

THE BULLFROG.

*Nec sumit aut ponit securus,
Arbitrio popularis aura.—Her.*

No. 29.

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THE GENERAL POST OFFICE.

In MACAULAY'S essay upon WARREN HASTINGS, the position of the Nabob of Bengal is thus described: "There was still a "Nabob of Bengal, who stood to the English rulers of his "Country in the same relation in which Augustulus stood to "Odoacer, or the last Merovingians to Charles Martel and "Pepin. He lived at Moorshedabad, surrounded by princely "magnificence. He was approached with outward marks of "reverence, and his name was used in public instruments.— "But in the government of the country he had less real share "than the youngest writer or cadet in the Company's service." Leaving princely magnificence out of the question, and making due allowance for the difference of position between the head of our Government and such men as Pepin and Odoacer, it would seem that the POST MASTER GENERAL of Nova Scotia has no more real share in the Government of the General Post Office than had REZA KHAN in the Government of Bengal. This is, however, the fault of our political system rather than of any individual public officer. When we obtained that inestimable boon, Responsible Government, we took good care to improve upon those old country principles which were unsuited to the inhabitants of a free country on this side of the Atlantic.— Those stupid, oppressed Englishmen, whose constitution we condescended to import, are silly enough to fancy that each department of the public service can be worked efficiently under one or more responsible persons, and that any Government interference with such responsible person, or persons, must inevitably be attended with detriment to the public service. We are wiser in this Province, and know full well that unless the head of the Government for the time being is also the head of every public department, nothing can possibly go right. There was clearly nothing to be gained from the creation of an Upper and Lower House, Speaker, Black Rod, &c., unless our leading politicians duly asserted their rights to control all around them. No liberal minded Colonial statesmen could be supposed to rest content with such limited patronage as is vested in the hands of British statesmen. It is not enough that the head of a Nova Scotian ministry should be allowed to nominate the heads of sundry departments—he must also assume the control of each department as a legitimate requisite of his office. The wisdom of this arrangement must be apparent to everyone unbiassed by the prejudices of the old world. The head of a ministry must necessarily be a sensible man, whereas the head of an Institution, such as the General Post Office, may be merely a careful man of business, well versed in the details of his department. Narrow minded individuals may argue, that a man who had passed many years of his life in looking after the interests of one particular branch of the public service, would probably better understand the requirements of that particular service than one whose life had been devoted to the study of general politics. Any such argument is manifestly absurd, inasmuch as the interests of any one public department are as nothing compared to the interests of the community at large. The Government, representing as it does the greatest men of the popular party for the time being, is of course justified in providing for its supporters without any reference whatever to the well working

of any particular department of the public service. We are well aware that this doctrine finds no favor in the Mother Country, but then it must be remembered that this is a young Country, and that Nova Scotians are apt to resent, as a sneer, any notice of their shortcomings. We, therefore, maintain, that the old Country system of politics is altogether faulty, whereas our political system is in all respects faultless. But this, after all, is merely an assertion, and if we fail to establish our position, it will be from lack of argument rather than lack of faith.

The POST MASTER GENERAL, being very properly deprived of all control over the appointment or dismissal of his subordinates, whether in town or country, cannot fairly be held responsible for the efficiency or non-efficiency of the postal department. This is as it should be; a Post Office official having interest with the Government of the day should of course be allowed to set the so-called POST MASTER GENERAL at open defiance. The public may at times complain, and assert itself the only sufferer, but, be it remembered, this is a free Country, and the mere assumption of rank is eminently distasteful to those honest Conservatives who introduced Universal Suffrage. Rank forsooth! the POST MASTER GENERAL is a nobody, so long as his clerks are friends of a Government affecting Lords and Commons. But this system of Government interference in small matters is occasionally productive of something seemingly akin to unfairness towards individuals. About a year ago, it so happened that two clerks were appointed to the Post Office under circumstances very peculiar indeed—even for a free Country. With little or no experience of the duties required of them, they yet found themselves in the receipt of precisely the same salaries as those paid to clerks who had worked assiduously in the Postal department for several years. Two young men who had served in the Post Office for four years at a low salary, were in a moment cut out by two elderly gentlemen whose chief recommendation for post office employ was their unfitness for employment anywhere else. These ancient clerks were nominated, not by the POST MASTER GENERAL, but by Provincial statesmen who were of course much better acquainted with the requirements of the Post Office than Mr. WOODGATE could fairly be supposed to be. We may here remark that the life of a clerk in the General Post Office is by no means an easy one. He works on an average sixty hours per week, for the same salary awarded clerks in other public offices where the work extends over a period of only thirty-six hours. For the Post Office clerk there is no vacation, no holiday, but almost continuous work for a pittance miserably small. Unlike those employed in other public departments, the Post Office clerks work chiefly by night, and are consequently subjected during the winter months to additional expense in their home consumption of oil and fuel. A glance at the working hours of a single week will convince any reasonable man that the Post Office clerks are underpaid. Let us take the week ending 11th Feb. 1865. Monday, 2 P.M. to 11 P.M.; Tuesday, 4.45 A.M. to 2 P.M.; Wednesday, 2 P.M. to 10.30 P.M.; Thursday, 5 A.M., to 3 P.M. and 6 P.M. to 7 A.M.; Friday, 11 A.M. to 11 P.M.; Saturday, 5 A.M. to 2 P.M. If work like this does not entitle the Post Office clerks to a higher rate of pay than clerks elsewhere em-

ployed, we can only say that we are mistaken in our estimate of Nova Scotian clarity. The effect of such constant night work is best illustrated by the fact that, within the last few years, three clerks have had to retire from the postal department owing to loss of sight. The whole department is in a state of almost hopeless confusion, owing to that pernicious system of Government interference which paralyses the action of the POST MASTER GENERAL. Mr. WOODGATE is in reality not the POST MASTER GENERAL, but rather the Post Master of Halifax, an office for which special provision should be made. Government interference prevents all hope of postal reform, and we can never expect to see the General Post Office properly conducted until the management of its affairs is vested solely in the hands of the POST MASTER GENERAL. It is the merest folly to dub a gentleman P. M. G. and at the same time not allow him to appoint or dismiss the subordinate officers of his own department as he may think fit. To allow a ministry to dispense Post Office appointments is not a whit less absurd than would be an attempt on the part of Lord PALMERSTON to give away the colonelcy of a regiment. But in this Province politics are the curse of the Post Office, as of every other institution subject to their baneful influence. It will scarcely be believed that although no fewer than 2,527,824 newspapers passed through the General Post Office during the year ending September, 1864, there is no regular staff of newspaper sorters, the duty of sorting papers being performed by the letter carriers. This fact fully accounts for the numerous notices which appear in the columns of the press regarding the non-delivery of newspapers. The letter carriers should be distinct from those employed within the Post Office, and it would be well if in Halifax, as in all European towns half its size, the carriers were distinguished by means of a uniform of some sort. The duty of sorting papers should be performed by young men appointed for this important duty, and at the same time kept in training for promotion to clerkships should any vacancies occur. The Post Office might very easily be reformed if the so-called POST MASTER GENERAL was allowed to manage his own department, but, as we before remarked, Government interference is the bane of our public Institutions, as politics are the curse of the community. If our public men would only attend a little more to the present affairs of the Province and a little less to its possible future, we might make a better figure in the eyes of the world in general.

INCIDENTS OF THE UNION DISCUSSION.

There is a story on record of a trial for sheep stealing, the chief interest of which hinged upon the difficulty of proving whether the field, from which the sheep had been stolen, was square or oblong. Some of the questions discussed in the newspapers in connection (?) with the Federation scheme, seem to have been equally to the point, so far as the merits of the scheme were involved. The following are among the least irrelevant questions brought before the public.

1. A correspondence between MESSRS. ANNAND and McCULLY, relative to the interior economy of the office of the *Morning Chronicle*. This question was of paramount interest to the public in general, inasmuch as the public cares nothing for the arguments put forth in the *Chronicle*, but attaches great weight to the individuality of those who write for the public press. The public has naturally gained much valuable information from this direct method of dealing with the Union question in its broadest aspects.

2. Various speculations as to the writer of the articles headed "The Botheation Scheme."

3. A discussion in the *Colonist* upon the relative claims of MESSRS. HOWE and TUPPER to be considered great statesmen.

4. Sundry futile attempts on the part of the *Unionist*, to

enlighten the public as to the individuality of the *Bullfrog* writers. The immense importance to the general public of the issue involved in these attempts must convince all right minded persons that the *Unionist* is the "best conducted paper in the Province," and that the *Unionist* writers disprove in their own persons the assertion that "small countries produce small men."

5. A correspondence of three and a half columns of small print between MESSRS. McCULLY and E. M. McDONALD, upon the tactics of the liberal party in Nova Scotia. None but the most enthusiastic students of Provincial literature having read this correspondence, its publication cannot be said to have produced any very startling effects upon the minds of those undecided as to the merits of the Federation scheme.

6. A question as to whether the *Chronicle* or the *Unionist* was most to blame regarding personality, likewise a wager upon this important point. It was found impossible to decide this wager, inasmuch as neither paper seems to know what really constitutes personality in journalism. Hearken—both *Chronicle* and *Unionist*. There is no more offensive and unwarrantable form of personality than that common to both of you—viz.—saying, "Mr. so and so, in yesterday's issue of such and such a paper, said this or that." Views published in newspapers should not be regarded as those of any particular individual, but rather as those of the journal wherein they are set forth. This rule holds good in countries less advanced than ours, and should be carried out by those who assert that Nova Scotians have not in this Province a field wide enough for their ambition.

7. An article headed "The wild man of the mountain," likewise a reply thereto—neither having any point whatever.

8. Many articles penned, seemingly, with no object save to convince dispassionate lookers on that all those who take a leading part in Provincial politics are notoriously corrupt, dishonest, inconsistent, and untrustworthy. It is not easy to perceive what the public has gained by all this. Let those who assert that we are ripe for "greatness," reflect upon the conduct of our "fourth estate" in connection with the only question of any magnitude which has ever come before it, and then say whether Nova Scotia is not large enough for the peevish, school-boy wrangles, of those who seek to guide public opinion.

OUR POLITICAL PRESS.

It would, all things considered, be unreasonable to expect in Halifax that polish and refinement of manner which are the attributes of the upper classes in European capitals; but, on the other hand, there is no reason why courtesy and suavity should not be cultivated in Halifax as in London and Paris. The writers for our political press may not have that power of language to be met with in the columns of the *Times*, but it is at least in their power to exercise forbearance, charity, and moderation. Without in any way abandoning a principle a great deal may be effected by a conciliatory manner. "No one," says BULWER, "overcomes the difficulties in his way by acridity and spleen. Hannibal, in spite of the legend, did not dissolve the Alps by vinegar. Power is so characteristically calm, that calmness in itself has the aspect of power. And forbearance implies strength. The orator who is known to have at his command all the weapons of invective, is most formidable when most courteous." We might quote as illustrative of the truth of these remarks the present tone of the English papers. When a public man merits chastisement, he receives it as soundly from the *Times*, or the *Saturday Review*, as his worst foes could wish, but these journals never use harsh words—they may sometimes cut deep in order to effect a complete cure, but they never bruise merely for the sake of inflicting pain. There is, after all, no style of writing more easy than that of

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coarse personal detraction. Any one can write a man down a knave, or a fool, but it is not every one who can compose a dignified article, the perusal of which will convince an unprejudiced person that the man of whom he has been reading must necessarily be a knave or a fool. Coarse expressions are often the only weapons which an uneducated man can command, and in a warfare of this nature a gentleman has no chance whatever against a costermonger. Seeing, therefore, that a man of intelligence and education cannot, so far as strong language is concerned, compete successfully with those immeasurably his inferiors in all other accomplishments, it is surely prudent for a gentleman to avoid an encounter, wherein the mere fact of his being a gentleman must prevent him proving victorious. The wisdom of such a course must be readily admitted by all who write for the Halifax press, yet still, day after day, and week after week, we find the columns of our local papers teeming with language such as in ordinary life would not be tolerated for an instant. How is this: can it be that men once launched upon the stormy sea of politics fancy themselves justified in writing of a political opponent in terms which they would not use in private life towards the humblest menial of their establishment? Is it absolutely necessary that we, Nova Scotians, should in this nineteenth century be perpetually informing all around us that our foremost politicians, those who are supposed to represent the highest intelligence of Nova Scotia, are men with whom no gentleman could possibly associate? If to accept Office really qualifies a man for being publicly pilloried, the sooner our form of Government is altered the better for public morality. We often wonder whether our political writers ever reflect upon the probable effect of their writings upon the minds of strangers. Suppose an Englishman were to publish a work upon Nova Scotians as represented by their metropolitan press—would the account be altogether flattering to our pride? We fancy not. Or, suppose an Englishman who had resided among us for some years, thought proper to enter the Imperial Parliament, and was placed upon a committee appointed to examine and report upon the testimony of two of our leading statesmen with regard to Federation! What opinion would such an one entertain of our politicians? He would be in honor bound to say to his fellow committee men: "You must not believe a word these Nova Scotian statesmen say—they are utterly untrustworthy, and in every sense as bad as bad can be—the Halifax press is my authority, and it must be better informed on such matters than any of us." And if all this came to the knowledge of Nova Scotians, how angry they would be, and how our press would be down upon our so-called *trader*. Yet, in such a case, the Halifax press only would be to blame. We do not make these remarks in a spirit hostile to any one of our contemporaries, but we cannot shut our eyes to the ultimate consequences of a style of journalism which should be very foreign to the taste of a community such as ours. We would, in all honesty and good faith, ask our contemporaries the plain question—is it wise that our population should be educated in a thorough contempt for those to whom from time to time we entrust the government of this Province? Must not such teaching tend eventually to weaken the whole fabric of our constitution,—to create general suspicion and mistrust—to paralyse the action of our ablest men, and to bring reproach upon Responsible Government itself? Our politicians have already conducted themselves in a manner which called forth the following withering language from the leading journal of the world:—"Imagine the tension of interest, the excitement of passion with which they fight and struggle to gain or retain place! Imagine the triumphant exultation of the victors as they grasp, the frantic anger of the vanquished as they yield, the spoil!" We would fain consider this language exaggerated, but how can we do so while we have before us the language of the Halifax press? Read the following passage taken, almost at random,

from a paper which, in a purely literary sense, is perhaps the best paper published in Halifax. "But Dr. Tupper who has all the vulgar impertinence that certain snobs display when in company with their betters, and who took delight in spitting his venom at the Duke of Newcastle when that wise, good duke was dying, this sixty pound city medical Officer and four hundred pound Secretary, this forty pound delegate to Charlottetown, hundred pound delegate to Ottawa, and general shareholder in the public pickings, &c., &c." Now, we would ask the *Citizen* two questions,—(1.) Is this a style of writing calculated to improve the tone either of our politics or of the public? (2.) Is it not the duty of journalists to endeavour to raise the tone of society? Our contemporary may possibly tell us to "mind our own business," but we maintain it is for the interest of journalism in general that newspapers should avoid such passages as that quoted. We know no more of Dr. TUPPER and his colleagues than we know of Mr. McCULLY and his colleagues, and our only object in penning these remarks is to check, if possible, that intense and unnecessary bitterness for which the Colonial press is so unfortunately celebrated. We have attentively studied the columns of the *Citizen* from the date of its first appearance until now, and we know of no Provincial paper better qualified in the science of legitimate hard hitting. But we maintain that the paragraph quoted oversteps the bounds of legitimate political warfare, and conveys to the general reader an idea that the writer of the paragraph in question was angry while he wrote. We need hardly say that any, even the most remote signs of anger are out of place in a newspaper. A journalist should never write as a mortified individual, but rather as a dispassionate looker on, anxious that the public should adopt that particular view which he, himself, thinks fitting and correct. This is especially the case with journalists who come before the public under a general heading. The *Times* may change its opinion as often as it pleases so long as it is called the *Times*, whereas the *Standard*, so long as it indicates the rallying point of the British Conservative party must necessarily advocate Conservative views. Again, the *Saturday Review* is at liberty to review all the events of the week in any spirit its managers may think proper, while the *Globe* must, in order to further the supposed interests of mankind in general, advocate so-called liberal views. And the same rule holds good, or ought to hold good, in Halifax. The *Reporter* is in duty bound to report all matters of even the most trifling importance, and the *Bullfrog* is justified in indulging in a prolonged croak about things in general. But the "Halifax Citizen" should necessarily reflect the views, not of any individual citizen, but of the great mass of liberal citizens, but few of which ever trouble their heads regarding the personality of the "City Medical Officer." Some one must look after the sick of our city, and if Dr. TUPPER can find time to do so, it is rather to his credit than otherwise. We cannot conclude this article without reminding those who write for the Halifax press that journalism is a profession which, for the interest of the public in general, should be honoured rather than despised. Every professional journalist must finally render an account of his stewardship, and although all cannot hope to win distinction, it is yet in the power of the humblest public writer to do good or evil. What THACKERAY said regarding certain great men of letters, applies equally to the profession of journalism. "It may not be our chance, brother scribe, to be endowed with such merit, or rewarded with such fame. But the rewards of these men are rewards paid to our service. We may not win the baton or epaulettes, but God give us strength to guard the honor of the flag!"

PARAGRAPH A-LA-MODE.—A butterfly was seen near the N. W. Arm on 29th March, 1865.

OUR ENGLISH CORRESPONDENT'S LETTER.

MR. EDITOR.—Although you expect to hear from me only with English Correspondence, I think it not unlikely that if I pass away my time on board ship by writing you some account, (not a diary) of my voyage home to the "Old Country", my letter will be acceptable, the more so, as I do not travel by the ordinary route—the Cunard Steamers, but by a sailing vessel; for if you Nova Scotians have just pride in any one thing, it is assuredly in your mercantile marine, and, moreover, I presume your chief interests revolve round it.

Never mind the date, but the wind was blowing a frosty northerly breeze, and the Sun was shining as only North American Suns do shine, when I was waiting on the wharf alongside of which the barque was lying moored, "all hands aboard and ready for sea," as the log recorded the day before, and I was wondering why you Halifaxians don't build stone docks, instead of your wretched wooden wharves. Surely, in a harbour like yours, exposed as it is to northerly winds that know well "how to blow a good'un," those wooden wharves must be an expensive economy. Why—you must spend every few years as much in repairs to your shipping and to the wharves themselves, as would build fine durable stone docks, to say nothing of the loss of time in lading and unlading unsheltered vessels—and then my eye wandered over the water to Dartmouth, pretty Dartmouth. And if I could understand what you do with all the Rum, Sugar, Molasses, &c., entered at your Custom House, I should wonder why you don't build fine stone docks on its sloping shores, and erect huge warehouses in the place of the wretched tumble down shanties, which at present stand as a monument of disgrace to enterprise: I do not understand the course of your trade; but as you have now got two Temperance Societies, you can't possibly consume all the Rum, and as, if I may judge from the column of "Things talked of in Halifax," you are not sweet enough to find a home market for all the Sugar and Molasses, I must suppose that you have to store these goods somewhere before shipping them to Newfoundland, or Canada, or wherever you do send them, and I consequently am surprised at Dartmouth's neglected state. And then again, I was watching that strange steam Noah's Ark, the Sir C. Ogle,—it was entertaining my sense of the nasty reminiscences of journeys taken in it. There is a mixed dish of smells always about it, animal and mechanical which, per-chloride of iron itself could not deodorize. I cannot enumerate all the ingredients: there was steam and oil, and tobacco smoke, and the mildew of expectorated tobacco juice, &c., and the odor arising from people's damp clothes, and dirty dogs, and dirty Irishmen, Dutchmen, Indians, Negroes, and omnium gatherum of humanity, and there were draughts of wind whenever the door opened carrying in the smells of a farm yard without the straw—and really a trip to Dartmouth seems to me to be a more formidable undertaking to a lady of refinement than a journey across the Atlantic.

It is the province of newspaper correspondents to run off the track whenever they see any thing on the road—as for the great George Augustus Sala, (Special Commissioner,) when he goes to write for the English public about that great struggle which is heaving a large nation into an era of barbarism, and grieving and disturbing the whole civilized world; why he can't even see a lady's bonnet, or eat an apple pie, without filling up a column or two of the *Daily Telegraph* with his views thereon. Well, you must not blame us, we are chit-chatting upon paper—we are trying to shoot the manners as they fly and there is a regular battue of manners always flying about us, and we can't help having a shot, and sometimes a long shot as they pass,—besides, I said: I was waiting on the wharf, and a too potent reason was keeping us there,—the cook was ashore and could not be found. Says Captain: "If it was only the mate now, or any one else, I would not lose this fine wind for him, but one can't go to sea without a Cook." Strange, is it not, how dependent mankind is on the stomach, even that kind of man who lives on salt pork. At last the cook appeared, and to the tune of the Captain's relieved shout, "Cast off!" I jumped on board and we glided so noiselessly down the stream that the wooden wharves, and wooden warehouses seemed to be moving past us, instead of our moving past them. How different from the scene of departure one experiences in a steamer, with its whistling, and steaming, and shaking and quaking, and smelling! As it was, we could scarcely conceive that we were moving, and it was only

when distance commenced to lend its enchantment to the view of Halifax, that I could realize that I was leaving your shores perhaps for the last time, and as we passed McNab's Island, although every feeling within me was playing "Home Sweet Home" upon my heart strings, making me too joyous to think of other things, I could not help admiring the beautifully composed picture behind us, for surely Turner himself could not improve the composition of Halifax as seen from this point—the low sun shedding his coloured glories over it; and I could not but experience regret at leaving many kind friends, and the scene of many happy days. I had but lately come there after a residence of two years in Canada West. I had come from a flat ugly country to a hilly pretty one, from an atmosphere of sadless air to a sea girt land, from a city where ruin, desolation, and woe, were dancing to a dead-alive tune; a "trois temps" of unreality, retrogression, and despair, to a city where all was busy, active, prosperous life,—from a country peopled by effeminate men and coquetted women, to one where real men and women live and move and have their being,—from a country where hospitality is sought for as Mr. Sponge sought for it, where it is given by people with their eyes uncommonly wide open, to one where it is a thing revered and respected to such an extent that I might almost fancy that Halifax is peopled by the Earl Yuiols of the Blue Mountains of Jamaica, who had come and settled and prospered there—indeed if I were not writing for the *Bullfrog*, which devotes its chief energies to putting down the personalities with which the press in your city seeks to increase its circulation, by tampering to the worst feelings of human nature, I should like to mention by name the families of a Banker, a Government Official, a Merchant, a young man rising to fill a position he will adorn, and last not least, the family of a Mechanic—but as I agree with you, it is not right to give publicity to private actions unostentatiously performed, it is sufficient that I note as my thoughts on seeing Halifax perhaps for the last time, that it is a man's own fault if he does not meet with consideration and hospitality from all grades of your society, from the Banker to the Mechanic.

I have gone so completely off the track, and I find I have been writing you so long a letter about land matters, that I have no space for any thing about the sea.

Yours,
"EAGLE EYE."

IMAGINARY CONVERSATION.

No 3.

Scene. Saloon of R. M. S. *Fidlestyria*, 2 days out from Halifax, time—noon.

Enter Nova Scotian and Englishman.

Nova Scotian. Luncheon time! I wonder what there is for luncheon. Ah! lobsters. Steward, are those Halifax lobsters? Yes, of course they are (*to Englishman*) our lobsters, Sir, are unrivalled both for size and flavour, allow me to give you some.

Englishman. Thanks, they are not bad but hardly so superior to those of other lands, as you would lead me to believe.

Nova Scotian. We are sending some to the Dublin Exhibition.

Englishman, *drily*. Indeed.

Nova Scotian. You English gentlemen are always ready sneer at Colonial produce. I have often noticed it.

Englishman. I think you are in error; we do not sneer at the produce, but at the want of knowledge of the world which induces some of you gentlemen to be forever crying up your productions. Really good things require no puffing.

Nova Scotian, *mildly*. I merely wanted you to make a good luncheon, Sir.

Englishman. Thanks, I mean no offence, but do you not think that there is a germ of truth in what I say? You have many things to be proud of in Nova Scotia. Let them speak for themselves. And many things to be ashamed of—

Nova Scotian. What?

Englishman. Your public men and your press, and they unfortunately do speak for themselves.

Nova Scotian. Well, Sir, you are rather severe, I fancy they will improve. This union will effect much, no doubt.

Englishman. You must confess that you have at present no politician of whom you can justly be proud.

Nova Scotian. Since Judge Johnston's retirement—no, Mr. Howe, too, is gone.

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Englishman. A very clever man, but I am told that he introduced the use of personalities into your debates—is it so?

Nova Scotian. I cannot tell, but we have some rising men.

Englishman, warmly. That may be, but so long as your leaders are so snobbish as to be constantly thinking of how they appear before us, and what others will think of their acts, instead of doing what seems to them for the good of their country—they cannot rise above mediocrity in Nova Scotia or gain ought but the contempt of the civilized world.

Nova Scotian. You seem to take a great interest in our Provincial affairs.

Englishman. I hate seeing people make asses of themselves (fumbles in his pocket) read this.

Nova Scotian reads from Unionist. "There is not a man of mark in any of the Provinces but whose name will be a household word, before the matter is finally disposed of, among four millions of people on this side of the Atlantic, and whose fame will not be more or less wide spread in Great Britain itself."

Englishman. Well, what do you think of that?

Nova Scotian. It merely shews what most men have always thought, that the late L—r of the O—n is no statesman. He shews so clearly that his object is self-aggrandisement.

Englishman. Well, you grant he is not fit to be a leader of the people. For my own part I should much regret to see the *Unionist* upon a drawing room table in England. No; I trust the name of the writer of this may not become a household word in my part of England. Ah, here comes Mr. B—, do you know him? A great Montreal merchant. M. P— let me introduce Mr. B—.

Nova Scotian. How is Confederation getting on in Canada Mr. P.?

Canadian. Well, I don't know. I suppose our legislature have got all they want—time to patch up a truce amongst themselves. I don't think much will come of it. The people don't care much about Union, they are more interested in the disunion part of the business, the separation of Upper from Lower Canada, a great mistake in my thinking.

Englishman. You are in favor, even though a Lower Canadian, of a legislative Union some day.

Nova Scotian, rather pertly. Oh yes, but Dr. Tupper and Mr. McCully have told us that such is impossible. Mr. McCully spoke long and well about a something Union of England and Scotland and said that—

Canadian, hotly. Who is Mr. McCully? What does he know about Canada? (*Sighing*) I beg your pardon, excuse my ignorance. I am no politician.

Englishman, cheerily. Ha, no, you see the household word reputation is not made yet. Let us go and have a cigar on deck. Your lobsters are certainly very good, and Nova Scotia can get on well enough without pulling.

Local and other Items.

Our esteemed contemporary, the *Express*, aims at nothing short of a complete revolution in the opinions commonly entertained regarding the difference between verse and prose. Our contemporary would seem to occupy the position which Byron ascribed to Wordsworth:—

Who, both by precept and example, shows
That prose is verse, and verse is merely prose.

We had the hardihood to assert that Moore's "Epicurean" was not a poem, but the *Express* contradicts our assertion because Moore says in his preface, that he had originally intended to write the "Epicurean" in verse, and that he saw no objection to having the "Epicurean" bound up along with his poems. We confess that there is more in our contemporary's literary eccentricity than was "ever dreamt of in our philosophy." We have before us an edition of Macaulay's Essays wherein is incorporated the "Lays of Ancient Rome." We must, therefore, in order to please the *Express*, endeavour to tutor ourselves into the belief that Macaulay's Essays are, in reality, poems. Well, we must perforce accept the judgment of the *Express* as final, and allow that all poetic ideas, no matter how expressed, constitute legitimate poetry. (Johnson, it is true, defines a poem as "a composition in verse," but Johnson did not live in a "free country," and his dictionary finds no favor in the eyes of Colonial journalists.) But in the article, no—we must not call it an article—in the gorgeous *Lyric* of the *Express*, we are informed that Fenelon's "Telemachus" is one of the

"most beautiful poems" published in the French language. Our contemporary must surely never have "seen or read" Telemachus, which is no more a poem than is "Rasselas," or "The Epicurean." Were we to adopt the views of the *Express*, we should say that the *Gleanings of Europe*, headed "Bullfrog Criticism," was, despite its magnificent imagery about "blue and gold,"—"young maidens from sixteen to twenty" &c., &c.,—taken as a whole, inferior to that brilliant *Epic* published not long since under the truly poetical heading "The Croaker." We shall in future notice the articles which may appear in the *Express* as mere poetical effusions, inasmuch as the tendency of our contemporary is eminently poetical. We cannot, it is true, conscientiously rank Moore with Shakespeare or Milton, nor can we see any analogy between the "Epicurean" and the Psalms of David, or the book of Job, both the latter being written in verse. But we cannot but admire the spirit wherein the *Express* alludes to the officers of the British Army—(what connection the latter can have with Moore's "Epicurean" is not apparent)—"school-boys, captains, and lieutenants in the army, boarding school Misses, and other half educated people," &c., &c. The *Express* does not go far enough. Radicalism should not stop short at this point, but should rather declare that the whole British army is a job, kept up for advancing the interests of the younger sons of an overbearing aristocracy, &c., &c. We should like to see an article, no—a *ode* from the *Express* upon a subject ever popular with a certain class. We must congratulate our contemporary on its increasing knowledge of French literature. It is not very long since the *Express* avowed its inability to comprehend the meaning of French terms as applied to the dishes served up at the dinner to our late Mayor. But this is an age of progress.

The "Grand Tyrolean Concert" with which Mr. and Mrs. Khern, and some others, favored the Halifax public on Tuesday last was, in its way, the most dismal entertainment ever puff'd by the city press. It was pretty generally believed that the chief performers were in indigent circumstances, and that the patronage solicited for the concert was accorded merely as a charity. We cannot see that the mere fact of one or more individuals having utterly mistaken their vocation, entitles them to any claim upon the good nature of the general public.—It is absurd to suppose that poverty or misfortune can justify imposture, and as the Halifax press invariably pulls every entertainment advertised in its columns, we must do our best to warn the public against being duped by such charlatans as from time to time visit this city. The performance of Tuesday last was beneath criticism. None of the singers came up to the level of even respectable mediocrity, and we cannot but consider their high sounding advertisement as an insult to the musical taste of the community. If these would-be-professional vocalists want pecuniary aid, and are fairly entitled to compassion, let them state the circumstances of their case and produce certificates of character, and we shall be among the first to proffer a helping hand,—but we emphatically protest against a repetition of a performance such as that of last Tuesday. Mediocre as was the singing, it was angelic as compared with the words set to music. Listen to the following stanza, from "The Hunter's Life on the Alps":—

He, vers'd with hunters' lore,
Ready for what may befall;
Hunters honored are by all;
Bravely stands the hunter firm.—*Idem.*

Without pausing to consider the precise nature of the spot wherein the Alpine hunter stands, we hurry on to another stanza descriptive of "Alpine Life":—

What delight 'tis to see the Sun uprising,
And to hear birds' songs ascending in the sky;
When in the wood is first heard the cuckoo's voice,
Then we know 'tis the season to rejoice.—*Idem.*

The noises made by songs while mounting heavenwards are doubtless unearthly. The words of the *trio* which concluded the entertainment are most significant:—

Yes! we must be parted,
It may be forever.

We wish Mr. Khern a pleasant journey back to his favorite Alps.

We have before us a blue book entitled "Rev. Dr. Honeyman's Geological survey in Nova Scotia and Cape Breton." Dr. Honeyman is not only a D.C.L., and F.G.S., but is also the very worst writer of the English language that it has ever been our misfortune to criticize. We should like to give our readers some Geological information regarding this Province, but we fear that any extracts from Dr. Honeyman's letters to the Provincial Secretary, or to the Lieutenant Governor, would prove hopelessly unintelligible to the general public. The following extracts, taken almost at random, will prove the truth of our assertion:—"I did not intend to submit to His Excellency a full report, with maps and specimens, which I expected to do after the snows of winter interrupted my field work."—"A topographical survey being necessary in

"order to a proper geological survey, as there are no maps extant, &c."—
 "The General Mining Association and others have spent much time
 "and money in attempts to win (i.e. to gain by conquest or play) the
 "more important metallic veins, &c."—"The determinations (i.e. the
 "decisions, or resolutions) of this locality have also shed considerable
 "light upon the geology of other localities, &c."—"The age and po-
 "sition of these substances which constitute to wealth, &c."—"If there
 "are any veins of metals, of which a surface specimen appears to indi-
 "cate one, &c."—"A circumstance (i.e. an accident, an event), of in-
 "terest connected with this district is that extending from the western
 "entrance of the Marsly Hope, to Sutherland's River,—the part to which
 "I have especially directed, &c., &c."—"It would have been very de-
 "sirable, in order to prevent misunderstanding, that Dr. Dawson had
 "indicated the course of his line of section, &c. * * although as I
 "stated in my memoir to the Geological Society on Arisaig, the arrange-
 "ment there in consequence of the absence of A, in connection with the
 "mountain greenstone and the doubtful occurrence of B, in the same
 "direction, &c."—"Our coal measures are being worked, while ores
 "for the proper working of which that coal is necessary, are or may be
 "unworked." We fancy that our readers have had nearly enough of
 this Rev. Dr. Honeyman, D.C.L., F.G.S., &c., &c. ad infinitum. We
 sincerely hope that the Rev. gentleman's sermons are better composed
 than his Geological Reports.

The *Unionist* is always blowing its own trumpet. Its latest perfor-
 mance in this harmless exercise has been to italicise a portion of the fol-
 lowing sentence from the *Times*—"In the event of war it is clear, that
 all our Provinces must be placed under one command," and then to say—
 "This it will be seen is but a mere echo of sentiments, &c.," published in
 the *Unionist*. No one, we presume, ever supposed that in the event
 of war these Provinces would not be placed under one command. In the
Bullfrog of 22nd Feb., occurred the following passage—"In case of war
 "all B. N. America would be under one military leader, and the im-
 "mediacy of the several Provinces would be no more regarded than the
 "individuality of regiments serving under one general officer, or of allies
 "under the control of one Commander-in-Chief." Who ever argued
 otherwise? Perhaps our contemporary will enlighten us on this point.

The *Reporter* of Thursday last says that at a recent meeting of the Hall
 Cricket Club—"It was resolved to communicate with the several Clubs
 relative to preparing a suitable ground." If the several Clubs
 be really in earnest, they would do well to bear in mind that every day
 lost at this time of the year must increase the difficulties of getting a
 cricket ground in order for the coming season.

Extracts.

THE DEFENCES OF CANADA.

It is not necessary, in discussing the defence of Canada, to enter into
 any minute calculation of the chances of an attack by the United States.
 Mr. BAILEY tells us that the Americans have extremely ill-used
 by us; that they have a superiority among them; that they hold in re-
 serve complaints to be brought forward at a more convenient season;
 that Canada lies helplessly at their mercy; but that they are much too
 magnanimous to take advantage of the opportunity. Let us hope that
 the Federals are as amicable as their advocate paints them; but still the
 question of defence is always this—Can our neighbour see us safely at-
 tack us? not Will he do so? On this principle of "defence, not de-
 fiance," the Volunteer force was raised, not only without leading to a
 rupture with France, but with the best possible effect on our relations
 with that country. An effective system of defence for Canada is equal-
 ly called for by Mr. LINCOLN has the power to crush the colony, how-
 ever little he may be now or hereafter disposed to use that power; and
 we have no doubt whatever that, the stronger Canada becomes, the more
 friendly will be the intercourse between Great Britain and the Northern
 States. France has not been angry because we declined to stake our
 safety on her forbearance; and the United States will be rational enough
 to see that, if Canada is, as they rightly or wrongly suppose, at present
 absolutely defenceless against them, it is no sign of ill-will on the part
 of this country to give to her greatest colony the privilege of relying for
 security upon its own strength rather than upon the benevolent disposi-
 tions of a warlike neighbour.

That Canada ought to be defended was not, indeed, denied by any
 speaker in the important debate of Monday evening. The only ques-
 tions raised were, who was to defend her, and how was it to be done?
 Mr. FITZGERALD, in his laudable anxiety to say nothing but what was
 flattering to the people against whom he was pressing the Government
 to prepare, was betrayed into a statement which may have a very mis-
 chievous effect in Canada. He said—and other members took up the
 cry—that the Americans could have no inducement to attack the colony
 except the desire to strike a blow at England. This is the theory by
 which the Canadians, in their sluggish moods—now, it may be hoped,
 past for ever—have justified the utter neglect of their own duty of self-

defence. "If we are attacked," they said, "it will be in an English
 "quarrel, and let England save us harmless from dangers which we
 "should not incur if separated from her." The existence of Canada
 depends on her shaking off this delusion, and it is unfortunate that any
 contentance should have been given to it by English statesmen, even
 with the amiable design of speaking kindly of the United States. If
 ever the party in America which desires war with England should be-
 come predominant, we shall find that there are two considerations which
 make them anxious for hostilities—one, because they wish to humiliate
 England; the other, and the stronger, because they covet the possession
 of Canada. The colony, if severed from this country, would be in vast-
 ly greater danger of attack from cupidity than it is now from the com-
 bined influence of greed and revenge, cherished as those feelings are by
 the consciousness of what a war with England would be. Without the
 help of England, Canada could scarcely maintain her freedom though
 she showed all the heroism of old Virginia. Without the hearty co-
 operation of the Canadians, England could not hold the colony if her
 strength were double what it is. But there is good reason to believe
 that England and Canada, working cordially together, would be more
 than a match for any force that could be brought against them. And
 not only is the necessity for joint action apparent, but the conditions of
 the partnership are almost dictated by the circumstances of the case.
 Naval defences, and that effective protection which is given by counter
 attacks, would of necessity be the exclusive task of this country. The
 actual defence of the interior must be, in the main, the work of the in-
 habitants, encouraged and assisted by the invaluable support and im-
 pulsion which a small force of highly disciplined troops can render to
 a people rising in force to resist an invader. We know, and to some
 extent the Canadians know also, how rapidly a few Guards' sergeants
 can convert a mob of enthusiastic volunteers into manageable and ef-
 fective soldiers; and Mr. LOWE's nostrum of removing the English
 garrison altogether from Canada can only be justified on the assumption
 either that the Canadians would be strong enough to hold their own
 without ordinary training, or that they would be strong enough to form
 the nucleus of British troops sent out to take the lead in their military or-
 ganization. We do not believe in either of these contingencies. The
 colonists are neither experienced enough to train themselves for a strug-
 gle which, if forced upon them, will come with little warning; nor are
 they so wanting in manly patriotism as to leave a little band of Eng-
 lish defenders unsupported by the vast numerical strength which a peo-
 ple of nearly 4,000,000 can so well supply. Mr. LOWE's plan, and
 Canada's part in the defence of the American frontier of the Empire
 are, in now well enough understood on both sides. The colonists know
 that the sole condition required to induce this country to put out her
 whole strength for their protection is that they should do all in their
 power in a cause which is, we will not say more, but at least not less,
 theirs than our own. There is good ground to hope that this condition
 is not only understood, but accepted, by our Transatlantic fellow-sub-
 jects as the only one on which it is possible for England to render the
 assistance which she is very willing to give. After the assurances of
 Lord PALMERSTON and Mr. CARDWELL in the late debate, no doubt
 should linger in the minds of the colonists as to the readiness of Eng-
 land to risk much rather than adopt the tactics recommended by Mr.
 LOWE, of limiting our efforts to counter attacks on the common enemy.
 From a purely military point of view, it is true that much might be
 said in favour of this mode of economizing the limited army of which
 our generals could dispose. But, in war, moral forces are, according to
 the maxim of NAPOLEON, of far more weight than mere material
 strength, and the influence of a British contingent on the energies of the
 Canadian people and the morale of their hastily raised militia would
 much more than counterbalance any advantage that might be gained by
 concentrating the Canadian garrison on a number of fortified posts.
 The British soldier in the Provinces ought to raise up ten native recruits;
 and the Canadians will scarcely fail to see that it is only on this sup-
 position that any military justification could be found for locking up our
 best regiments within the fortifications of Quebec or Montreal.

When once the policy of Mr. Lowe is rejected, as it was not only by
 the Executive, but by the almost unanimous feeling of the House of
 Commons, there remains little choice among the measures which can be
 suggested. Colonel Jervis's report, short as it is, exhausts the subject
 so far as the principle of defence is concerned. Vital points must be
 fortified, as the only way of holding at bay an enemy who would inevi-
 tably wield a superior force at the commencement of a war. A com-
 plete protection of the whole frontier must be postponed as impracticable
 until such time as the Canadian army shall have acquired sufficient
 strength to meet the enemy in the open field. But, in the meantime,
 the St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario may be, and indeed must be, held
 by an adequate naval force, supported by fortified depots where it can
 take in supplies in safety. These are the only preparations which it is
 possible for this country to share in; and, for the rest, it remains for
 the colonies to call out their militia, and give them at least the rudiments
 of military training, before the actual advent of hostilities, if war should
 unhappily ensue. No one in the House of Commons ventured to com-
 plain that the Government had entered upon the course we have indica-
 ted; and the only ground for anxiety is the well-founded doubt whether,
 on either side of the Atlantic, the value of promptitude is adequately
 appreciated. A sum of 50,000,000 is proposed to be taken this year for
 the works at Quebec, and we are glad to find that Mr. Cardwell promises
 much more energetic action in the second year of preparation; but who
 can say that so much time will be allowed us, and what evidence is there
 that the Canadians will fall to work more actionably at Montreal than
 the Home Government propose to do at Quebec? It is well known that
 the great hindrance to effective local defence has all along been the com-
 parative poverty of a new country which has almost overtaxed its pow-
 ers in the construction of railways and canals. The adjustment of the
 burden, by which the protection of Quebec and the armament of all the
 proposed fortifications is undertaken by the Mother-country, will not be
 thought unfair or ungenerous by the Canadians themselves. But it is
 not certain that they will be able to raise the funds for their portion of
 the common work with the rapidity which the urgency of the occasion
 demands; and Mr. Fitzgerald's suggestion that, if necessary, Great
 Britain should, by advance or guarantee, assist the Provinces in effecting

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my loan that may be required, deserves more consideration than it seems to have received. Nor do we believe that it will be found impossible to complete within the present year a larger portion of the defenses of Quebec than the insignificant sum of 50,000 \$ is likely to suffice for. It may well be that the Americans will be too wise to count a second war immediately after the close of such a struggle as they have been engaged in for the last four years; but the exhaustion of war is never fully felt until after a short interval of peace, just as the weakness of disease shows itself only after fever has subsided. The risk of hostilities will be infinitely less in the second than in the first year of peace, whenever it may come, and the blot in the Government scheme is, that it makes admissible arrangements for defence to be perfected only when the chief danger will have passed away. It is noticeable, too, that a silence, which we hope is not ominous, was maintained as to any provision for the avast protection of the river and lake frontier. We have no sufficient supply of suitable ironclads and gunboats at present aloft for any such purpose, and no trace is to be found in the Navy Estimates of an intention to supply the deficiency. If the storm should come, we do not doubt the spirit in which it will be faced, but we do not see any due appreciation of the value of the time which may intervene before our preparations may be put to the test. In matters of this kind it cannot be so often repeated that promptitude is worth all other military virtues at together.

AN M. DS. TALE.

(Continued.)

Was it a woman, or could I be dreaming? No one, certainly no woman, had any business in the shrubbery, I reflected, this bitter frosty night. Yet there the tall slight figure, with some dusky rap on, was passing quickly before me. Soon the gate of the shrubbery was opened and silently shut, and, whoever she was, her figure disappeared amongst the laurels.

I was on the point of dropping the blind, and thinking it a day's maid going to meet the young keeper for a few minutes' bat, when another female figure, tall as the other, and also loosely wrapped in a grey shawl, came out from the house to the path. She was evidently undecided what to do, as she paused and listened; that instant the moon came brightly out from a cloud, and I saw it was Miss Vandeleur's face, but pale and terror-stricken.

In a moment an awful figure seized me. The moon's power had drawn out Jack's wife, and Kate had followed but lost sight of her. Mrs. Arden might do herself no harm beyond catching a cold, or she might destroy herself; but what of Kate? What if she were perceived by Mrs. Arden, and the latter, in her frenzy, were to turn upon her? The idea was too awful. I hastily flung on my cloak, rushed down-stairs, and in the hall met Mrs. Arden, calm and bright as ever.

She was habited just as when she left the drawing-room, and carried a candle and a book.

"Mr. Tracy! what is amiss? You might have seen a ghost!" she said.

"—I fancied I—Excuse my agitation? Where is Miss Vandeleur?"

"Kate! In her room, to be sure!"

"Well, but I thought I saw her just now on the lawn. By-the-by," added I, as a thought struck me, "where is Mrs. Awdry?"

"I have just been down to fetch her the second volume of 'Stolen Secrets'. But what's amiss with you? what has happened?"

"Will you oblige me by taking up the book to Mrs. Awdry, and then saying Good-night to me from the upper landing? I will tell you my dreams in the morning," I added lightly.

"After a good night's sleep, I hope," said she, and passed up-stairs. I paced impatiently up and down the hall till steps were heard above, and Mrs. Awdry said softly, "My good Mr. Tracy, don't terrify us poor women to death, but go and join the men in the smoking-room, or else ring for Hastings to bring you hot water, and have a sedative before you go up-stairs! Good-night!" Mrs. Arden also said Good-night, and before I could rejoice they had both retired. Was it a dream of mine, or had I seen two people outside? Miss Vandeleur I could not be mistaken in; at all events I would look out at the night. I opened the door and passed on to the lawn.

There was a touch of frost in the air; and I was silent except the monotonous fall of water over a distant wheel. Rapidly passing into the shrubbery where I had seen the figures disappear, I looked up and down the long walks, but beyond the bare leafless arms of trees and many a dark shadow chequering the moonlit ground, I saw nothing. Brushing through the laurels, I vaulted the paling and found myself in the park. Few scenes are more lovely than an English park in the moonlight—the dark clumps of trees and ruminating cattle, and silvery grass shrouded by mists here and there, are always engaging; but I had no time for an artistic glance just then; I was looking for a moving figure. Hah! there was something on that rise, but now it had disappeared! I ran to the hillock, dashed through the mist and down into the glade in time to hear a snort or two, and a fine hind joined a troop of ten or dozen others, and all trotted off into the darkness. With a laugh I retraced my steps, and thinking all must have been a delusion which, as Mrs. Awdry had suggested, would best be cured by a glass of brandy-and-water, I resolved to punish Hastings for my nocturnal ramble, and returned to ring him up.

Soon I perceived I had missed my way, and as each turn I took round the gnarled lawthorne only led me up one hill and down another glade shrouded in the same blue mist till all looked identical, I began to think my adventures were not yet over. I had never been in this part of the park before, and, though I approached a large fir wood at the side, did not like venturing into it; better be lost in an open park, I reflected, than plunge about in a dark wood, and perhaps fall into an old quarry. So I passed down the edge of it to an open ride. I had entered this, when to my amazement the same figure I had seen from the window crossed it at right angles some way in front. A moment more and the second figure followed. I dashed up the ride and gazed down the cross-path; it led into a thick haze that cut off all further investigation of the mysterious wanderers, and they were not in sight. I listened and heard no footfalls.

"They are in the park," I thought; "I will secure them at once, or at all events see the dénouement of all this."

Turning my head, however, I saw the house at the other end of the park, and a light in a small window that I conjectured must be the pantry. To reach this window and tap at it took me not a moment's time. I heard one give a violent start, and then the valiant Hastings called out (to some imaginary ally, for no other slept indoors), "Thieves! mercy on us! thieves! here, John, bring my blunderbuss, and take you the big carver!"

"Hold your stupid noise, Hastings," I said, "and come out quickly without saying a word to any one; you will find the front door open. I want you for a guide."

After a minute or two he appeared on the lawn with a dark lantern (that he had forgotten to light), and a sword, as if to attack poachers.

"Drop those," I said, "and come on at once. Two of the ladies are in the park, and I fear the worst." We hurried on in silence down the ride and through the haze to a height over-looking the park, where we paused a moment. Hastings was puffing like a grampus over what might be a tablecloth he wore as a necktie. He evidently thought me light-headed, and began to wish he had kept his sword. I descended the long dip with intense eagerness. It led down to the Exe, and like a clear white ribbon the river wound round this side of the domain. I saw no signs of the ladies, and once more began to doubt my own sanity. Turning to my guide I said,—

"Well, Hastings, did you hear any one moving in the house before I knocked at the window?"

"I did, sir; the gentlemen are still in the gun-room; but I heard some lady pass my door, and fancied I heard the drawing-room window open. But I had a good deal to do to the plate; and it doesn't do, you know, sir," he added meaningly, "to take any notice of one's fancies."

I was going to blow him up for his cowardice, when I saw one of my phantoms passing quickly to the waterside, and the other following.

"Stay, Hastings, not a word! Look there!"

"It is my lady and Miss Vandeleur, I think, sir," he said.

We were somewhat hidden, and stood rooted to the ground in utter amazement. The first figure turned at the river's edge, and seeing Miss Vandeleur following, waited for her; we could see them parleying as it seemed, and then they walked along the side to a clump of low willows. The moon was out brightly at this time, so I could see distinctly what occurred. The first figure stepped into a boat under the trees, the other delayed.

"Good heavens, sir!" said the butler, "run! There are no oars in her, and the lash is only a hundred yards off below the willows!"

I was off like a shot long before he had ended, and sped to the boat, but not in time to prevent both ladies getting in and pushing off into the stream! They saw me, and Mrs. Awdry, flinging the boat-hook into the water, stood up in the stern, while poor Kate covered on the benches.

"Save me, Mr. Tracy," she cried; "oh save us!"

"All right, my darling," called; "look out!" and was instantly in the water up to my knees, when, horror at horrors! Mrs. Awdry raised a knife that gleamed in the moonlight responsive to her own wild eyes, and said coldly, sternly, and impressively, as she held it over Kate,—

"Come a foot nearer us and I strike! We are going to have a new sensation to-night!"

I stood in utter despair, not daring to move, and the boat whirling round heavily swung off into deeper water past me, while Mrs. Awdry stood dressed in white with her hair loose, and the gleaming knife over her head, like some fury bearing off poor Kate to destruction. She was raving mad, I saw, and, awful as the situation was, I felt instinctively it was best to be quiet.

"Keep up, my brave Kate! Wait a moment," I called, "and help is at hand!"

Mrs. Awdry did not seem to heed this, but raised a wild snatch of Italian, *Dolce vendetta!* and glared now at the moon above, now at poor trembling Miss Vandeleur below. As the boat moved into the centre of the river I ventured to emerge and run along the bank, keeping a vigilant watch on Mrs. Awdry's movements. Soon the boat ceased to whirl round, and shot steadily on, and I heard the increasing rush and roar of what had seemed from the lawn like a water wheel, but was in reality a lash or a backwater, where the Exe, swollen with the late floods of autumn,

plunged madly over a stone weir into a sullen pool beyond. The danger thickened momentarily, and I dared not yet dash in! Still the knife was glittering in Mrs. Awdry's hand. I made up my mind to wait a few seconds more, and then leapt in at all risks; even then I might only hope to tow the boat nearer the shore before it took the dread plunge, and it was certain the knife would fall on poor Kate. I rushed instinctively to look for help, and a large stone was flung over my head, and fell with a heavy splash beside the boat. Mrs. Awdry started, and the knife dropped into the stream.

"Well done, Hastings!" I cried, as that functionary came panting up. "Run to the top of the ladder and be ready to help."

"Now then, Kate darling! I will save you yet!"

As I plunged in, I saw Mrs. Awdry cower down beside Kate, but the sudden cold and the rushing of the water in my ears gave me no more time than to rise half bewildered to the surface and strike out wildly to the boat. Swiftly, swiftly was I drawn on to it; the yawning lasher was but ten yards farther on, and I saw the white, leaping waters dance like so many fiends in the moonlight. A stroke more and I had my arms on the boat's side, calling loudly over the hiss and swirl below me. Alas! Kate had fainted, and ere I could turn the boat, we were swept over! I sprang forward and clutched Kate's dress, and then was struck violently on the head by a post, and whirled round, blinded, and suffocated, and confused against the stones, and finally, after what seemed an age instead of an instant, lost my senses.

When I came to myself I was lying on my back on the grass with my hand still firmly grasping Miss Vandeleur's dress. Hastings and Jack were holding me, and the latter was dripping.

"Thanks, Jack," I feebly murmured, and turned to look at Kate.

"No grip like a drowning man's," said Jack.

"But what on earth does all this mean?" The wan figure beside me was raised as I loosened my hold, and Hastings sped off for assistance. "Good heavens," said I, "it's Mrs. Awdry!" In my hurry and confused state of mind I had seized Mrs. Awdry and saved her instead of Kate! "Oh, Jack Jack!" I said piteously, "where is Kate? Lift me up, let me go in again! Save her, and never mind me!" He held me in a vice, and said,—

"You don't go in again I can tell you. But what in the world brought Miss Vandeleur here too?" And in he plunged once more into the seething pool, dark as ink under the high pollards.

I jumped up, and in an agony was crawling to the edge, when what seemed an other drawing out a salmon on the other side revealed itself into Awdry, whose cheery voice soon rang out—

"Here she is, leeching yet, Tracy! Come over the bridge just below, and I will cross to my wife." Out came Jack again dripping like a Newfoundland, and speedily led me over the bridge, where we found Miss Vandeleur senseless on the bank.

But then came a crowd of domestics, and doctors, and hot-water bottles, and the two ladies were carried off to a neighbouring cottage.

In an hour poor Kate slowly revived, but Mrs. Awdry never breathed again. It was supposed that she had been struck against the stones with greater force than myself. As for Mrs. Arden, she knew nothing of what had occurred till the next morning. Mrs. Awdry had cleverly disarmed her fears, and sent her to bed. When Kate could converse on that dreadful night, she informed us that she lost sight of Mrs. Awdry in the park for some time, and it was plain that that lady had returned to lull all suspicions (during which time she had said Good-night to me in the hall), and then descended to the park, where Kate, once more seeing her, pursued her to the water's edge; and the sequel has been told. Such is the cunning of madness, and with such terrible frenzy does it sometimes blaze out after many years' quiet, at the sight of something or somebody that revives old associations. I need hardly say that Mr. Awdry had married the young lady dressed in blue, whose eyes had told their tale so readily on that long-distant evening of the ball at Lady L.—'s; and perhaps it is still less needful to add, that six months after the tragedy of that eventful night at Kilton Park, Miss Vandeleur gave me the office of ministering to her sadly shaken nerves by a much clearer title than that of your humble servant, M. D.

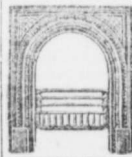
MONEY-LENDERS.

Sir Walter Scott located his usurer in a tumble-down tenement of Whitefriars; Mr. Ainsworth's miser vegetated in a wretched hovel in the slums of Westminster; but the modern money-lender is to be found domiciled in a handsome office in the City or in sumptuous chambers in St. James's. He delights in Morocco-covered easy chairs, Mahogany bureau, and gilt paper weights. He is a judge of pictures, wines, and horses; he wears a moustache, and would like to gain admission to Tatnall's or to a West-end club. He gives charming little dinners, and is frequently to be seen in the stalls or private boxes at the opera. He patronizes the ballet and drives a brougham. He calls bills "securities," and keeps a lawyer to sue his victims, a wine merchant to supply them with drugged and adulterated liquors, and a jeweller always ready with hundred-guinea brooches worth forty, and fifty guinea rings worth fifteen, as personal *attaches* to his great and glorious mission of lending money at as much as ever he can get per cent. He is quite the gentleman, and as punctilious as Don Pedro de Snavedra on the point of personal honour. If he does lend money at exorbitant rates of usance, it is because he loves his fellow-men—sympathizes with their woes, and burns to alleviate them. When he dies, there should be engraved on his tombstone this simple and touching epitaph, "Post obit."

In fact, the usurer of 1865 is like the age he lives in—eminently polite, genteel, and affable. He is the kindliest of creatures; it pains him to the soul to sell up his fellow-creature; it scathens his sentiments to be compelled to skin his brother man alive. It is harsh to regard him as a morose and churlish curmudgeon; he can smile—and he can murder while he smiles.

There are degrees in everything, as the French jurist told Alexander Dumas the elder, when that eminent book-manufacturer shrunk from calling himself a dramatic author because Camille likewise wrote for the stage. There are degrees in the hierarchy of usurers. There is the man who only discounts for the peerage, and even then draws a line, and will have nothing to do with lords by courtesy. He must have a substantial coronet, and would prefer one with strawberry leaves round it. There are military money-lenders, and among these, too, distinctions may be found: A discounts for the Guards, B for the cavalry, and C for the line. It is said that when a certain notable discounteer was on his death-bed, he thanked Heaven, that although he had ransomed half the Household Brigade, his conscience was clear of ever having done a bill for a Woolwich cadet. And then there was the renowned X, who remarked of his fellow and rival Q, that he was sunk so low as to be obliged to do bills at 30 per cent. for the Royal Marines. There is another type of harpy who won't look at the *Army List* at all, but confines himself entirely to the clergy; and there yet is another—and a most pestilent nuisance he is—who concentrates the whole of his energies on the civil servants of her Majesty. He is great at the General Post-office; he knows Somerset House well; he would find his way blindfold about the Treasury and the War-office; but he does not care much for the Custom House. Perhaps Thames-street is too far east for him; perhaps the clerks in the Long Room have had their wits sharpened by the contagion of commerce, and think 60 per cent. slightly too much. Mr. A. W. Nathan and Mr. Swatton—*round angles*, twin barries moulded on one stalk—who on Tuesday appeared to oppose the passage through the Bankruptcy Court of Mr. William Jackson, a clerk in the General Post-office, evidently do not consider 60 per cent. excessive.—The salary of the unlucky borrower is £231 a year; to Mr. Nathan he owes £256, to Mr. Swatton only £96. They opposed the granting of his certificate on the ground that he had contracted debts without reasonable expectation of payment, and it was asked that a portion of his income should be set aside for the benefit of his creditors. According to the bankrupt's statement, all his difficulties arose from his having become surety two years ago to Mr. Swatton for Mr. Hudson, a clerk in the same office. Gentlemen in the public departments very frequently owe the commencement of their embarrassments to similar circumstances. The victim, we will say, is unable to discharge his liabilities, and sends for his creditor. The usurer is willing to accede to his wish, but requires an additional name to tie the bill. He has no friend, he asks him, who will "jump up behind"—that is, endorse the acceptance; a facetious parallel between a bill of exchange and an omnibus. The Hudson finds a good-natured Jackson who "jumps up behind" and backs the bill, and in due course of time discovers that he is in the same predicament as his friend—that is to say, over head and ears in debt to a merciless creditor.

Mr. Hudson having become bankrupt before his "little bill" arrived at maturity, his friend was called upon to meet it, was unable to do so, and was fain to renew it from time to time, paying between 30 and 40 per cent. to the money-lender. The name of these persons about St. Martin's-le-grand would seem to be, comparatively speaking, legion; for Jackson describes six or seven of them as visiting the General Post-office, ordinarily choosing pay-day as the time for their call, to collect their usurious interest from their unfortunate clients. The bankrupt who now appealed from oppression to the law began to borrow from the opposing creditor in 1856, so that he has been in purgatory for nine years—a pretty long spell. Mr. Nathan usually charged 60 per cent.; and if on one occasion, in a melting mood, the lender only exacted 20 per cent., in another the promise given was to pay 100 per cent. "In my experience," concluded Mr. Jackson, "it is a very unusual thing for a Post-office clerk, once a borrower, to extricate himself from his difficulties; indeed, a money-lender has only to threaten an application to the Postmaster-General, and we are ready to give any amount of interest for forbearance; we would do anything rather than lose our appointments." To this plain statement we may add, that a Government clerk of any kind, or a poor curate, or a salaried in the army, experiences not less difficulty than the *employee* of the Post-office in extricating himself from a money-lender who has once got him into his clutches. The Commissioner in Bankruptcy appeared to be of a similar way of thinking, and, without calling on Mr. Sargood, who supported the defence, to reply to the arguments of Messrs. Nathan and Swatton's counsel, he granted the bankrupt an immediate and unconditional discharge. We wish the released gentleman joy of his deliverance; but we trust he will take warning thereby. He has escaped only by the skin of his teeth; and, if he be wise, he will have no more to do with money-lenders or their "little bills."—*Dy. Telegram, March 2.*



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