the honor of becoming acquainted with him. The Princeton left Halifax for the Gulf of St. Lawrence on 16th. The Fulton having made a voyage to New York, returned to Halifax on the morning of the 21st with despatches, and after an hour's stay proceeded again to the fishing grounds in the St. Lawrence Gulf.

During the stay of H. M. S. Medea in our harbour, a Court Martial was held on the First Lieut. Williams of that ship, which resulted in his acquittal, when he in his turn preferred a charge against his superior officer, Commander Bayley. After a long trial the Captain was acquitted with a reprimand upon one or two points proven, many of the charges preferred against him being pronounced frivolous.

During Lord Ellesmere's visit to Halifax, a Sham Fight came off near Point Pleasant, which was an unusually brilliant affair, and reflected honour on the gallant troops engaged in it. A large number of the citizens witnessed the proceedings, both from the grounds and one of the ferry steamers, which was plying off the land during the duration of the sham hostilities.

Pic-nics and parties of every description have afforded amusement to our townspeople during the pleasant month of August, which was remarkably fine. The 10th and two subsequent days were excessively warm, and among the obituary notices recorded at this date is that of Mr. Lownds, a respected mason of Halifax, who died in consequence of the heat.

On the 2nd a Sea Serpent is stated to have been seen in the harbour, near McNab's Island, by Mr. Peter McNab, junr. The animal appeared to be of great length, and moved through the water with extraordinary swiftness.

The brigantine Alexander, Captain Wyman, sailed on the 11th from Halifax to Australia. She took a small number of passengers and an assorted cargo of lumber, &c.

In addition to the other celebrated persons that have visited Halifax during the past month, we must not omit to notice the world-renowned Siamese Twins, Chang and Eng. They remained in Halifax four days, and a large number of the curious availed themselves of the opportunity of attending their levees. The Twins are now forty-two years old, enjoying good health, and were accompanied by two of their children, the eldest of the eleven they possess. Both parents and children seemed cheerful and intelligent. Chang and Eng answered all questions addressed to them politely and fully. They are exhibiting themselves now for the last time, with the object to amass sufficient money to educate their children, who are represented as exceedingly intelligent. They all reside at Mount Airey, in North Carolina, where they have a plantation.

An Agricultural Meeting, held at Dalhousie College, to report progress with regard to the Agricultural Exhibition to be held in October next, was respectably attended and arrangements made for its furtherance.

The Governor General of British North America, having left Quebec by the Doris steamer, landed at River du Loupe and travelled overland to Fredericton and St. John, thence via Windsor to Halifax, where he arrived on the 30th. The Countess of Elgin and suite had arrived by the Doris on the previous evening,—his Excellency and family intending to take passage by the Cunard Steamer America for England on the evening of the 31st. The customary honors marked the arrival of the Governor General at Halifax.

An American fishing schooner captured in the Bay de Chaleur and carried into Charlottetown, P. E. I., was subsequently released on payment of costs. Much feeling is manifested against the British authorities by many of the United States fishermen.

There are upwards of five hundred men at work on the St. Andrew's and Woodstock Railway; ten miles are almost completed, and the work is going on with great rapidity.

The survey of the line of railway from Shediac to the Bend of Petticodiac had been entirely completed, and the rails are expected to arrive by the barque Mary, belonging to the port of Yarmouth in N. S., and owned by Thomas Killam, Esq., M. P. P.

Montreal is represented to be inundated with visitors; it was impossible to find hotel accommodation, and crowds were obliged to lodge in the steamers which brought them to the wharves.

The yellow fever prevails to an alarming extent in New Orleans; hundreds are dying daily. Late telegraphic intelligence states that they are unable to bury their dead, and that a large number of bodies had been burned.

The cholera is still raging in Havana. Its ravages have been very great in the sugar estates of the district of Cardenas.

The heat has been not excessive in New York; two or three hundred persons in that city are reported to have died from its effects.

The corner stone of the first Protestant Church in Mexico was laid at Santa Fe on the 21st May.

A severe shock of earthquake was felt recently at Cumana, which destroyed a number of houses, and several hundred persons were buried in the ruins. Cumana is the capital of the Province of Cumana in Venezuela. It is mentioned as the oldest European city on the new Continent.

The notorious Lola Montes was lately married to a Mr. Hall at San Francisco.

By the Cunard Steamers we have late intelligence from Europe and the East. As the first item of interest to all loyal subjects, we must record the fact that Her Majesty with the several members of the royal family had been subjected to an attack of measles. The disorder, however, was very favorable, and by latest accounts the Queen and the royal children were perfectly restored to health.

The Imperial Parliament was to close its session on the 20th August.

Considerable excitement was occasioned in London in consequence of 'the strike' of the Cabmen. The fares having been reduced by law, on the 3rd of August, the day on which the act was to be enforced, not a Cab was to be found at any of the stands in the city. Great confusion ensued throughout three days, during which the Cabmen remained idle. The public, by the aid

of porters and railway accommodation, managed to get along without attempting a compromise with them. They ultimately resumed their duties, and will probably benefit by the lesson they were taught. The loss to the Cabmen during the strike was estimated at six thousand pounds.

The income of the Submarine Telegraph across the English Channel is already estimated at the rate of £23,000 a year gross receipts.

At the anniversary dinner of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, our countryman, Judge Haliburton, was an honoured guest. His health was proposed by Lord Ashburton, the Chairman, and the author of Sam Slick responded in a humorous speech.

A dreadful accident had occurred at the new Crystal Palace at Sydenham. A part of the scaffolding gave way, and several of the workmen were instantly killed, while a number of others were fearfully injured.

A great naval review was held at Spithead on the 19th, the first of any importance since 1814, when the Prince Regent entertained the Allied Sovereigns with a similar demonstration at the same place. The Queen and Prince Albert with an immense concourse of people were spectators of the exciting scene.

A great fire occurred at Dover on Sunday the 14th, which lasted until the evening of the next day. The loss is supposed to be between £40,000 and £50,000.

The British Barque Condor, from Australia for London, with a cargo of wool, and 25,000 ounces of gold dust, was burned at sea. Passengers and crew saved. Gold dust saved also.

The Australian letters brought by the Indian mail, give the most satisfactory accounts of the continued productiveness of gold at the mines.

The emigration to Australia still continues; six ships left Liverpool in one week recently for the gold regions.

In the obituary list we notice the name of Henry Cockton, author of 'Valentine Vox,' 'Percy Effingham,' &c., also that of Michael Burke Honan, for many years Foreign Correspondent to the London Times newspaper, and author of a volume entitled 'Personal Adventures of Our Own Correspondent.'

The war in Burmah has been concluded, and a treaty of peace has been entered upon with the authorities.

In China the revolutionists are rapidly progressing; by latest advices they had taken Nankin. They are said to profess Protestant Christianity, and in the event of their success, will probably introduce the reformed religion throughout the Empire.

A number of brilliant fetes and reviews have been held in France to celebrate the anniversary of the 15th August.

A conspiracy had been discovered against the life of the Sultan, fifteen Mussulman students implicated were in consequence put to death by the bow-string.

The differences between Russia and Turkey, though still unadjusted, will it is thought result in an amicable settlement.

The cholera was raging at Copenhagen.