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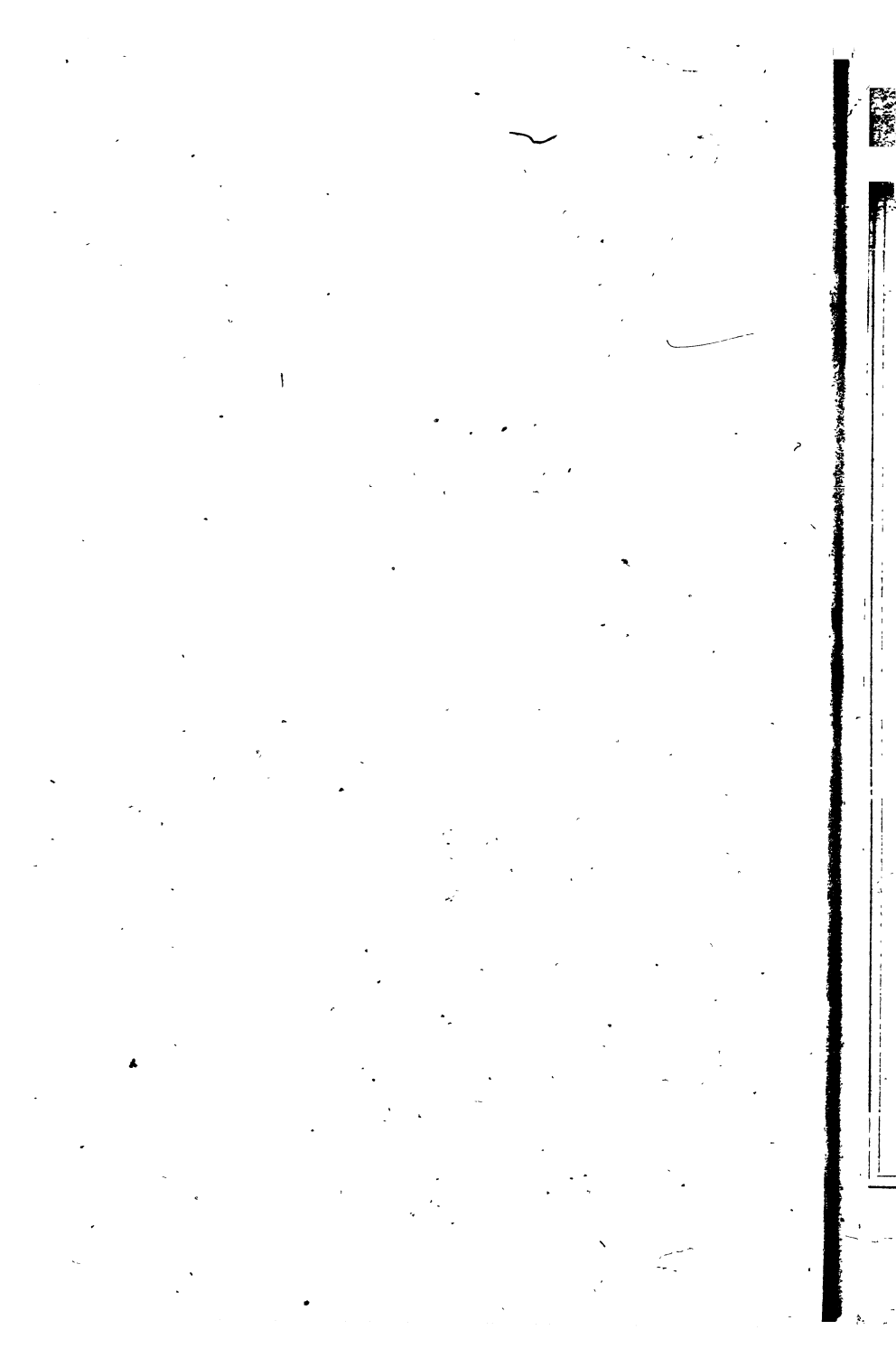
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THE FAIR GRIT,

—OR—

THE ADVANTAGES OF COALITION.

A FARCE.

BY

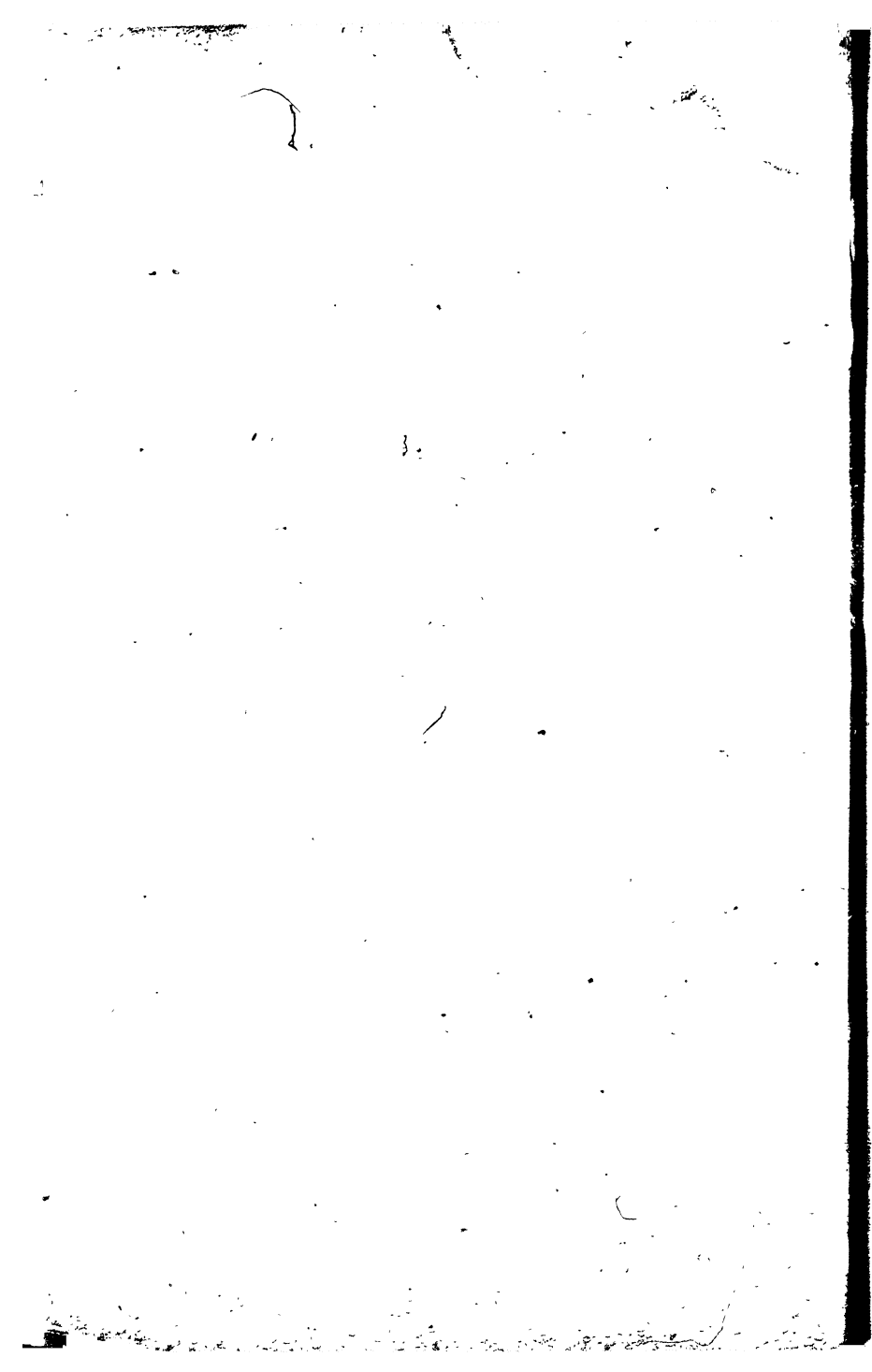
NICHOLAS FLOOD DAVIN.

TORONTO:

BELFORD BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS

1876.

PRICE 25 CENTS.



THE FAIR GRIT.

Dramatis Personæ.

ALEXANDER MCPETERSON (a Grit and a Senator.)

BROWNSON BANBURY ST. CLAIR (a relic of the Family Compact.)

GEORGE ST. CLAIR (his son, educated abroad.)

RONALD (a friend of George, and a cynic given to express himself strongly.)

SUPPLE (a Grit candidate.)

SNAPPER (a Tory candidate.)

EDITOR of *Smasher*.

EDITOR of *Dasher*.

(*Various Editors.*)

ANGELINA MCPETERSON.

MRS. MCPETERSON.

SERVANT.

POLICEMAN.

SHERIFF.

(*Ladies, Citizens, etc., etc.*)

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THE FAIR GRIT.

SCENE I.—*A hall giving on a ball room.* GEORGE
ST. CLAIR and ANGELINA MCPETERSON prom-
enading.

GEORGE.—I hope, Miss McPeterson, you are going to the Cheapleys' next week.

ANGELINA.—No; we don't know the Cheapleys.

GEORGE.—But there can be no difficulty in your being invited. Shall I get Mrs. Cheapley, who is a particular friend of ours, to send you an invitation?

ANGELINA.—It would be of no use. Papa would not let me visit them, and you would find the task you propose more difficult than you think. It's only on occasions like the present that you and I can ever meet. The Cheapleys are Tories. The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans, nor the McPetersons with the Cheapleys.

GEORGE.—The Tories are not so terrible as you think. I'm a Tory (*with a smile*), or at least my father is. (*With a touch of anxiety*).

ANGELINA.—Although born in it you do not know the country. You have lived too much abroad.

GEORGE.—But, surely, politics do not embitter social intercourse.

ANGELINA.—They pervade all life. We carry the war along the whole line. If a member of our party "jibs" in the least, my father gets

word from headquarters to frown, and he tells us all to frown, and we do our best to send the offender to Coventry. A hungry Tory would not touch a joint cooked on Grit principles. The very look of a pudding made according to a receipt furnished by one of your party would disagree with the strongest member of ours—to such an extent, he would fail to recognize the value of a five-dollar bill. We have Tory delf and Grit ware; we eat off party plate and wash our hands in basins of faction. (*They change sides*).

GEORGE.—If this be so, then I fear our opportunities of dancing together will be few, now that the season is so far advanced. But I hope we shall meet.

ANGELINA.—I fear not: my father would be very angry if he knew I had this long *tete-a-tete* with a member of the opposite—

GEORGE.—Sex. Is he so particular? (*Laughing*.)

ANGELINA.—No, no. (*Laughing*). I was about to say “opposite party.” Here comes my partner.

GEORGE.—That gigantic gentleman—“pride in his port, defiance—”

ANGELINA.—Hush! That is the Speaker of the Imperial Bund.

GEORGE.—God bless me!

(*Exit ANGELINA with the Speaker of the Imperial Bund. She smiles at GEORGE ST. CLAIR as she goes away. ST. CLAIR remains for a moment in a brown study, whence he is awakened by a tap on his shoulder from RONALD.*)

RONALD.—Why, St. Clair, what is the matter with you? Are you in love? Have the starry eyes of the fair Grit cast their spell athwart your heart? Has your soul been captured by that smile which breaks like sunshine from the purple cloudlets of her lips, and glories each dimpled rosebud, and wreathes her snowy chin with subtle charms. Ha! ha! ha! Say—Have the darts of Dan Cupid pierced the joints of your worship's harness? Ha! ha! ha!

GEORGE.—Come, Ronald. No chaff. Good Heavens! what a beautiful girl! How she dances! What a lithe figure! Her little feet! I could take both within my hand. And her eyes! And that columned neck on which the head rests in lovely praise!

RONALD.—Yes: the neck of a swan and the eye of a Basilisk. I see you're hit hard. But there's no use; she's a Grit.

GEORGE.—She told me that herself. But what matter? I suppose mine is the oldest family in the country.

RONALD.—Barring the Indians.

GEORGE.—I'm well off; or shall be.

RONALD.—Of good appearance—go on.

GEORGE.—Come, don't chaff.

RONALD.—Well, then, your father would cut you off to a penny if you were to mingle the aristocratic blood of an earlier with the plebeian blood of a later emigrant, and a Grit too—fair though she be.

GEORGE.—Are there indeed such great causes of division between the two parties?

RONALD.—You are as ignorant of our politics

as the latest-arrived Englishman, who thinks he does us an honour if he comes to earn his bread in what he calls our "blaursted country," and fears he is about to be charged by a bull from the prairies when the driver of a sleigh who has been waiting for rugs, cries: "Here come the buffaloes." Great causes of division? Sir, they are like infinity—you cannot grasp them. Do you know the cry with which the Grits intend to go to the country at the next election?

GEORGE.—How should I know?

RONALD.—"Loyalty & Condy's Fluid." They say they found this invaluable mixture most useful for purifying, deodorising, and disinfecting the Government apartments in Ottawa after the death of the late Government, and that it is very appropriate for the "Party of Purity." But the Tories will be even with them, for they mean to inscribe on their banner "Our Ancient Institutions and Chloride of Lime." The chasm that gapes between chloride of lime and Condy's fluid is a measure in its way of the great differences between the two parties.

GEORGE.—But why will the Tories cry "Chloride of Lime?"

RONALD.—Because they contend that the present Government has become vicious at a bound, and not by the ordinary process of deterioration, and that they have out-Heroded Herod in practising the corrupt arts of their predecessors. Hence the great need of chloride of lime at Ottawa just now.

GEORGE.—Surely our politics cannot be such

as you describe them. We have not fallen so low.

RONALD.—Yes, but we have. It is a rivalry in indecent hypocrisy in which practice and profession are more than usually apart. They out-vie each other first in professions of purity, and then out-do each other, as far as it is possible, in acts of corruption. It is a buncombe struggle—a battle of quacks. Each has his sham nostrum, his delusive specific, and the poor country is the patient whom the betraying drug of the blatant and brawling Pharmacopola leaves worse than he was. In Opposition all is virtue; in power all the reverse.

GEORGE.—Horrible.

RONALD.—Horrible indeed. Aye, Sir, horrible hypocrisy. Fancy a polecat crying out for eau-de-cologne at the approach of a fox and you have an idea of some of our statesmen. Next election decency will be outraged, characters stained, reputations ruined, life's life lied away, in a battle between rival corruptionists, fighting over the respective merits of Condy's fluid and chloride of lime, while our local Government will be the Boss Tavern Keeper of the Province.

GEORGE.—What a picture!

RONALD.—Say, rather, what a picture it would be were there an artist capable of drawing the deformed reality in its proper lines, and painting it in its veritable colours. It is not even the quackery of incompetent or time-serving allopaths who go in for homœopathy; ours is in part the quackery of utter ignorance. We have ministers talking like children about political

economy—a science they never studied, and if they had, they couldn't have mastered it. We have persons who don't know its rudiments thoroughly, dogmatizing about free trade, as if any man of mark ever held that free trade was applicable to the condition of every country. We talk about constitutionalism. But we are at present ruled by a personage responsible to no one. If taxation without representation is tyranny, still more is power without responsibility.

GEORGE.—You have attracted attention by the earnestness of your manner.

RONALD.—The manner is as out of place here as earnestness itself is elsewhere. I suppose you are thinking of the fair Grit.

GEORGE (*taking hold of RONALD'S arm, and leading him to the door.*)—Look how she dances. She moves like a goddess. The motion of the wave is not more graceful in its curves. She has the sweep of the swallow and the poise of the sea-gull. If Grits look like her I shall love them all; and every bit of Grit in her I love.

RONALD.—What an enemy Cupid is of policy, and yet he is the best of diplomats.

GEORGE.—She is the fairest figure in that fair scene.

RONALD.—That fair scene—pshaw! It's a mass of vulgarity. Gilded hollowness! Jewelled meanness; gems, and panniers, and skirts, and lace in many instances borrowed; poverty and pride, haughtiness and vulgarity, confidence and ignorance go hand in hand; and all powdered like—but I wont proceed. Are these young ladies? Why, they dance like Bac-

chantes and like barmaids leer. George, let us here in Canada make no mistake; to have a real society, that shall have good form, you must have a real head of society, and that head should find his or her inspiration not in the brackish waters and moral poverty of imitation, but at the springs and fountains of principle and nature, and in elevating companionship with the ideal heights of human character, round which blow for ever more the breezes which keep the heart fresh, and the bloom on the cheek of the soul. But these mendicants of fashion, these social Lazzaroni.—

GEORGE.—I see you're a cynic.

RONALD.—So much so that I advise you to drive love from your heart.

GEORGE.—Never.

RONALD.—Tush.

GEORGE.—I mean it.

RONALD.—You want to marry her?

GEORGE.—I tell you without her, life is worthless; it is the setting without the gem.

RONALD.—Or the Irish stew without the mutton. Ha! ha! ha!

GEORGE.—You are profane.

RONALD.—No; rational.

GEORGE.—Ronald, pray do not talk in this way. I love her, and you must help me to get her—if all the parties under heaven stood in my way.

RONALD.—Why, really, your case is hopeless. Come, 'tis nearly time to go. We will talk this matter over as we drive home. I will not say it is quite so bad as that the Tory who would be

mated with the Grit must die for love—but it is very nearly. *(Exeunt.)*

SCENE II.—*A Hustings erected on one side, on the other stands the House of McPETERSON.*

Enter ST. CLAIR AND RONALD:

RONALD.—Good day St. Clair; sharp frost—though summer ought to be at hand. Has it cooled the ardour of your affections?

GEORGE.—If you brought the bulks of ice, which make the pole sacred from man's spade and keel and placed them round my heart, they would not chill the great pulse of love which beats for Miss McPeterson. This is the gulf-stream of my existence. I saw her father the other day; such a jaw and such manners. They say there is no rose without a thorn, but my rose blooms amid a whole hedgerow of prickles.

RONALD.—Thistles you mean. You say you are well off. But even "another ten thousand" would not enable you to pluck that rose. If a marriage between you and Miss McPeterson is ever to "come off" you must make a "big push" and a "grand stand"; and you may not then win her. You have come here for the nomination, or for the chance of seeing your goddess?

GEORGE.—I thought I might see her.

RONALD.—Be sure you look as romantic as possible. All grits are romantic. Their great leader, steeped in tenderest hues of poetry—you understand—and if you are to win Angelina you must approach her from the romantic side.

Mind that side is not her pocket. But here they come.

Enter SUPPLE and SNAPPER, the Grit and Tory Candidates—McPETERSON and BROWNSON BANBURY ST. CLAIR (father of GEORGE). People before the hustings.

RONALD.—While the preliminaries are going forward let us chat more over this question of your marriage. But, see, McPeterson is speaking already.

ALEXANDER MCPETERSON (*comes forward, and is greeted with loud cries of "Bravo Sandie."*) He says: My friends, I don't think it shows much good manners on your part to call a man of my dignity 'Sandie.' I am a Dominion Senator, and even when I say my prayers I always ask the Lord to bless not 'Sandie' but the Honourable Alexander McPeterson, Senator of the Dominion of Canada, and the Lord feels honoured by being addressed by a person of my dignity. (*Cheers and cries of "So he ought!" with a voice of mockery in the distance: "San-die!" which is greeted with laughter.*) My wife never speaks of herself but as the Hon. Mrs. Senator McP. And the motto of our family has always been for six months or more—"Let us be dignified or die." I should be overwhelmed in addressing such a meeting did I not call to mind the great principles of Gritism—those principles which sustain the canopy of freedom—(*Cheers and a voice, "Sandie," and laughter.*) those principles for which Chatham thundered and Sidney bled. (*Cheers and confusion.*)

1ST CITIZEN.—I thought only Tories bled well.

2ND CITIZEN.—Yes, Sidney was a Grit; he took money from the King of France; he was in foreign pay; he was a Grit.

1ST CITIZEN.—Then it was the King of France bled. The King of France then was a Tory.

ALEXANDER MCPETERSON.—A base hound who has got amongst you (*confusion*)—some miserable Tory scoundrel, some traitorous villain, some insufferable blackguard, has dared to interrupt me—me, a Senator of the Dominion of Canada (*sensation*)—and I would denounce him as he deserves but that it is contrary alike to my political and religious principles to use any but the gentlest words. (*Cries of "That's so."*) Believing that my friend Mr. Supple will support our respected leader, and knowing him not to be overburdened with education, which is the great foe of sound statesmanship, I ask you to elect him. (*Cheers.*)

MR. BROWNSON BANBURY ST. CLAIR.—Gentlemen, I am a Tory of the old school. Gentlemen, in an ancient country like this, with our venerable institutions to conserve, who would not be a Tory? Gentlemen, will you support an ugly old Grit like this Supple? Gentlemen, the Grits are not a bit better or more refined than we are in the use of nice delicate language. (*Hear, hear.*) I'd scorn to stoop to personalities; nor will I say a word against Supple but that he has the face of a villain, and the walk of a sneak. (*The crowd applaud. The orator wipes his head with his pocket handkerchief.*) Gentlemen, my father was a member of the Family Compact, and did great things for Canada. (*A voice: "And for himself," laughter.*)

1ST CITIZEN.—I love dearly classicality.

2ND CITIZEN.—He is too gentle with those Grits who brought in hard times and the potato-bug.

1ST CITIZEN.—And is the potato-bug a Grit?

2ND CITIZEN.—Yes, potato-bugs have been Grits from time immemorial.

1ST CITIZEN.—That can't be, for then it would follow that all Grits are potato-bugs. I am something of a Grit; do you mean to say I am anything of a potato-bug? (*Makes as if he'd fight.*)

2ND CITIZEN.—Now, hear me patiently, and I'll give you reasons. A bug is a bug.

1ST CITIZEN.—True.

2ND CITIZEN.—A Grit is a Grit.

1ST CITIZEN.—True.

2ND CITIZEN.—Now, mark me. All potato-bugs are Grits; therefore, all Grits are potato-bugs.

1ST CITIZEN.—A striking conclusion, and deserves a blow. (*Hits him; both are removed fighting.*)

MR. BROWNSON BANBURY ST. CLAIR.—See what fellows those Grits are. I know the two just removed for the direst members of that unholy fraternity. Gentlemen, I abhor making charges against private character; but to my knowledge, or rather to the knowledge of a friend of mine, Mr. Supple in his youth stole a pair of gaiters, and he and his wife get drunk every morning before breakfast, and finish up at night just before they say their prayers. (*Cheering and confusion.*)

ONE CITIZEN.—The country is going to the dogs.

ANOTHER CITIZEN.—We must have prohibition.

B. B. ST. CLAIR continues—I ask you to support Snapper.

(Here two drunken men, smeared all over with filth stagger on to the stage and fall side by side.)

POLICEMAN *(bending over one)*—What party are you?

1ST DRUNKEN MAN *(holding up his soiled hands)*
—I'm the party of purity.

POLICEMAN *(to the other)*—And what party are you?

2ND MAN.—I'm another.

(They are led off the stage.)

B. B. ST. CLAIR proceeds—I say I ask you to vote for my friend—my consistent and honourable friend, Mr. Snapper, who with our worthy leader will fight the beasts at Ephesus. *(Cheers.)* Mr. Snapper is a cheese manufacturer, but he could sell a charter as easily as a cheese, and pocket the money with a conscience that would give him no more trouble than one of his own mites. *(Renewed cheers.)*

(Then all sensibly agree that the Returning officer shall put the question. There are conflicting cries. A poll is demanded. The Election day is fixed for the following Monday. The crowd disperses.)

RONALD.—Well, what are your chances now?

GEORGE.—I know not. How dreadful!

RONALD.—What?

GEORGE.—McPeterson called my father a forger and a murderer, a robber and a thief.

RONALD.—That's nothing. Do you know what your father called him?

GEORGE.—Good Heavens! I heard him call him a brigand.

RONALD.—Worse; He said he was a hypocrite.

GEORGE.—And do you call that worse?

RONALD.—Yes, for 'twas true. Will you still insist on having Miss McPeterson?

GEORGE.—The current of my thoughts are set that way, and shall know no retiring ebb. True love gives strength to purpose and breath to character; its food is hope and sweet imaginings; its instinct, effort; its rapture, worship. It will outwatch the stars to catch a glimpse of the beloved's eyes, and scorn sleep to know itself near the unconscious angel of its thoughts and vows. If I cannot marry her—

RONALD.—You'll do something desperate. Oh! I know. Ha! ha! ha! I see your case is a bad one. Come on, and let us see if we cannot help you. Perhaps the Government would subsidize a little railway for you from your own to the fair Grit's house.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The same.*—*Night.* *Light burning in one of the bedroom windows of McPETERSON'S house.*

Enter ST. CLAIR with a fiddle and a ladder of ropes.

GEORGE ST. CLAIR.—Ah! that is her room. O, dearest one! (*he kisses his hand towards the window*). To sit beside you and see your wealth of golden hair shower its largess of glory round your peerless form! To watch your pensive beauty in a pleasing sadness, it would be mine

to dispel! To hear your laughter gurgle like a stream of music through the pearls and corals! Oh! —

Enter RONALD.

RONALD (*touching his shoulder*).—Oh!

GEORGE.—Ah, Ronald, it is so good of you to come.

RONALD.—Yes, I have come to play love's lackey and to act the A. D. C. to a madman. I hope I won't prove myself a ninecompoop, like other A. D. C's. I see you have got the fiddle. Now play a little in order to attract her attention, and let it be as sweetly, as sentimentally cadent as the "mee-yow" of a hungry kitten.

GEORGE.—Ronald, how can you?

RONALD.—And then when she comes to the window sing the song I composed for you in a thoroughly feeling manner.

(*ST. CLAIR plays, and after a little MISS MCPETERSON lifts up the window and listens.*)

GEORGE.—The difficulty about your song is I have no boat.

RONALD.—And an Irishman would say your guitar is a fiddle. However, it is all the better. Lying and loving have gone hand in hand from the creation.

GEORGE sings :

I.

Our summer nights are fleeting,
My boat is in the bay;
Our summer nights are fleeting,
My boat is anchored near.

Pale as the ghost of ill-starred love,
 The moon her course doth take,
 And sad and sweet as hopeless thought,
 Her light rests on the lake.

II.

Our summer nights are fleeting,
 And youth is fleeting too ;
 Our summer nights are fleeting
 And rapid joy's decline ;
 Unveil thy beauty to the night,
 And I'll fetch my guitar ;
 The moon is waiting for your song,
 And waiting, every star.

III.

Our summer nights are fleeting,
 Sweet the honied-lapping wave ;
 Our summer nights are fleeting,
 With their silver-shadow'd walls ;
 Whose echoes of soul-born song,
 Wake ghosts of happier years,
 And faint far o'er the shimmering deep,
 And die among the spheres.

MISS MCPETERSON (*Aside*).—I do believe it is
 Mr. St. Clair. Who is that ?

GEORGE ST. CLAIR (*Aside*).—Ronald, hide.
 (*To MISS MCPETERSON*)—'Tis I.

MISS MCPETERSON.—Mr. St. Clair ?

GEORGE ST. CLAIR.—Yes, dearest Angelina.

MISS MCPETERSON.—If papa were to hear you,
 I don't know what he would't do.

RONALD (*Aside*).—Make a Grit of him perhaps,
 but *you* could do that better.

GEORGE.—I brought a ladder of ropes.

ANGELINA (*Aside*).—Enchanting. It makes me
 quite a heroine. Hush, Mr. St. Clair.

(*Here old MCPETERSON comes on the stage unseen
 by the rest.*)

McPETERSON (*Aside*).—As I live, serenading my daughter. Who ever heard of such a thing as a respectable lady Grit being serenaded, and by a Tory, too!

GEORGE.—Will you come down, dearest, and walk? We can slip into the garden. At your approach the flowers will open to a dawn more lovely than the sun ever steeped our planet in. They will diffuse their fragrance in homage to a fairer Flora. Oh, come down.

McPETERSON (*Aside*).—How I hate such stuff. I hates poetry like pisen.

ANGELINA (*Closing the window*).—I'll come down in a few moments.

GEORGE.—Ronald, all goes prosperously.

RONALD.—You did it well. If you should ever become impoverished you'll be able to earn an honest livelihood as a Christy minstrel. But you forgot to offer her the ladder of ropes. Look where she comes:

(MISS MCPETERSON *here enters on the stage, but just as GEORGE is about to greet her, her father steps between.*)

SCENE IV.—*Room in MCPETERSON'S house. MCPETERSON, MRS. MCPETERSON and ANGELINA arranging for a garden party.*

MRS. MCPETERSON.—Really, Mac, these big affairs don't suit me at all—though it is pleasant to be so grand as we are—and to be able to send out invitations on enamelled cards; it is a delirious thing.

ANGELINA.—You mean delicious, mamma.

McPETERSON.—Of course she means delicious. But she must suit herself to her station. I'm a Senator of the Dominion, and I'm rich, and therefore I'm a great aristocrat. We are grand people. What matter who we are, provided we're rich; and what matter whether I'm ignorant of political science or not, so long as I'm a Senator? Hang all aristocracy, say I, except our own aristocracy. And what I say is this—what's the good of being in a high station if we don't shine? Your European aristocracies be hanged—having their family tree, indeed. Though I do like to be seen in the street with a lord, whenever one comes this way; and doesn't Angelina feel the better of dancing with a lord? Nevertheless and notwithstanding, as Mr. Blake so elegantly says in his orations, give me the aristocratic plant that has its roots in the gutter, surrounded by dead rats and decaying cats, and with the sap of a fine, fat, purse-pride—or to change the figure—you see I have been studying the orators—an aristocracy which is like a pimple on the hide of a deranged society—an angry self-assertive thing, as full of pus as of pride.

Mrs. McPETERSON.—Shall we invite young St. Clair?

McPETERSON.—No! No Tories for me.

Mrs. McPETERSON.—You are too bitter. I think Liny would like to have him invited. He wouldn't be a bad match, and he'd introduce us into one of the old families—one of the F. F. C's. And then we could abandon Presbyterianism and go to the Church of England. For as the Argyles say—if we are to go to Heaven at all,

we might as well go by the first-class route, and having in hand, an aristocratic prayer-book with a nice Puseyite cover.

McPETERSON.—How foolish you talk. If old St. Clair would consent to have his son marry the daughter of a Grit, John A. would never speak to him again; and if my daughter were to marry a Tory, George, B. would read me out of the party.

Mrs. MCPETERSON.—Then Liny I'm afraid we must leave out St. Clair.

ANGELINA.—I don't care.

McPETERSON.—You don't care? Do you suppose I forget his serenading of you?

ANGELINA.—Well, I think we have finished now.

McPETERSON.—No we haven't. Teach your mother how to bow, and how to walk across the room.

Mrs. MCPETERSON *doing the grecian bend à good deal, strides across the room, and bows in an awkward fashion; the daughter teaches her, and at each bow old MCPETERSON bows too.*)

McPETERSON.—You improve daily, my dear. Now, I must go and order wine. I think the \$1.50 sherry will do.

Mrs. MCPETERSON.—Yes, and have a few bottles of Moet's to mix with the cheap champagne. And if you could find one of the Government clerks that we could borrow to act as my equerry, and groom of my chamber, and my lad-in-waiting, it would be very nice. Some fellow who is useful for nothing else.

McPETERSON.—I will make inquiries; shall be

sure to find somebody now that the Civil Service is being made a system of out-door relief for the incompetent relations of wire-pullers. I must go to my wine merchant.

ANGELINA.—And I must do some shopping.

(*Exeunt McPETERSON and WIFE.*)

ANGELINA and ST. CLAIR.

ST. CLAIR (*Entering*).—Oh Angelina!

ANGELINA.—This is too daring. If you were to meet papa—

GEORGE.—I'd risk my life for you. I cannot live without you. You are the ocean to the river of my thoughts. You haunt me with your beauty and persecute me with anxiety. In every sweet sound is your voice. The light of your eye is in every star. How can I overcome your father's objections?

ANGELINA.—Have you not likewise your father's objections to overcome?

GEORGE.—Yes, but I think an article in the *Dasher* would change his views.

ANGELINA.—You have hit on the only way you can move my father. You know in the Roman Catholic Church they get dispensations for irregularity from the Pope. Now the *Smasher* is the great Grit pope, and if you could get an article in the *Smasher* saying that in an exceptional case a Grit and a Tory might marry—as, for instance, when they are very fond of each other as we are—all might be well on our side. If the *Smasher* gave him directions, my father would eat five dollar bills and sleep on a bed of wal-

nuts. But would you marry me without your father's consent?

GEORGE.—I am prepared to defy my father. They say John A. nearly fainted with horror when he heard that the son of a Tory wanted to marry a Grit. But though a person of such extreme sensibility, he would probably survive the shock of our marriage. If I may make a pun, he has though a *Tory* a great deal of *grit* in him, and he is specially strong on virtue.

ANGELINA.—No; let us not think of marrying without our fathers' consent. I will never marry any one but you; let that be enough. But if we are forced to desperate courses, my Highland blood will not shrink from a bold step. For I, too, am proud of my race. That race so strong, so many-sided, so thrifty, and yet so generous and tender where they love; so full of purpose and of power; hard as the wave-beaten granite, and soft as the moss which grows on the brow of the steep; prickly as their thistle, but with the heart and beauty of its crimson flower. They gave me a spirit as free as the streams of their native hills; John Knox's strength and Burns' liberal heart; and Marie Stuart's fiery fervour without her falseness.

GEORGE.—My heroine! Ronald was right. You should have been serenaded not with the fiddle but the bagpipes, and I can see a glory in them now I never saw before. Yes; not only Marie Stuart's fervour, but her beauty too. (*He embraces her*).

Enter MCPETERSON.

MCPETERSON.—You Tory scoundrel !
 (GEORGE *throws himself on his knees, but* McP.
only belabours him with his stick, and GEORGE
flies, while MISS McP. *cries* “Don’t Papa !”
 (*Exeunt Omnes.*)

SCENE V.—*The same.*

GEORGE ST. CLAIR *and* ANGELINA.

GEORGE.—I heard your father and mother were out and I bribed Bridget to let me in again. I have been to both newspapers and have met with nothing but discouragement.

ANGELINA.—Then we are indeed undone.

GEORGE.—Yes. On entering the office of the *Smasher* I saw a small boy engaged in sorting papers, and I asked him who he was. He replied “A devil.” I started; but suddenly remembered all about printer’s devils, and said, “Oh! can I see the editor?” He asked what editor? Was it the night editor, or the city editor, or the political editor, or the transcendental editor, or the theological editor, or the fighting editor, or the blackguard editor, or the editor-in-chief? In my utter bewilderment I asked for the blackguard editor, and the devil shouted out, “Our own blackguard—to the front.” Immediately there appeared an elderly gentleman with spectacles, and having the appearance of a Sunday school teacher. Having told him my business he informed me that a matrimonial question like mine

would only come under his cognizance if I were a candidate for a seat in Parliament. He added that my case was one partly theological, partly political, in the purest sense, and that I had better see the political editor, whereupon the devil cried out—"Kohinoor to the front." Again I was in the presence of a model of respectability, and he informed me that he thought I had better see the editor-in-chief at once. "Then enter there," cried the devil, pointing to a door on his right, and on opening which I saw the editor-in-chief dictating how a Tory should be roasted to one "amanuensis," and then turning to another and telling him whether hell had or had not an existence. "The fact is," he concluded, "if they could knock the bottom out of hell we would re-create it with an article. All Canada is at our feet, and we can do as we please, and we are determined to have a hell. We are just as strong as the convict Davis on future punishment." At last he turned to me, and having heard my story he said no word but rang for his brother, told the devil to summon "our own blackguard," the "transcendental," the "theological," and every editor and clipper in the establishment. "Theological, sing a hymn," said the editor-in-chief. Scarcely had the sacred strains sounded when I heard a war-whoop from the brother of the editor-in-chief, and the whole pack made at me. When I found myself at the door half alive I was thankful.

ANGELINA.—My poor George!

GEORGE.—I went and recruited my strength

with oysters and wine, and then repaired to the *Dasher* office. About the *personnel* of the *Dasher* staff I know nothing, for I happened to meet the editor in chief on the stairs, and having told him my story, he looked at me with a frank expression, and merely said: "You're mad! you're mad!" and on my honour I thought I must be, ever to enter a newspaper office again, after running such a risk as I ran in the office of the *Smasher*.

ANGELINA.—Those papers are dreadful things.

GEORGE.—As I turned to leave, the editor-in-chief of the *Dasher*, fixing me with his glittering eye, said with the utmost courtesy: "Follow me and I will show you our inquisitorial chamber." I followed him. At the touch of a secret spring a door flew open, and we found ourselves in a room kept with scrupulous neatness. On all sides were implements of torture: boots, thumb-screws, Procrustean beds, ancle-chains, handcuffs, rapiers, daggers, and many other cruel instruments, the very names of which have escaped my memory. "This," said my guide, taking down an augur of huge dimensions, "this is the augur with which we bore into a fellow's vitals." I shuddered. "And this," he said, taking down a rapier, "is what we thrust under a person's fifth rib. Of late it has been used on a learned subject. You see the blood has an Oxford hue." On a slow fire at the end of the room a figure lay which I was informed belonged to one Robert Pinchbeck. "That is a process," said the editor-in-chief, "which is supposed to be understood at the *Smasher* office, but

we understand it too." And he smiled on his victim with the enthusiasm of an artist. He then threw open a large cupboard in which hung the skeletons of those who had been tortured to death, with their names and pedigrees, and the date of their demise, pasted on a little beam overhead. "The owner of this skeleton," said he, pointing to the second one, "gave us more pleasure than perhaps any other of our subjects, and we tried on him nearly every instrument of torture in our possession." Here a radiant light of inspiration glowed on his face, and "with gentle voice and soft, angelically tuned," he sang as follows, all the skeletons keeping time with their gaunt bones, and grinning a horrid laugh :

I.

McK——r has gone like a light o'er the wave,
 When night clouds are gathering o'er the dark sea,
 No more will he gladden great M——t's conclave,
 No more will he madden the patient Pardee.

II.

We called him with fondness 'the blundering child,'
 For with the best of intentions he never did right,
 And a beam o'er the waters when tranquil and mild,
 Best emblem'd his smile when just up for a fight.

III.

Unless 'twas in coin, all that's golden he hated,
 And kid gloves would tear, if one dared them to show,
 Nor cared he how heavily the people were rated,
 Could he draw but the long, and play the sweet beau.

IV.

But he's gone! oh, he's gone like a light o'er the wave ——

Here he was interrupted by the figure of Robert Pinchbeck, who asked him if he was sing-

ing a hymn, adding that if so he would like to join in, but the only answer he received was—it has escaped my memory—but I remember well the editor-in-chief seizing on a poker, which he told me was a Thalberg poker, and stirring up the fire with considerable energy. He then turned to me and asked me if I should like to have a pair of wrist crushers placed on me, "or, perhaps," he added with the utmost politeness, "you would wish to try the boot on? or would you prefer to be placed on this Procrustean couch? Would you like to be bound to one of those skeletons? We'll do anything to oblige you." I begged of him to let me go. "Then go," he cried, "but beware of marrying the fair Grit."

ANGELINA.—O, George, what a country is this Canada of ours.

GEORGE.—Come; I have prepared everything. Run away with me to that land of peace and newspaper propriety below the line.

ANGELINA.—What if we should be stopped by detectives like Mr. Arches and Mrs. McTrieb.

GEORGE.—I'll take care that will not happen and even if we were we should cut no ridiculous figure. There's a great difference between running away with another man's daughter and stealing another man's wife and not only his wife but his children too. I don't know which to think the greater fool.

ANGELINA.—How can women do such things?

GEORGE.—My Dearest—There are women of a certain type who are always sporting on the brink of the precipice. We need not wonder if some of

them go over. Any woman who acts so as to deserve the name of flirt is an enemy to herself and to her sex. But the married flirt is an enemy of the whole race. She is an unmitigated nuisance. She destroys her husband's peace, disgraces her children, and mars the opening of some eager young fool. Such scandals would be rarer if artificial obstacles were not thrown in the way of the union of such hearts as ours.

ANGELINA.—I pity the poor young fellow.

GEORGE.—It is the foolish woman that is most to be pitied. He deserves to be censured and laughed at as he will be. He was more like the leader of family exodus than the organizer of an elopement, a beardless Abraham migrating with his household Gods than a Paris of the new world. The grip of Montreal detectives was worse than the upbraiding Nereus.

ANGELINA.—Of whom ?

GEORGE.—Oh, an old sea deity. But be sure I will prevent all danger of capture. Nor can I believe but that Heaven will smile on our attempt to escape into virtuous freedom.

ANGELINA.—I could not go to-day.

GEORGE.—When then ?

ANGELINA.—I am full of fears.

GEORGE.—Dismiss them. The fate fight for lawful, even as they fight against unlawful loves. To the devotees of these Cupid is constantly transformed into a policeman and his little dart into a truncheon ; to those who follow the better path the gay heathen little God becomes a veritable angel of light beckoning them onward to not merely to greater sensuous happiness, but to

higher planes of moral, intellectual and spiritual being. Dismiss your fears and lean on my faithful heart.

ANGELINA.—I am resolved. Come here tomorrow at this hour. Papa and mamma will both be out, and I'll be ready to start with you for that land of correct clergymen and pure politicians.

(Exeunt.)

SCENE VI.—*The same.*

ANGELINA.—*(Enter ST. CLAIR.)*

GEORGE.—Have you seen the *Smasher* and *Dasher*? Both have articles on the question this morning.

ANGELINA.—What question.

GEORGE.—Our marriage, which they treat as an accomplished fact; it is dreadful. The *Smasher* says my youth has been steeped in dissipation; hints that you are a weak vessel; and thus concludes: "Never since John A., in an evil hour for Canada, entered public life, has he done anything so nefarious, so ruffianly and so traitorous, as concocting this marriage. A nice person he is to play the servitor to Cupid. He ought to be caricatured as a link-boy to Hymen. Away with such immoral coalitions. Talk not to us of the happiness of young people. Happiness indeed! Preposterous! Puling nonsense! when the interests of a great party are at stake. Before happiness—before individual peace of mind stands the great party of purity." The *Dasher* says: "There has always been something of the sly schemer about George B., but the

most devilish guile with which he has set on foot this marriage surpasses all his achievements."

ANGELINA.—Dreadful! (*Bursting into tears*).

GEORGE.—Follow me. Let us leave this region of newspaper oppression and erotic despair.

ANGELINA.—I'll follow you to the ends of the earth.

(*As they go forth enter McPETERSON and old St. Clair.*)

McPETERSON.—Where were you going?

ANGELINA *falls at his feet and says*.—Papa, I was going to marry him.

McPETERSON.—Suppose there is no necessity of your going away. Mr. St. Clair has always at heart been a sound Grit. The moment he was offered a good place he discovered this, and tomorrow morning the *Smasher* will have an article explaining to the world his true character, and saying that the marriage between you and his son is one of the most auspicious events that could happen. You see there are coalitions and coalitions. All coalitions that suit the Tories are damnable; all coalitions that suit us are divine.

ANGELINA.—Do I dream?

OLD ST. CLAIR.—No! Embrace me, my daughter.

(*ANGELINA throws her arms around his neck and kisses him*).

Enter RONALD.

OLD ST. CLAIR.—There, that's nice, that's nice, that's nice. 'Gad, I'm not surprised at my son.

What trouble we have given these young people and all for humbug. I wish I knew any way of lessening the humbug in the world.

RONALD.—Commit suicide.

OLD ST. CLAIR.—Commit suicide!

RONALD.—Yes. I thought you wanted to decrease the humbug in the world. That would be an effectual way.

GEORGE.—Don't be cynical at this hour. I have some reason to be morose. My body is still black and blue from the blows of the *Smasher* editors. "Our own Blackguard," or "Our Special Blackguard," whichever he was, hit specially hard, and under the belt too; in fact, his blows have made it impracticable to sit down with comfort. But when my heart is full of joy, what care I—

OLD ST. CLAIR.—Ah, well, all is over now. I was born and bred a Tory, but I was really *au fond* a Grit.

McPETERSON.—Yes, he was always a fond Grit.

RONALD.—A contract or a good place has a wonder potency of conversion.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.—The editor in chief of the *Smasher* and his staff are come to congratulate you, sir.

McPETERSON.—Show them in.

Enter MRS. MCPETERSON from one side and the EDITOR; from the other.

MRS. MCPETERSON.—O, Liny, kiss me; we shall

now belong to one of the F. F. C.'s. (To
 GEORGE.) My son!

GEORGE.—My mother!

The editor-in-chief sings :

To-morrow this couple will happy be ;
 To-morrow must ring the marriage-bell,
 And whoever with this does not agree
 We'll roast him slowly, but roast him well.

Second Editor :

We'll roast him nicely,
 We'll roast him neatly ;
 We'll do it politely,
 We'll do it featly,
 And all in Christian love.

Third Editor :

Away with love, away with sorrow,
 Give me but plenty of good abuse,
 For if I live on each to-morrow,
 Some public character I must traduce.

The whole staff sing in chorus :

Roast him slowly, roast him slowly, roast him slowly,
 But roast him well ;
 For he's a Tory, for he's a Tory, for he's a Tory,
 O roast him well.

RONALD.—O, most sweet voices !

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.—I have not yet shaken
 hands with the bride. May you have every
 blessing, dear Angelina, and be the mother of a
 stalwart race of Grits. I suppose there is no
 difficulty about your future husband. He's
 sound?

GEORGE.—I take my politics from Angelina's
 eyes.

RONALD.—Better teachers than most men have
 in that corrupting science.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.—And her eyes like the stars which guide the Dominion, borrow their light from the *Smasher*. That will do.

GEORGE.—But I hope, sir, she will acquire none of the enlightenment of your “special blackguard.” It is, I assure you, almost as impossible for me to sit down at this moment as it would for one of those cherubs who are represented all head and wings, and who, holy though they be, have one characteristic of hell, as described in the sacred writings.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.—Now that you are in our party, remember that you have no business to think for yourself, sir. We’ll do all that for you.

GEORGE.—I am too happy to fight on that argument. Come, Angelina, and let us seek to realize the unexpected turn events have taken.

ANGELINA.—O George, how happily everything has turned out! May the union between your honest father and the party of purity be symbolical of ours (*advancing to the footlights*).

Nay, do not wonder that both hurled us to perdition,
For our policy undoubtedly was—*coalition*.

Nor could he or I be said to be

Impartial—since each was *parti-pris*.

Can *we* be harsh on parties—one or both,

That to coalesce—they were nothing loth?

Yet as so ruthlessly young hearts they’d crush,

Ere on one side a factious straw they’d brush.

The sad suspicion will force itself unbidden

That by both parties country’s overridden.