## THE SCRIBBLER.

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"The liberty of the press, and the liberty of the people must stand or fall together."

HUMB.

Unquam longa voluptas Longus sæpius est dolor.

CASIMIR.

Shortlived and transient pleasure's e'er esteem'd; And longer, hence, succeeding pain is deem'd.

"Ten censure wrong, for one who writes amiss "

TRIAL OF J. T. BUCKINGHAM FOR A LIBEL, Extracts from, and Observations on, continued.

In proceeding to deliver its opinion on the doctrine asserted by the counsel for the government, that the law of Massachusetts, following the common law of England, denied the right of the defendant to give the truth in evidence, the Court, first, at some length, and referring to local cases and opinions, considered it as being a question of "alleged repugnancy between a puticular liberty secured by the constitution of the State,\* and a particular doctrine existing at common law." This being an argument not bearing upon the intrinsic merits of the question, but upon the applicability of those merits to the circumstances of that individual state, I pass on to where the Court proceeded to state that

<sup>\*</sup>The constitution declares the liberty of the press to be 'essential to the security of freedom' in a state, and that "it ought not therefore to be restrained in this commonwealth."

The doctrine of libel is, in all countries, a doctrine of power. In England the object has been to draw questions of this class from the jurisdiction of the jury to that of the court. The means by which it has been effected are the assumption by the court of three principles;

1st. That criminality in publications depends upon their general tendency, and not upon the publisher's particular in-

tention.

2d. That the tendency of the publication is a question of

law to be decided by the court and not by the jury.

3d. As the general tendency of a publication may be to public mischief, notwithstanding the facts alleged in it be true, that it follows, in such cases, that the truth, or falsity, of those facts is indifferent; and that therefore the truth shall not be allowed to be given in evidence.

In the course of this argument, it will be attempted to be shewn that the first of these principles is false in nature; the second, false in fact; and the third, false in consequence.

The question, however, first to be considered is; What is

the liberty of the press?"

"It is not becoming a court of justice to deal in popular declamation and flourishes concerning the liberty of the press. Its business is to analyze every subject, and, amongst the depths and mysteries of its nature, to detect those fundamental principles, which, because they inhere in it, and are inseparable from it, constitute its law. The question here raised concerning the liberty of the press, has nothing to do with popular opinion, or popular excitement, it is a naked, abstract, enquiry, instituted for the purpose of satisfying ourselves concerning our own duties.

"First. What is the press?

It is an instrument;—an instrument of great moral and intellectual efficacy. The liberty of the press, therefore, is nothing more than the liberty of a moral and intellectual being, (that is, of a moral agent,) to use that particular instrument. The question therefore, concerning what is the liberty of the press resolves itself into two enquiries.

1. What is the liberty of a moral agent to use any instru-

ment?

2. Is there any thing in the nature of the instrument called the press, which makes the liberty of a moral agent to use it, different from his liberty to use any other instrument?

As to the first enquiry, there can be but one opinion. As a general rule, the liberty of a moral agent to use any instrument depends upon the motive and end he has in using it. For a good motive, and a justifiable end, he has a right to use

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it;—that is, he has a liberty to use it. For a bad motive, and an unjustifiable end, he has no right to use it;—that is, he has no such liberty;—in other words, such use of it is licentiousness. Liberty, is, in relation to every other instrument, characterized by, and coextensive with, the nature of its justifiable use. And this depends upon the quality of the motive and the end.

If A. thrust B. through with a sword, and he dies: A. has used an instrument over which he had power; whether in that, he was guilty of an act of licentiousness, for which he is obnoxious to punishment, or merely exercised an authorized liberty, for which he shall go free, depends not upon the fact, or the effect, but upon the motive and end, which induced the thrust. If A. be indicted for the murder of B., A.'s guilt or innocence depends, not upon the conclusion of law to be declared by the court, resulting from the fact of the blow given, and the effect of death, which followed, but it depends upon the conclusion, concerning the intent or motive of the moral agent, to be declared by the jury. If A. should be indicted for the murder of B. and the counsel for the commonwealth should contend, and the court should decide, that the jury had nothing to do with the intent or motive, which was the occasion of the thrust; but that their sole province was to decide, 1. the fact that A. made the thrust; 2. the effect that B. died by it; and that the intent, motive, and preconceived malice, was a conclusion of law from that fact and that effect, to be declared exclusively by the court; a doctrine so repugnant to common sense, would not be endured one moment.

Yet this is the precise doctrine of the English courts of common law, in the case of libel. It is that doctrine, on which depends, and solely depends, the other doctrine, that the truth shall not be given in evidence by defendants in public prosecutions for libel. For if the liberty to use the press depended, like the liberty to use every other instrument, upon the quality of the motive and the end, and if the jury, in deciding the guilt or innocence of the accused, had a right in these prosecutions, to take into consideration the intent, motive, or end, as they have in deciding guilt or innocence in every other prosecution, then the right to give the truth in evidence, would follow necessarily and of course. For the truth or falsity of the allegation, is, in all such cases, an inseparable quality of the intent or motive; and whatever jurisdiction has the power of deciding concerning the intent or motive, must,

<sup>&</sup>quot;In like manner, if A. in his defence, upon his trial for the murder of B. with the sword, alleges he killed him in self defence, or in consequence of B.'s premeditated attempt to injure A., the truth or falsity of that allegation which would remove the guilt of murder from A, is a matter of enguity and decision by the jury, and not by the court,

of necessary consequence, have the power of considering and deciding upon such truth & falsity; whether the object of the defence be to justify the act, or to excuse the malice. It follows that, by denying to juries the right to decide on the intent or motive in making the publication, and by this only, have the English courts of law deprived the defendant of the right of giving the truth in evidence. It also follows that, if, by the principles of our constitution, juries have a right to consider the intent or motive, in deciding every question concerning guilt or innocence, then that the right of giving the truth in evidence is a necessary consequence."

makes a thrust at the reputation of B. by the use of that weapon called the press. It A. makes a thrust at B. with the weapon called a sword, in case of a public prosecution for that act, he has a right to show the intent or motive, with which he gave the thrust. Why shall he be denied the same right, when he makes a thrust at him, with the weapon called

the press?

This brings us to the second, and grand enquiry in this

case.

Is there any thing in the nature of the instrument called the press, which makes the liberty of a moral agent to use it, different from his liberty to use any other instrument?

(To be continued )

## Story of CAROLINE SUMNER, continued.

Pleased as Lothario was at having thus succeeded in establishing in Caroline's breast perfect confidence in the rectitude of his intentions, he would not, however, too suddenly seem to take advantage of their mutual contract, lest any quick transition of behaviour should, as it infallibly would have done, make her believe, that all his professions were only so many snares to deceive her. Gently and by degrees, however, he became more free, and whenever she attempted to repulse any liberty she thought too great, he would exclaim; now do not be so strict, dearest Caroline, are you not my wife? Although the ceremony of the church be yet uncelebrated, the vows we have exchanged are the essential parts of marriage;—and you ought not to deny any thing to my impatient passion. But Caroline always resolutely answered that she should ever look upon herself, in her soul, as his wife, but that, as to her person, it must remain a pure and undefiled virgin-bride, until those ceremonies had taken place, and those mystic wordswere pronounced, which alone, in the estimation of mankind, have the power of sanctioning the conversion of two distinct bodies into one. He affected to laugh at her scruples, and at the logical and precise definition she had given of the union of marriage; but was not a little disappointed to find all the artifices he had successfully practised upon others, fail of their desired effect upon her. He had now but one card more to play, which was to persuade her to marry him privately; alleging, in the first place, the violence of his passion; and, in the next, the danger of their secret intercourse being discovered by her aunt, whose inclination towards him, would, doubtless, cause her to be malicious enough to do every thing in her power to separate them for ever.

This was a proposal which Caroline had not the power to refuse, not only because her heart took a part in it, and her passions, though controuled by her virtuous sentiments, were raised almost to overflowing, by their familiar intercourse, and only kept within the brim, by her strict sense of fefale honour, but also because her reason seemed to approve it. She reflected that the sacred ceremony would not be the less binding for not making a great noise: that private marriages were almost as frequent as public ones; that no one could condemn her, in a prudential point of view, for securing to herself so great a fortune with a man she loved; and that, as it was the last and greatest testimony of his honourabte intentions towards her, it would rather be an overstrained

modesty than real prudence to refuse acceding to it. There required therefore not many arguments to prevail on her to consent to what she not only warmly wished for in her own mind, but which she was convinced was right in itself; and she agreed to give herself up to his disposal in the manner he desired, provided that none of the necessary forms of marriage, according to the ritual of the church of England, should be wanting.

Lothario assured her that he should be no less careful than herself in that point; that he had one friend in whom he would venture to place confidence, and who should perform the office of father and give her away; and that he would take care to provide a regular license, and a ring, only desiring she would agree to the ceremony's being performed in some private room, because it was impossible to warrant that no accident should betray the whole affair, if it were celebrated in a church, notwithstanding all the cau-

tion that might be observed.

As she knew that nothing was more customary, amongst persons of condition than marriages of that kind, she made not the least objection to the plan, and place he proposed; and this material point being settled, they proceeded to arrange others, in relation to her way of life after marriage. In the first place she was to quit her aunt's house on the very day, and retire to lodg. ings he should prepare for her; and as they could not cohabit together openly, he was to pass for one of her relations when he came to visit her. As he stated the necessity he should be under of frequently being out of town, as was customary with him, in order not, by a change in his way of life, to betray any change in his situation, he would, whenever he had to absent himself, supply her

with a sufficiency to defray all the expenses she could possibly be at till his return; and that at these times he would write constantly, but without subscribing his real name, at least once a week; and that her answers should be always so contrived, as to pass for those of a gentleman of her acquaintance, and herself mentioned in them only as being a person in whom her friend took much interest, in order to guard against discovery should any of them be intercepted or found, by his mother, or any other person.

All these preliminaries being fixed to the satisfaction of both parties, Lothario prepared lodgings for her in a pleasant but retired part of the outskirts of London, purchased a ring, procured a license, and every other requisite for the nuptials, on the very next day, and on the ensuing one, early in the morning, Caroline packed up her clothes, and quitted her aunt's house, leaving a letter for her to the following purport:

MADAM,

An opportunity now offering of relieving you from the trouble which I have so many years been to you, I gladly embrace it; and hope you will pardon me for not acquainting you at present either with the motives for my departure, or the place whither I am going. Be assured I have strong reasons for acting in this manner, and that wherever I go, I shall do nothing that can call a brush upon the face of any of my family. I beseech you, therefore, madam, to think and speak favourably of me, until the situation of my affairs permits me to disclose them to you, and the world to be made sensible of the happy fortune that has befallen,

Madam, your most obedient niece,

and humble servant.

CAROLINE SUMNER.

Thus, with a heart perfectly at ease, and the brightest visions of hope with respect to the future, did Caroline, wholly unapprehensive of any future storms in the voyage of life, launch out

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into the wide ocean of the world. She discerned not the rocks and quicksands that lay between her and that harbour of calm delight, so euchanting in the prospect, to which she thought her careful pilot was conducting her; nor saw any of the gathering clouds that were ere long to burst with tury on her head; neither could she perceive the distant calm and sunshine of repose, which after the tempest had abated, awaited to

reward her suffering virtue.

It must be allowed that she had behaved with a discretion superior to her years, and such as few of her affectionate sex, loving with that devotion she did, and warm in youthful blood, with emotions of desire which, fanned almost to flame in her bosom, she yet kept even concealed from the penetrating knowledge of her experienced betrayer, would have been able to exercise, amidst so many temptations. But on her lover's side all was hollow and deceitful. He had indeed procured a real license, with their real names, but this he did, in order that since, according to the scheme he had laid, he could at any time disown the marriage which he meant should be pretendedly celebrated, yet, were he so inclined at any future period of his life, the license might be referred to as a proof of its validity, and, registers being then scarcely kept at all, a certificate, signed by fictitious characters, would nevertheless, following up a regular document, be considered as efficient, unless he himself chose to unravel the iniquity of it. His plan was carried into full effect in the following manner.

(To be continued.)

In anatomizing the name of the doughty Bynon of York, I perceive I have not followed his own orthography, or rather that of his very discerning editor, who spells it TRESSILIAN. There are various ways in which that ancient Norman name has been written, but my etymology of it, (as regards the York Byron,) will agree with them all; for, if he was not so before, I have made him look like, a very silly one. But now to the quotations presented to us, à la Fothergill, from his prose composition, in which I wonder he has not been compared to Hume, Chesterfield, Demosthenes, the apostle Paul, or any other writer eminent for eloquence by his very judicious trumpeter. And first, I stumble upon that sickening lamentation about "characters of the first respectability," which has been sung and resung, so much that at last we shall lose the meaning of the words, and actually think that they denote "characters of notorious profligacy;" and such, it is well known, are those which smart and wince the most under my lashes. But the vilest and falsest assertion of this pretender to honourable sentiments, is where he attributes to me an "utter want of delicacy and feeling in my treatment of female character." Thou liest, base groom, and not only thou knowest it, but all who have the sense to appreciate the general tendency of my writings with regard to the female character, know it too. Now don't think I am in a passion, thou recreant knight! No, the smiles and approbation of the fair, keep me in much too good a humour; for they,—the ladies, -one and all, -are eager to read my blue book-Some indeed, swayed and awed by the chilling fastidiousness, and hypocritical formality of their male companions, and spiritual directors, whether husbands, brothers, fathers, or parsons, pretend to chime in with the condemnations bestowed upon it, but not only in their hearts do they approve of it, but they all—one and allget hold of it, and read it slily; while others, less in awe of the lordly brutes who wish to wield dominion where they ought to be the helots, or associated with men of liberal minds and honourable feelings towards the sex, openly are my advocates, and many names of ladies stand upon my list as known subscribers. I have also not a few ladies who correspond with me, and are contributors to the work. Many too have been the times that, when I have sent the Scribbler on trial to a gentleman at his office, it has been returned, but when sent to his house, and put into the hands of his lady, she has persuaded him to take it. Believe me, Sir Tressilian, it is chiefly thro' the medium of the fair sex that I have obtained the bulk of my subscribers. not find themselves aggrieved, they are pleased and gratified, and know that I am a knight-errant in their favour,—they, the final and most perfect work of creative omnipotence, which in forming woman, both body and soul, bestowed on mankind as Milton finely expresses it

"Heaven's last best gift."

But name! name! point out where and how I have treated the female character with indelicacy or want of feeling. I can point out to you a multitude of passages and some entire essays, in the Scribbler, of a totally different aspect; in which the superior virtues and excellencies of woman's mind, and the all-conquering charms of her person, are celebrated with a tact and feeling that have stamped me as a favourite of the ladies. What do you say to that, master Ford? But probably because I have admitted some sportive epigrams upon the inconstant, the termagant, the coquettish, or the vicious, part of the sex; or have exposed some glaring and known instances of pride, vanity, folly, and perhaps vice, I there,

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fore am wanting in delicacy and feeling for the female character; no, most sagacious, sir Tressilian, the reverse may be concluded from those exposures; for, where deserved, do they not tend to throw into greater relief, the amiable, the affable, the faithful, the virtuous, the truly enchanting, part of the sex? Away with such general censures then, that you can not substantiate by laying your finger on any particular passage of the work; away with such illiberality and hypocrisy; away with such mock feeling and mock delicacy, roused only because the man, or his patrons, have smarted under some cuts from the pen of satire, that are like the poor man's curses,

"not loud, but deep."

But enough of this: I am running on too much, and bestowing more powder and shot upon the discomfited stragglers from the enemy's camp than they are worth; so I shall curtail my re-

maining remarks.

Tressilian can not, even in his prose, abstain from dashes and stars; but then, to be sure, the poor man is so modest, and is absolutely a sensitive plant. "I shrink," says he, "from publicity as from a serpent;" and why? here comes the cogent reason; "for if \*\*\*\*\* (1) were to discov-

"Suppose I have a lawsuit with a lady about a cart, and that I fight the weapons of law through in my defence, that

<sup>(1)</sup> Let each, as before said, sit his own cap on; but those who fill up blanks are so often mistaken, that they come under the imputation which was cast upon the attorney-general by the counsel for Mr. Horne Tooke when he was tried for a libel, who, the learned gentleman said, was the real libeller, as he had bodied out the garments which had been thrown loose for any one to put on who thought they fitted him. The same counsel it was, who, in a treatise on the subject, published in opposition to some doctrines held by lord Mansfield as to committals for contempt of court, illustrated his argument with the following curious supposed case.

er his satirist" (don't flatter yourself, my good man, you are not much of a satirist, tho' I will allow you are a good scold;) "I might expect all the vengeance of his remorseless malice." Ah! so you are atraid of your skin, master Tressilian, that is, you are atraid of being bespattered in your turn.

He proceeds, "I consider the editor of a periodical work like your's, (2) as a kind of literary contessors, to whom a thousand transgressors in poetry and prose may unburdentheir consciences; while he either corrects their errors, or condemns them as incorrigible." And why not let other editors do the same, master Tressilian? You don't consider that children must creep before they can walk, and that poets of all descriptions, from the lotty epic writer, to the humble sonnetteer, must make their first essay in some nursery of literature, where their weak, and dissonant cries, like the shrill voices of bantlings, can be not only endured, but soothed, and modulated, and taught, till they rise into the manly tones of

she considers I am acting unwarrantably in so doing, and writes to me, saying in conclusion, "sir, if you proceed to justify your laying hold of my cart, in that way, I will complain to the court of you." Upon this, being provoked, suppose I return her letter, and underwrite it with these words, "Damn your c—— t madam;" would it not be very hard that this imperfect word should be construed court, and I be committed for contempt of court, since it can be as well be made out by more monosyllables than one, every bit as pertinent to the matter, by particularly by the word cart?"

Montague s letter to lord Mansfield on contempts of Court 1775.

(\*) Lord have mercy upon us! a Weekly Register, and Gizette, is a periodical work! How we apples swim! Who ever, before Tressilian, thought of setting the transitory columns of a weekly newspaper, upon a par with a weekly essay? The one moves in a sphere as much superior to the other, as an original writer does over translators, compilers and epitomizers, the hacks of literature, as newspapers are of politics.

rhetoric, or ripen into the harmonious swell of This is a valid and a sufficient defence for the many crude pieces that must necessarily appear in periodical publications: and as I have considered it always my duty to take some pains in correcting and altering such pieces, where I thought I perceived either some bright thought, or genuine harmony, so I believe I have nurtured, and assisted in attaining some merit, (be it only the merit of mediocrity, which in this part of the world is no mean praise,) many who would otherwise have been totally discouraged from the cultivation of their mental faculties. this view of that part of my duty as an editor, I here fulfil my promise to preserve the lines by C. A. (3) mentioned in my last.—

> When every pert, conceited, fool Pretends to criticise by rule, And each defect at once to shew, His critique gives in couplets too, Where, to relieve the doubtful mind, The rule and fault are both combined; Each bard before he ventures forth, Where, like "the whirlwinds of the North," A critic spirit rages round, And withering sweeps the open ground, Should count the hazards of the game, And see what chance he has for fame; Should prune his verses and refine The phrase and fancy of his line, Erase whatever's strong or new, And leave it flat, and faultless, too. A genuine critic still maintains, (The proof is doubtless, in his brains,) That thought, like wine, improves by age, And, as it's older, is more sage;

<sup>(3)</sup> I made choice of the motto from Horace prefixed to this number, as it seems peculiarly adapted to the writer of these verses, both because *Celabitur Auctor*, "the writer will remain concealed," and it applies initially to the signature of C. A.

One set must serve a man through life, Bound to one system, like one wife. Whate'er's above his own low mind, In dark and narrow rules confined. By him is sure to be contemn'd, Denied, derided and condemn'd. But I who neither wish, nor fear The critic frown, must still declare. The freeborn muse a foe to slaves. Dull critics, and conceited knaves. Chain'd by no rules, aloft she soars, While, far below, the critic snores; Sports in the heavens, with daring eye, Or sweeps the azure of the sky. What if she wander in her flight! Her path is still a stream of light, And all her wayward frolics done, She mounts sublimely to the sun. Such is the muse; and those who court Her smiles, her freedom must support. High and serene her temple stands; Its lofty portal wide expands; No prosing pedagogue can bar That portal, or repel afar Unletter'd genius: for she spurns A thousand pedants for one Burns. Then welcome be the rhyming band, Unfetter'd let their wings expand! From grave to gay, try every strain, And failing once, try still again. If they have faults, the public eye, As well as you, those faults can spy; Nor needs a solemn dunce to sit To tell what's poetry or wit. But if perchance, some sparks divine, Some fire from off the Muse's shrine. Lie latent in a humble breast, With cold obscurity opprest, Here give them freedom, and the flame Shall well attest the poet's claim, Shall round his brows its rays combine, To mark the favourite of the Nine. Coxcombs and fools no doubt will write, And rave and thyme in nature's spite, (The Xus has proved,) but if they do, Must other dunces scribble too,

In rhyming, ranting, critic verse,
To shew what's bad by what is worse?
Can we not all these faults perceive
Without their labour or their leave?
Yes! be the critic snarler thrust
To kindred night, and native dust,
To doze and grovel—hoot and how!,
Like the light-hating, frightful ow!;
There con his precious scraps and bits,
The lingua franca of his scatter'd wits,
The "non-sense" which his "luckless stars,"
Amidst our "literary jais,"
Vainly permitted him to use,
Like the harsh gabble of a noisy Goose.
C. A.

Port Hope, 20th October, 1822.

Now, sir knight, to give you a parting blow. You make a most awkward apology for not having printed your "epistle" in one of the papers in Lower Canada, where the Scribbler is chiefly circulated; you say, you have "learned to appreciate the precarious promises of a Yankee editor." Now there happened to be but one paper (the Canadian Courant,) to the editor of which that appellation could be given in all Lower Canada, when you were composing your delectable "e-pistle;" (for the Canadian Times was not then in existence) and, supposing he had either refused you, or falsified a promise made to you, were there not the Montreal Herald, and Gazette, and the Quebec Mercury, and Gazette, the editors of which are, respectively, an Englishman, a Scotchman, an Irishman, and a Canadian, whilst all of them are notoriously opposed to the Scribbler? But the truth is, sir Tresillian; you DARED not; you, the knight-errant of "female character," and "characters of the first respectability," are a coward, a recreant, craven knight, sir Sillyone; who thought to escape a scourging by putting forth your epistle in a distant paper, published in a place, where, thanks to Mr. Sutherland's dishonesty, the Scribbler is seldom seen; where it is little read, and less understood; where you thought you could be a cock on your own dunghill: but the shaft is nevertheless sped, and has transfixed your shrinking breast; your spurs are hacked off, sir knight, and your crest is humbled to the dust; and faith! I pity you!

L. L. M.

An OPEN COUNTENANCE.

An open countenance I love,
It shews th' ingenuous, honest, heart.
Fraught with each virtue from above,
Devoid of guile and worldly art.
An open countenance? quoth Pat.
Is that the thing you prize so dear.
There's Peg Mallowny, fair and fat.
And with a mouth from ear to ear.

Defaulters in Montreal, both as regards subscriptions, and advertisements, are reminded that this week is the very last week of grace, and unless their arrears are paid up, at the Scribbler-office, No. 4, St. Jean Baptiste street, on or before Saturday next at four o'clock, their names will appear in the Black List to be published next week, without distinction of persons, high or low, friends or foes. Circumstances render it absolutely necessary to be peremptory and decided in this measure.

Erratum in last number; last page, 13th line from bottom, for reasonable read readable.

To Correspondents. Roger Boutems, Paddy O'D' Cut up, Montezuma, Loxias, and Good night, are all received, and will all be availed of. Manfred is too gross; his ideas are good, but his language is both incorrect and vulgar.

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