

*Hon. J. B. Papineau*  
*Institute Canadien*

# THE SEARCHER ;

OR,

## CALUMNY REFUTED.

BEING AN ANALYTICAL REVIEW OF MR. GASPARD  
DE LA RONDE'S PAMPHLET

ON THE

MUNICIPAL AND EDUCATION ACT FOR LOWER CANADA,

WHICH CONTAINS

A SEDITIOUS LIBEL UPON THE COUN-  
CIL FOR THE MUNICIPALITY  
OF ARGENTEUIL.

---

BY PETER HACHEL, JUN.

---

" He that is first in his own cause *seemeth* just ; but his neighbour com-  
eth and *searcheth* him"—Proverbs xviii. 17.

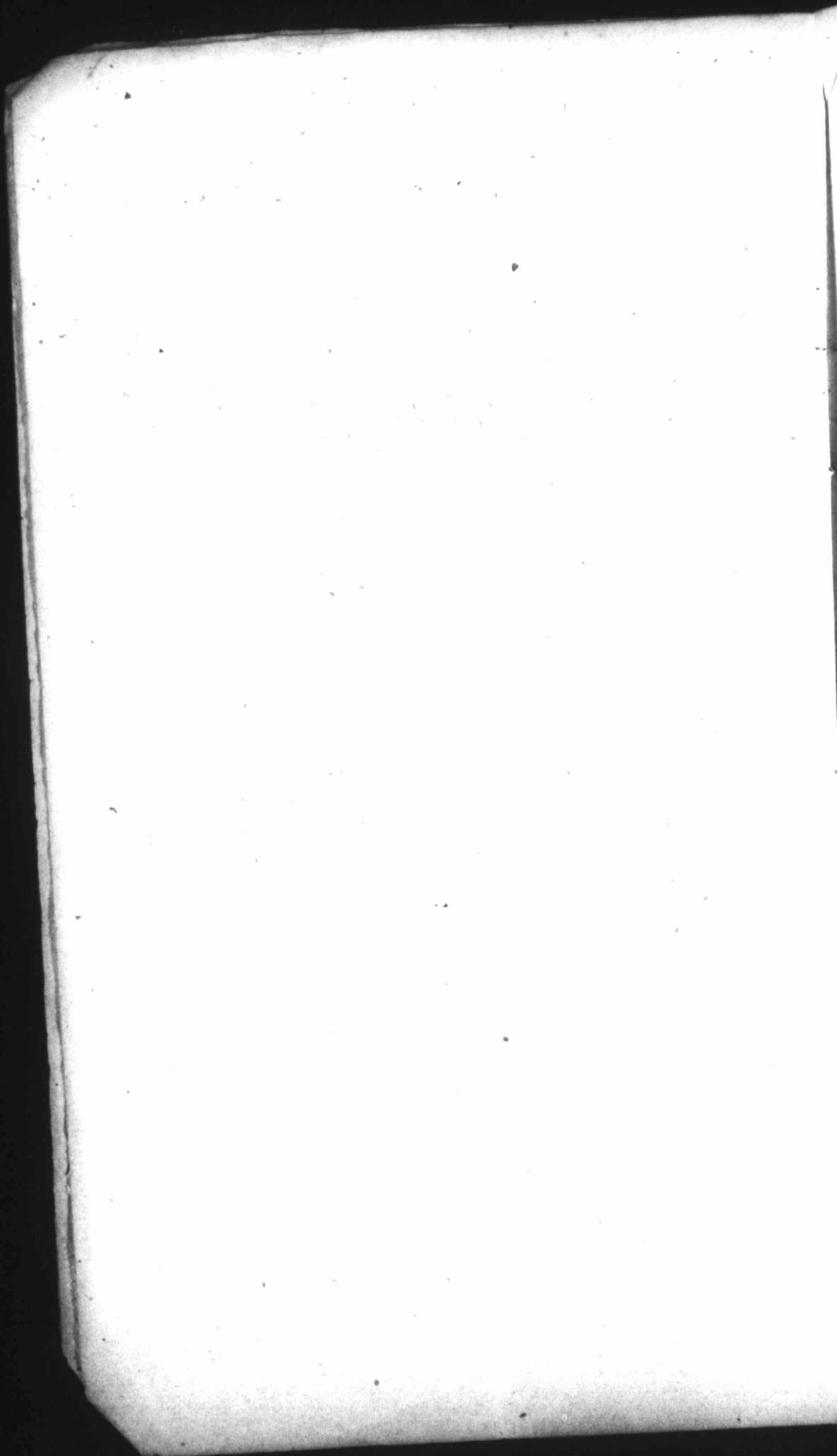
---

**Hachute :**

1846.

BR  
352.071423  
H13

THE SEARCHER.



## INTRODUCTION.

---

### TO THE FREEHOLDERS OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF ARGENTEUIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I have written the following pages with a direct view to the accomplishment of two material objects; to vindicate the innocent from the groundless aspersions of calumny and falsehood, and to convince you, if possible, of the expediency and practicability to Lower Canada of the Municipal and Education acts. I regret that circumstances would not permit my dwelling upon the <sup>a</sup>letter to that length its transcendant importance demands. I have, however, furnished the hints, and I hope you will exercise the requisite reflection. In this work, I ask you not to take my word for a particle of anything said. My appeal throughout is to facts which cannot be resisted, and I have employed arguments so plain that sophistry cannot refute them.

I perhaps owe you an apology for taking so much notice of the author of the pamphlet of which this purports to be a review. Though the writer of that production is contemptible through insignificance, yet the baseness of the man cannot affect the reasonings of the author. He is, moreover, the <sup>mouth</sup>~~man~~piece of a combination, and *his* assertions must be regarded as *their* fabrications. The work is intended to deceive the <sup>unwary</sup>~~memory~~ and to gull the simple. Every lover of order in society and of harmony in the operations of a government will feel it a duty imperative to expose the dishonesty of *such* an attempt.

I have no pecuniary design in view. I transfer the M. S. with the responsibility of its publication to an individual who is more than a little concerned in the subject on which it treats. I have no ambition to appear as an author, nor can I condescend to the meanness of using an anonymous signature, and afterwards send-

ing a *hawker* through the streets, with instructions to *inform the people of the author's real name*.

No man of candour will be satisfied without hearing *both sides* of an affair. If the reader has not already made up his mind on the points at issue, let him suspend his decision until he shall have perused the defence.

I have the honor to be,  
Gentlemen,  
Your obedient servant,

**THE REVIEWER.**

## THE SEARCHER.

---

THE object of all liberal Governments is the welfare of their subjects. And the strength of every Executive will be found to be coextensive with its desire to advance the general interest. If the subjects of a Kingdom perceive a disposition manifested by their Rulers to promote their welfare, nothing will be wanting on their own part to strengthen the Executive hands. The principle of loyalty will ensure obedience, and a wise policy will effect its continuance. As no country in which the Ruling Power and the People are at variance can long flourish, so confidence throughout every branch of the government is indispensable to public prosperity. It is the practice of the government to watch narrowly the dispositions and movements of their subjects; and it is no less the duty than the privilege of the latter to scrutinise with exactness the conduct of their rulers. A healthful influence over all public departments, those for whose exclusive benefit they have been established, and by whose contributions they are maintained, ought ever to exert.

It is as well the glory as the pride of our country, that we live under a Government which acknowledges the *right* of the People to propose or amend such laws as they deem expedient in their relative situations. When Canadians obtained Responsible Government they got the life and soul of the British Constitution with it. The necessity of selecting for the sworn advisers of the Sovereign's Representative, ~~and~~<sup>men</sup> having the confidence of a majority of the Representatives of the people was hailed as a boon eminently calculated to compensate for the years of misrule which had previously been suffered. There was now a channel through which the complaints and wishes of the people could be heard. The Mother Country saw the opening, and was not mistaken in the result. And as no nation has been known to spring into existence in a moment or grow wise in a day, it requires but the gradual work of *time* to ensure the unallayed prosperity of this already flourishing Colony, and the contentment of a vast portion of its inhabitants.

With the introduction of Responsible Government into Canada, I am aware that there are *two* classes dissatisfied. The one com-

prises all those who were *office-holders* under the *old*, and have become disappointed *office-seekers* under the *new* state of things. They are men who enjoyed the emoluments of station either through accident or design under an irresponsible system, but who, not possessing the requisite qualifications, or the confidence of the people, have been compelled to retire under a system of responsibility. These individuals can readily estimate their own loss, and are consequently well prepared to condemn the measures that have occasioned it. Their moving principle is self-interest, and, like true hypocrites, they pretend to great concern about the interests of their fellow subjects. The other class consists of individuals whose claims upon public place have been unnoticed alike under *both* systems, and who have always distinguished themselves in the work of agitation. They are men dissatisfied with all measures of which themselves have not made the proposal; they repudiate the attempts at ~~making~~<sup>making</sup> any machinery not under their own control, and view with a suspicious eye every Corporation that excludes their honourable personages from its counsels. We shall have occasion to refer to this latter class hereafter.

Among the regulations enacted under the new system of things in this country may be prominently ranked the Municipal and Education Acts—the former designed to give the people the immediate control over their own local affairs, the latter calculated to bring the blessings of an elementary education (sufficient for the ordinary purposes of life) within reach of the humblest classes of Her Majesty's Canadian subjects; laudable objects indeed, and likely to do more towards promoting the happiness of Canadian society than all other legislative enactments put together. To judge of the expediency of these measures, we have only to apply carefully the following rule of Blackstone, (I. 87 :) “There are three points to be considered in the construction of all remedial statutes: the *old law*, the *mischief*, and the *remedy*; that is, how the common law stood at the making of the Act; what the mischief was for which the common law did not provide; and what remedy the Parliament hath provided to cure this mischief. It is the business of the judges so to construe the Act, as to suppress the mischief and advance the remedy.”

The “mischiefs” arising from the old regulations relative to the local affairs and Common Schools of Lower Canada are too well known to require particular enumeration here. They are matters of history. In the former instance, bad roads, unequal distribution of statute labours, inefficient regulations with regard to houses of public entertainment, &c. &c.; and in the latter, no certain or reliable funds for the erection of school houses, incompetent teachers, children growing up in ignorance, and the fair prospect of a regu-



lar system of foreign usurpation entailed upon posterity in the filling of the various offices of emoluments, the unavoidable result of the people's ignorance, were consequences but too apparent. I admit that these "mischiefs" have not yet been entirely "remedied;" but I do maintain that the Acts in question are well calculated to affect this object. The only danger lies in the incapacity or dishonesty of those to whose hands the <sup>making</sup> of these Acts is entrusted. But, of this the *people* have no right to complain. The fault lies not in the Acts themselves. The people *alone* are responsible. If they are dissatisfied with the proceedings of their Local Representatives, the remedy is in their own hands. But I do affirm that to resist contemptuously the measures of such public officers (whose Corporation forms a department of the Government) is no less than to resist the Government itself. Opposition to any government, or the open resistance of its measures, should be the last resort of an oppressed people. It is not less than the spirit of rebellion, and can only be justified when remonstrance, protestation and entreaty have all failed. It can never be just or expedient while a peaceful remedy is within the subject's power. And no such thing as good government can exist in this world without a full recognition of the principle, that *the minority must, in all instances, submit to the will of the majority.* What, then, must be said of those who, through self interest, or a pitiful jealousy occasioned by disappointed ambition, or some other motive alike detestable, censure the Representatives of the majority, and complain of proceedings intended for their own benefit?

I make these observations more particularly in reference to the Council of the Municipality of Argenteuil. It is known to most, if not all, of my readers, that many statements have recently been made prejudicial to the credit and character of these men: They have been accused of raising money for false purposes, and of neglecting the interests of the inhabitants; both grave charges, but (as I am prepared to prove) no more *grave* than FALSE. These complaints have at length assumed a more tangible form in the shape of a compilation by their original author. It is entitled "The Pick-Pockets," and signed "A Limb of the Law,"—*alias* Gaspard De La Ronde. The design of this pamphlet is evidently to deceive those who have no opportunity of obtaining correct information upon the subject. This publication with its *illustrious* author might be treated with that silent contempt they so richly deserve; we might leave the latter to go down

"To the vile dust from whence he sprung,  
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung;"

but the fact that he has abettors who may be entitled to some respect will be a sufficient apology for my present undertaking. I

profess not to write the Council's only *Defence*; but I do profess to *defend* them. And I hope, with very little trouble, to vindicate their character from the groundless aspersions of this wanton calumniator, Gaspard De La Ronde.

Before proceeding to the question at issue, I beg the intelligent readers indulgence to a few observations I have to offer upon the literary character of the pamphlet now made known. It is the duty of every lover of science and education to keep a watchful eye towards the attempts of literary aspirants, and to maintain the dignity of public taste. There are bounds to the allowable invective of the political censor, and the licentiousness of the vulgar needs to be curbed. An individual may be a sincere friend, a good neighbour, a dutiful son, an affectionate husband, an indulgent parent; he may ~~wade~~<sup>unite</sup> in his person every relative and social virtue (or as in the present instance, he may possess neither;) for these qualities he will deserve the esteem and approbation of all good men; he may even have acquired celebrity in his profession, and for this he will be rewarded with *success* in his practice, but when he enters the lists as a public writer, and in so doing transgresses the rules of literary decorum; when orthography, rhetoric, logic, "*et hoc omne genus*," lie withering under the wounds he has inflicted; when science lifts her veiled head, and perceives that she has been wounded in the house of her votaries, the individual becomes amenable to public criticism; common justice and the interests of education demand that some one should step forward in vindication of their rights. I refer the reader to the following *choice* specimens of Mr. De La Ronde's *purely classical style*.

On page 7th, in his introduction, our pamphleteer employs the expression, "A little brief authority *who* claims all respectability and infallibility to *itself*." The similarity between the gender of *who* and that of *itself*, few can discover. On page 16th an expression is used relative to the Rouge Bridge, which is truly alarming to those who are compelled to *waddle* (!) their way *through* it. On page 17th the words "designing speculators" convey to the reader a rather unfavorable impression of the author's discrimination. Who ever heard of "speculation" without "design?" The following occurs, p. 24th, "What in the name of the *span* or *yoke* of *Denis Benjamin's* will become of you now?" At the bottom of page 26th is the following elegant expression, "this host of Notaries, Clerks, &c. should now be taught to yield their pretensions to places of emolument and benefit in favour of the goodly old system." The writer would seem desirous to have the present offices filled (not with *men*, but) by *by an old system*. Such is the plain grammatical meaning of the sentence. Class with this the phrases "mental reservation" and "lawful men" p. 27th, "Yan-

kee smuggler," p. 28th; and the second paragraph of the 27th page, in which no connexion exists between the various members of the sentence. Similar to the latter is the concluding paragraph of the address to the Governor General, in which the necessary declaration succeeding the present participle "being" (of which it states a condition) is entirely omitted. The critical reader will find in this scurrilous pamphlet many examples of the coarsest expressions and the lowest vulgarity it is possible for a scribbler so unparal- leledly contemptible to employ. Thus much for the literary merit of this "pocket-picking" production.

One prominent motive that prompted this *withered* "Limb of the Law" to ~~pen~~ and afterwards publish this effusion, was the opportunity afforded of indulging a private ~~figure~~ <sup>pique</sup> against an individual member of the Council. The 48 dollar ~~claim~~ <sup>Chain</sup> appears not to have been forgotten. He can scarcely forgive those who have stood security for "Mr. Secretary-Treasurer." Alas! how came the claims of "Mister" Gaspard to be so ungratefully overlooked?

Now for the legal discussion. On page 10 and 11, the author refers his readers to the 28th section of the Municipal Act, from No. 1 to 24; and after a most hypocritical appeal to the examiner's candour, he draws the following sage conclusion, "A tax imposed for objects over which such Councils have jurisdiction cannot be enforced, *unless such objects are petitioned and prayed for by the inhabitants, and until such application is made, they have no power to exercise.*" I beg leave to quote the following from the 28th section to show the unprecedented impudence of this despicable scribbler\*: No. 10 gives the Council the power "of imposing any rate payable in money, produce, or work, which may be required for the benefit of the Corporation." No. 16 allows to them "the determining of what officers it may be expedient to pay, the fixing the amount of their salaries, and the time and mode of paying them." What then, becomes of the illegality of paying Clerk fees, about which so much noise has been made? The reader will readily perceive that the appointment of officers &c. must be done by the Council, and, therefore, money may be raised to pay them, as well as to defray other necessary expenses without any application from the people. These things are essential to the very existence of any Council.

---

\* It is impossible to state any fair reason for Mr. De La Ronde's referring so often to ~~articles~~ in the Act, which he has omitted to quote; though it is notorious that few of his readers have the Act in their possession. Perhaps he prefers keeping back what is so fatal to his cause. It has, however, been conjectured that the recent dealing in "Chains," and other iron articles, in which this Canadian Vulcan has been engaged, has blunted his perceptive faculties.

+ clause

But let the reader attend to the following argument. The writer observes (p. 11, 12.) "The 5th section enacts that the inhabitants of each Parish or Township (why omit *Municipality* in the quotation?) shall elect seven persons duly qualified to vote to be Counsellors," &c., and then follows the *therefore* of this profound logician, this *not very immaculate* De La Ronde. "The Council so elected, not having the power to form a *quorum* of less than the whole number (seven) it follows, as a matter of course, that any rules, regulations, &c. imposed by such Counsellors, less in number than the *whole*, are null and void." What a profundity of legal wisdom must centre in the cranium of this pettifogging Notary! In the second part of the Act, 8th Vic. Cap. 40, Sec. 57, it is enacted in reference to Town, Village or Borough Councils, "that in case of the Mayor's absence from the Council, his place shall be filled by a temporary Chairman elected by the members of the Council then present; and the *quorum* of any such Council shall be *an absolute majority of the total number of Counsellors, including the Mayor.*" It will be seen from the 53 section of the same Act, "that until any Town or Village shall be *actually separated* from the Parish or Township," the Council of the Parish shall have the same powers over such Village or Town as are conferred in any Village or Town, (including of course, the privilege of a *quorum* as above quoted.) The 19th section also fully provides for every possible contingency of this nature. I quote it entire: "And be it enacted, that in case of a vacancy in the office of such Counsellor, Functionary, or Officer, by reason of his death or permanent absence from the Parish, Township, or Municipality, *or of his absence for more than six months,* or serious illness or incapacity happening after his election or appointment, such vacancy shall be filled either by election at a general meeting called as aforesaid, or by the Council, as the case may require." The phrase, "*of his absence for more than six months,*" separated as it is by the disjunctive *or* from the other members of the sentence, shows clearly that Counsellors may be absent without the assignment of any particular reason, and yet the proceedings of a *quorum* be strictly *legal*. I readily grant that the 17th section inflicts a penalty on those *refusing to serve after their election*, but that in no way affects the strength of my argument.

The next objection of the pamphleteer, relates to the *name* of the Corporation. He argues that the corporate powers extend only to Parishes and Townships. After digressing from the subject, and indulging in his favourite and inimitable *native* vulgarity over the whole of page 13th, he draws the following inference, page 14th, "the Municipal Council of the Municipality of Argenteuil, so

called, not being for the *Parish* of some name or other, has no legal existence; the Law authorizes the incorporation of *Parishes* or *Townships*, but not of *Seignories*." The writer elsewhere complains that the word "Municipality" is not found in the *English Lexicon*; so of course *he does not understand it*. I know not what "Dictionary" the "Limb" may use; but I find in *Walker's Dictionary* such a word as *Municipal*, defined "belonging to a Corporation," from which our name *Municipality* is derived; the Latin *municipium* is the root. But the 8th Vic. Cap. 40, Sec. 2 establishes the propriety of our own local arrangement. It says, "that the inhabitants of every *Parish* or *Township*, or *other Territorial Division recognized or DESIGNATED as a MUNICIPALITY*, in the manner hereinafter provided, "shall be a *body politic or incorporate*." It will be seen that any *Territorial Division designated as a Municipality* may be incorporated. Is not the "Municipality of *Argenteuil*" at least a *Territorial Division*? What an honour to the Profession must be this engrafted "Limb of the Law!!"

The 3d objection respects an alledged nonobservance of the formalities required by law, "that is (to use his own words) the Poll Book or Lists were not kept by such Justices of the Peace, authorized to preside at such election, but by the Parish Clerk." By a reference to the 6th section of the Act, it will be perceived that "the name of each elector voting at such election shall be written in Poll Lists to be kept by the presiding Justice, or any other person holding the same." It is absurd, however, to suppose that the presiding Justice shall act as Clerk on the occasion. It is sufficient that the entrances be made by a confidential person *under his immediate inspection*." This was actually done in the present instance.

"A Limb of the Law" further objects to the appointment of the seventh person. He contends that the individual who retired in favour of another had no right to do so. On the contrary, I maintain that his retirement was perfectly consistent, and the appointment of "Mr. So-and-so" strictly legal. By the 10th section of the Act, all persons "over sixty years of age" are exempted from serving, unless at their own option. The gentleman who retired belongs to this class. The argument, therefore, must be abandoned. Indeed it seems to have been framed merely to pave the way for a little reflection upon an individual who has not unfrequently called "our champion to order." This will likewise account for the writer's aversion to the "Small Courts."

The concluding paragraph of page 14th, every individual present at the election referred to contradicted. It was designed merely as an attack upon the presiding Justice.

From page 15 to 19th the public are presented with a garbled statement of recent occurrences, which is remarkable for nothing, so much as for the consummate disingenuousness of the author of the "Pick-Pocket" pamphlet. Before, however, proceeding to the facts of the case, I shall notice one objection which has been made by others besides this cat's paw writer. It is complained that the Secretary Treasurer's salary is by far too large. I contend, on the contrary, that it is quite too small, and is hardly sufficient to remunerate him for his somewhat arduous services. He has to keep a minute of all the proceedings of the Council; draw up all their notices and other documents; and carry on all official correspondence between the Council and individuals or other corporate bodies. For this he receives but the sum of £25 Od. 0s. Contrast with this the salary of officers in other Municipalities, or even of Councils in Upper Canada where the offices of Clerk and Treasurer are filled by different persons. In a neighbouring District on the Ottawa no less than £60 0s. 0d. per annum are paid to the Council's Clerk. Verily, in starting this objection, Mr. De La Ronde must have got to the end of his "*chain*?!"

I shall now return to the late proceedings of the Council, No. 10, under the 28th section of the Municipal Act, already quoted, taken in connexion with the 25th section of the same was the authority upon which the Council relied in levying a tax to cover their necessary expenses, I subjoin the latter: "And be it enacted, That "each Council shall have the power, after a previous estimate of "the expenses necessary to be incurred for any purposes within "their jurisdiction, to raise and assess such sum as may be necessary to cover the amount of such estimate, and to cause the same "to be apportioned by rate, upon the owners of property liable to "assessment and being within the Parish, Township or Municipality, whether such owners be or be not resident therein, in proportion to the value of their respective rateable property in the "Parish, Township or Municipality; provided that such rates shall "not in any one year exceed in the whole three pence in the "pound on the value of such property." A "previous estimate" was accordingly made, amounting to £120, and, agreeably to the provisions of the Act, due notice was served upon all concerned.

That my readers may have a clear view of the whole affair, I annex the following Resolutions truly copied from the Minute Book of the Council. They may be compared with the *pseudo* copy of the Circular, page 15th, and the pretended Resolution, page 18th, of Mr. De La Ronde's pamphlet. (This seditious and libellous author had not the honesty to make a fair quotation.) They were passed at a Special Meeting of the Council held in the room of David Beattie, Esq. of St. Andrews, on 8th January, 1846, the usual *quorum* being present.

“ Moved by Mr. Simpson, seconded by Mr. Montmarquet, and  
 “ unanimously Resolved 3d, That one farthing in the pound be rais-  
 “ ed on all rateable property in the Municipality, to meet the ne-  
 “ cessary expenses of the Municipal Council. Moved by Mr.  
 “ Montmarquet, seconded by Mr. Burwash, and unanimously Re-  
 “ solved 4th, That the Secretary-Treasurer be directed to prepare  
 “ the assessment list in accordance with the foregoing Resolution,  
 “ and to ensure that all persons subject to the payment of the same  
 “ shall receive due intimation thereof; and to that effect, that the  
 “ following notice be left at their respective domiciles, “ Take  
 “ notice that a rate of  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a penny in the pound is assessed on  
 “ your property, amounting in your case to £           , and that the  
 “ above named sum must be paid in my hands, at my Office in  
 “ St. Andrews, on or before the 25th day of February next. By  
 “ order of the Council.

“ (Signed,)           

“ G. COURSOLES,

“ *Secretary-Treasurer.*”

Surely there is nothing in the above contrary to the letter and spirit of the Law. “ But,” it may be replied, “ these notices were all served, some were complied with, others were not, and the Council were unable *legally* to enforce the payment of their demands. Why is this?” I answer, there was a trifling *informality* in their proceedings, and certain parties took advantage of a technicality in the Law, to evade the due course of justice. The 32 Sec. 8 Vic. Cap. 40 afforded the only opportunity for a temporary escape. It is as follows:

“ And be it enacted that the Secretary-Treasurer of the Coun-  
 “ cil, shall keep a book in which shall be entered the minutes of  
 “ the proceedings of the Council, and all the Rules and regulations  
 “ made by the same; and shall also keep a Register of all papers  
 “ documents on which any action shall have been taken by the  
 “ Council; and such Minutes and Registers shall be signed at  
 “ each sitting by the Mayor or temporary Chairman of the Coun-  
 “ cil, and countersigned by the Secretary-Treasurer; and *copies*  
 “ of such Documents so signed as aforesaid, shall be received in  
 “ evidence in all Courts of Justice in this Province.”

The Resolutions above quoted, and founded on the required estimate were, indeed, entered in the Minute Book, signed by the Mayor and Secretary-Treasurer; but the estimate itself, or the

" Document on which such action was taken, was incidentally omitted. I wish it, therefore, to be remembered that there were to be found in this Municipality "three inhabitants" capable of offering so unworthy a resistance. I regret to class, with this *de-cayed* "Limb of the Law," *two* who would most assuredly, *under any other circumstances*, be entitled to the highest respect. But this is not the *first* time men have suffered from being in bad company. I sincerely hope that with them it may be the *last*.

On pages 15 and 16 of the pamphlet, the charge of *embezzlement* is brought against the Council and its Treasurer. The contemptible and dishonest author of this unfounded allegation ought to be made an example of to the public, as a compound of all that is ignominious and base. He asserts that before the already mentioned assessment was made, the sum of "£126 0 0 was already in the hands of the Treasurer." The falsity of this accusation can be easily established. It is a notorious fact that the present Council was not in existence until the first day of July, 1845, and they levied no tax until the ensuing January, 1846. Nor were there any funds in their possession when they commenced operations. From what source, then, could this alleged sum have been obtained? The author does not *condescend* to inform us. But a report has been set on foot (probably emanating from the same source) that they had received £126 as their portion of the License Money. I am prepared to repel this charge. A Resolution passed the Council in September 1845, authorising the Mayor to make application to the Government for the expected portion of said money. But the following letters from the Provincial Secretary, dated respectively "17th December, 1845," and "20th April, 1846," show that the Council had received no portion of this money, nor were they even aware of the amount of their allowance, up to the last mentioned date, 20th April, 1846; and *then* only the trifling sum of "Forty-eight Pounds," instead of £126, as reported :—

" Secretary's Office,  
" Montreal, 17th Dec. 1845. }

" Sir,

With reference to your letters of the 30th of September and 6th ultimo, I have the honor, by command of the Administrator of the Government, to inform you that the subject of the action to be taken by the Government in regard to the mode of distributing to the several Municipal Councils the monies arising from the duties on Licenses to keep Houses of Entertainment under the provisions of the Act 8th Vic., c. 72, is under consideration,



and that you will not fail to be advised of His Excellency's decision as soon as possible.

" I have the honor to be,

" Sir,

" Your most obedt. Servant,

" D. DALY,

" Secretary."

" J. Wainright, Esq.,  
&c. &c. &c.

The following was received by the Secretary-Treasurer in April last :

" Secretary's Office,  
" Montreal, 20th April, 1846. }

" Sir,

I have the honor, by command of the Administrator of the Government, to inform you that the Receiver General of the Province has received His Excellency's instructions to pay to you the sum of Forty-eight pounds ; being the amount of the Tavern License monies payable to the Municipality of Argenteuil,\* under the authority of the Act 8th Victoria, cap. 72.

" I have the honor to be,

" Sir,

" Your most obedient servant,

" D. DALY,

" Secretary."

" G. Coursolles, Esq.,  
" Secretary-Treasurer."

I call upon the base author of the above accusation against the Council to *prove* the truth of his allegation. Until he can do so, *he must stand before the public charged with the propagation of calumny and falsehood.*

Great complaints have been made against the Council for neglecting to construct a Bridge on the Mail route over the River Rouge. " Why," it is inquired, " have not they attended to this matter ?" I answer, they have been retarded in the prosecution of their just designs by a *factious opposition* who have their own private interests, and not the public benefit, at heart. The Council cannot consistently make an appropriation of any sum until the whole is collected. " These three inhabitants," then, and others who acted with them, and *not* the Council, are the authors of this and other similar grievances.

\*This recognition on the part of the Government of the name "Municipality of Argenteuil" is—by the way—an unanswerable argument in favour of its legality and correctness.

View this subject, therefore, in whatever aspect you please, the proceedings of the Council are fair, honorable, and even constitutional; while the accusations of their enemies are unwarrantable, unprecedented, and unjust. The unchangeable principles of equity must eventually receive their appropriate deserts, and the ultimate success of the Council is beyond any doubt. Their regulations, so far as they do not contravene the intentions of the Law, will not be rendered null through informality, even though a special Act of Parliament be required to establish their legality. The disreputable attempts of ~~partial~~ demagogues to excite the people to rebellion, ought, therefore to be discarded, and their vile insinuations exposed. The strength of the Government will be employed, if necessity require it, to enforce the obedience of its laws. Are the people prepared for such a collision? If not, let them pause before they proceed so far under the banners of their present leaders that extrication will be impossible. Instead of condemning the Municipal Act without investigation, let them give it a fair trial. Let them lay aside those national, sectional, even religious distinctions by which they have hitherto been divided, and unite, as one man, to carry into effect the wise regulations which their Representatives in Parliament have enacted for their benefit. They will then have the control over, and the management of their own local affairs. Our neighbours and fellow-countrymen in Upper Canada present, in this respect, the aspect of a peaceful, contented, and happy people. Why may not we? Let us, my countrymen in this municipality, not be outdone by others in the improvement of our country. Deprived of "protection" in the markets, we must redouble our efforts, and endeavour to resuscitate the latent energies of this noble Province. I am not afraid of contradiction when I assert, that nobler and better resources are not to be found in any colony, than Canada now possesses.

*Political*

---

## PART II.

### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.

Doctrina sed vim promovet insitam,  
 Rectique cultus pectora roburant;  
 Utcunque defecere mores,  
 Dedecorant bene nata culpæ.

Hor. Lib. IV. Od. 4.

The education of youth is one of the most important subjects that ever engaged the attention of any free government. It is *knowledge* which most especially distinguishes man from the rest

of the animal creation, which gives him an undoubted superiority over every thing made by the Creator for his enjoyment or use, and places him in the undisputed possession of his natural inheritance. The human mind is capable of infinite expansion, and was evidently never designed to grovel away among the masses of ignorance, to lose its noble powers by inaction, or yield to the despotic sway of undisguised tyranny. In a word, knowledge is an essential property of freedom, the true *sine qua non* of civil liberty, the power which alone qualifies the human race to accomplish the important purposes of their being. Knowledge is emphatically *power itself*—the true *Archimedæan lever* which moves the world. Hence the necessity of making the subject of education a legislative consideration; for, as all governments are supposed to be established for the express benefit of the people, it is the unquestionable prerogative of civil rulers to turn their thoughts to such measures as will most tend to secure the prosperity and happiness of those over whom they are placed in authority; and it is their bounden duty to enact *such* laws, and make *such* regulations irrespective of personal or party conditions, with a view to promote the best interests of rising generations. And it will, no doubt, be found by a reference as well to the pages of history, as to the present aspect of society, that that people who have been the most enlightened and intelligent, have held the highest rank and the most prominent stations in the scale of nations. Acting upon this principle, Classical Greece rose to the wonder of her own and all succeeding ages; whilst the names of ~~Socrates~~, Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, Pythagoras, and Demosthenes will live long as sound learning, science and eloquence continue to be appreciated. Rome, who was for a time mistress of the world, owed her magnificence and splendour to the intelligence of her citizens. And it is more than probable that had not the arts and sciences declined, and luxury, indolence, and their concomitant evils entered within her walls, the "eternal city" would still remain, an imperishable monument of the infinite capacity of the human mind, and the durability of true greatness. Great Britain, (a name dear to every *Canadian ear*) by avoiding the rock upon which so many powerful nations have wrecked, has been acting upon a system which, if fully carried out, will ensure her continued prosperity and enduring renown. In our own country, we find matters, in this respect, evidently differing from those of almost all others. Few, if any, have been more highly favoured with original grants and government promises, than the people of Canada. But their object, through the instrumentality of covetous, egotistical, and designing men, whose only principle is passion, and whose ruling motive of action, self-interest and personal aggrandisement, has been inva-

+ ghalas

riably defeated ; the most splendid endowments ever made to any new country to advance its educational interests have been shamefully diverted from their intended purposes to serve the base and dishonest schemes of sectarian minions ; princely liberality itself has been outraged ; and charitable acts turned to the personal advantage of the genuine votaries of Mammon, disguised under the hypocritical garb of religious instructors. Efforts have, however, been made by the Legislature of our country to furnish means for the education of the youth, and to devise such a system as might best accord with the well-understood wishes, and the rapidly growing wants of the people. These attempts have been successful in the recent framing of a School System which, though in many respects as yet imperfect, will nevertheless be found of far greater benefit than any hitherto carried into operation in this Province. The government have only to watch well its workings, and beware of too frequent changes. Particular clauses of the Act might be expunged, or amended, or even new ones introduced, at the suggestion of any considerable portion of the people ; but the absolute *repeal* of the Act before the inhabitants have sufficient time to digest its contents, or to prove its tendency, ought in future to be avoided.

This law is founded upon the principle that *education is a public benefit*—than which nothing can be more correct. In accordance with this view, a tax is levied on all rateable property, to defray the necessary expenses of Elementary Education in the Province just the same as for any other public improvement—with the exception, that the importance of this exceeds that of all others, as far as the intellectual exceeds the physical man, or spiritual interests those of a temporal nature. And who (unless some old miserable bachelor, or niggardly miser) would not prefer giving a trifling sum every year towards the education of his neighbour's children, to suffering the consequences arising from their ignorance. Are not men more amiable in the social relations of life, to be educated ? Is not even property, that *idol* of the avaricious, more valuable when situated in the midst of an intelligent and virtuous society ? Is not education paramount to every thing else ? “ Seek first the goods of the mind,” says Lord Bacon, “ and the rest shall be supplied, or no way prejudiced by their absence.” The design of this Act is to do away, through the instrumentality of elementary schools, with those detestable distinctions which have hitherto existed, and bring the <sup>the</sup> coming generation, by *now* receiving an education together, nearer upon an equality. And it is admitted by many of those who have at present the highest school taxes to pay, that their expenses are even much less now, than when the old system was in force. Those whose aristocratic notions prevent

the allowing of their children to mix with those of their less opulent or less vain neighbours, will undoubtedly be dissatisfied. But let them abide the consequences of their vanity. Ours is a country in which no pompous titles or noble blood can afford an exemption from the ordinary requisitions of the law.

The writer of the pamphlet noticed in the preceding chapter, has made a furious attack upon the system of education in Lower Canada, *all* of which needs not to be repelled; indeed it sufficiently repels itself. He calls in question, without any reasoning or argument whatever, the wisdom of all modern legislation, and, like all superficial scribblers, is contented to rail at what he is incompetent to refute. He advocates a *return* to an old system which would throw this Province more than half a century behind the improvement of the present age. *Such* a proposition needs only to be mentioned that it may be rejected, and its author will require to conceal himself within the narrow enclosure of his own premises in order to escape the reproaches of his indignant countrymen. He will find a sufficiency of room to revel within the nut-shell of his own littleness. On pages 25 and 26 of the pamphlet, the author presents a table of the present expenses of elementary education for Canada East, which does as little credit to his honesty as to his knowledge of facts. By far the largest portion of the estimate exists only in his own imagination. The amount of the Superintendent's salary, £500, is all that can be ascertained with absolute certainty. Compare his statement of allowance to Clerks, Assessors, Collectors, &c. with the provisions of the Act. By the disposition of the 8th Vic. cap. 41, sec. 30, the Secretary-Treasurer is entitled only to "2½ per cent. on all monies by him received, but this sum shall cover all his contingent expenses." No salary is allowed. Now, let us make a probable estimate. On an average about £400 0 0 come into the hands of each Treasurer. He is then allowed the enormous sum of £10 0 0, instead of £30, as stated by this pamphleteer!!! The duty of assessment is performed by the Municipal Council, on application from the School Commissioners, who act upon a copy of the Council's valuation; and there are no collectors appointed, but the taxes are *received* by the Sec.-Treasurer, who notifies the people to come and pay them at his office. The host of Assessors and Collectors, therefore vanish, and with them the enormous salaries they are stated to have received. There is not indeed throughout the whole of this scandalous pamphlet a more reckless statement than that relative to the expenses of Elementary Education. I defy the seditious author, with all his boasted "acquaintance with the rights of men and things," to show from official sources that the expenses amount to *one third* of the sum he has stated.

But even admitting the correctness of the estimate alluded to, what, I ask, are a few paltry pounds, shillings and pence in the scale with the advantages of general education? It is a consideration infinitely beneath the dignity of a literary character to indulge it. If we want suitable books or competent teachers, we must expect to pay for them.

Every lover of his country will rejoice in the laudable efforts made by the Government to advance its educational interests. Thousands of indigent children who might, but for these exertions, prove to be a curse to their families and to society, will rise up to be ornaments of the Province and a blessing to mankind. To consummate this state of things, it is only necessary that every agency should be employed which can in any way secure the end designed. The whole weight of the Pulpit and the Press must be thrown into the scale. I shall conclude in the following words of a living Canadian writer: "The apathy hitherto manifested on the part of the public press upon this subject, and the more than affected indifference with which it has been treated by the great mass of the people, have effectually retarded the progress of the requisite improvement. Were our public journalists *more* active in the cause of general education, and *less* engaged in the party political contentions of the day, the best interests and prosperity of the country would be more effectually promoted. Canada is a young country, but the spirit of education in Canada is still younger. It is one which requires to be fostered and kept in exercise. The press is the powerful engine to effect, and the Palladium which is to preserve and transmit unimpaired to posterity the only efficient materials for this GREAT WORK."

FINIS.