

A CANADIAN JOURNAL OF LITERATURE AND LIFE.

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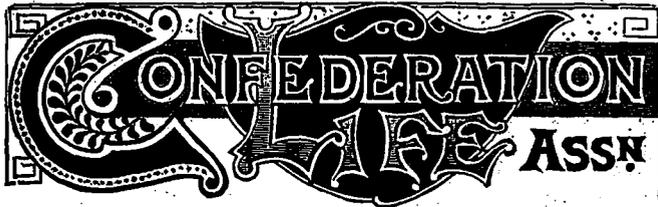
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## Editorial Notes.

### THE IRISH QUESTION.

NOTWITHSTANDING the lurid developments about Parnell's letter, this Irish business is becoming just a little tiresome. There are thousands of us in Canada who believe that a measure of Home Rule should be conceded to Ireland; but a good many of us are of opinion that these Legislative resolutions are an impertinence, not to say a nuisance. As for Mr. O'Brien, we think he has been well advised in abandoning his intention of coming over here to apply a Coercion Act of his own to Lord Lansdowne. It would be a simple outrage upon all decency were he to come here to raise private animosity against a nobleman who has won golden opinions in his official capacity, and who is an exceptionally good Irish landlord—far more liberal in fact than many resident English landlords. Whatever our private opinions on the government of Ireland may be, Canada as a nation has no interests at stake, and even if we admit the claims of the universal brotherhood of man, our sympathy could not be expended on less worthy objects than the Governor-General's evicted tenants. They are not the miserable victims of rack-renting tyranny, turned out naked and penniless to beg on the road-side, but gentlemen of good position and ample means, who might own farms of their own if they did not find it more profitable to rent from others and sub-let. They are fair representatives of the class of rack-renting middlemen, the detested "squireens" of Irish story, who have been hated for their presence more than the English landlords by reason of their absence. They joined the popular movement because it was too strong for them, and thought by a bold stroke to obtain a reduction of rent that would make their own interest in the land greater than their landlord's. Their plan did not succeed, and now they ask the sympathy of the civilized world because a dishonest business speculation failed.

### LEGISLATIVE INTERFERENCE.

THE action of the Dominion and Local Houses in wasting on outside matters the time that should be strictly devoted to the interests and business of Canada is to be severely deprecated. Of what consequence to this Dominion is the legislative action of the British Houses of Parliament respecting their English, Irish, or Scotch business? Is it at all likely that sentimental resolutions passed either in Toronto or Ottawa regarding Home Rule or Coercion will in any way influence statesmen in London who have to deal with practical matters of urgent importance? It is questionable whether any one but Mr. Gladstone would treat the gratuitous advice of Canada on the Irish Question with even the semblance of seriousness. The Home Rule resolutions are on a par with the perfected O'Brien Crusade. Both are ill-advised movements of insolent interference, and their results will be precisely similar in their harmless transparency.

### OUR FISHERIES.

LORD SALISBURY'S proposal to the United States Government foreshadows a tardy but permanent settlement of a matter which has long vexed Canadian and American politicians. That it is strictly just will hardly be admitted by Canadian fishermen, but abstract justice is unfortunately a rare commodity. In gaining an American market our fishermen get the greatest boon diplomacy can confer on them, and if they are wise they will imitate the selfishness of their American brothers of the craft, who seem to think that their Government is bound to further their interests at no matter what cost, provided the said cost does not fall on them. For ourselves, while anxious to protect the rights of our fishers, we would rather not spend a large annual subsidy in watching poachers, and should like at any rate to see free-trade in a case where all the advantage is on our side. But let us have no more taxing fish-cans, a piece of smartness as morally despicable as the sale of wooden nutmegs.

### THE PROVINCIAL GAME OF GRAB.

How the shade of Oliver Twist haunts the lobbies at Ottawa! Every session comes some impecunious Province, always asking for "more." This year two will probably appear, Quebec and Nova Scotia; and yet it has been shown again and again that either of these Provinces already draws more from the general treasury than it pays in. If Ontario drew out of the public chest all that her people contribute in the shape of indirect taxation, and returned a per capita grant for the expenses of the Federal Government, how would these Provinces fare? Very badly; yet such a plan would be eminently just, though we fear that as long as

indirect taxation lasts it will be found quite impracticable. It is yet too soon to assume that Confederation is a failure, but high time to enquire if the constitution cannot be revised in the direction of fairness. It would be a very decided improvement to increase the grant to the Provinces and make them do more for themselves. As matters now stand, with caucuses in No. 3 and No. 5 to be reckoned with, it is not reasonable to expect even-handed justice from the Government. By the way, in what room is it that the Ontario members meet to consult on the weal of this Province?

#### THE PROJECTED BAPTIST UNIVERSITY.

A CORRESPONDENT "has his say out" in another column on the subject of the proposed "Tinpot University," concerning which there has been so much discussion of late. The bill has passed the legislature, and we presume is likely to be carried out, but from all we can learn, a large proportion of the Baptist body are unfavourable to the project, and some of them are actually up in arms against it. Their account of the matter is that one or two professors who are very desirous of obtaining the power to confer degrees have resorted to a regular system of "bulldozing," and have prematurely forced the scheme on the Baptist body before the latter have had time to give the question due consideration. Whether the Baptists want the university or not, the scheme is one which, in the interests of higher education in Ontario, ought to be severely discouraged. We have been wont to pique ourselves on the value of our Canadian university degrees. We shall be able to do so no longer if this degree-conferring power is conceded to all sorts of minor educational academies. The latter have an abundance of useful and legitimate work to do. Let them stick to it, and not arrogate to themselves work for which they are unfitted, and which nobody desires to see them perform.

#### MONTREAL FLOODS.

"Of moving accidents by flood and"—folly, the Montreal dispatches again inform us. One of the surest signs of permanent spring is the annual recurrence of the Montreal floods. They return as faithfully as the redbreast or the hepatica, but are not so enthusiastically welcomed. The real City Fathers of Montreal not long since ordered prayers to be said in all the churches to avert the expected calamity; but the devastation along the river-shore once more proves that "faith without works is dead," and that "God helpeth those who help themselves." In the ordinary course of natural operations, it may be annually assumed that the Lord will provide spring floods in the vicinity of the city of Montreal, and that it will require a great amount of ingenuity and labour on the part of the citizens to prevent those floods from overwhelming a large portion of their centre. A great annual expenditure of scientific and sympathetic talking and writing occurs, but the wind thus created is of no avail against the tide of water. It is surely time for some practical steps to be taken, if only in the direction of experiment. In an endeavour to effect some lasting solution of the difficulty, convict labour might be used to advantage. The Montreal floods are a disgrace to Canada.

#### THE CRUCIFIX BILL.

THE Crucifix Bill has been wisely withdrawn. The fact that a large majority of the inhabitants of the Province of Quebec regard the Crucifix as a sacred emblem does not warrant its use in the Law Courts, where others who do not recognize its sanctified power will be compelled to swear by it. The Bible may be used by both Roman Catholics and Protestants without any difference of belief or opinion as to the sacred character of the oath; but to Protestants the act of lifting the hand before a crucifix would be both meaningless and repugnant. In many Roman Catholic communities oaths have been made upon the relics of saints or the Bishop's crozier; but the peculiar halidome of England is a copy of the New Testament, and there seems to be no reason adduced why this should not continue to be used in all British Courts of law by British subjects who believe in the Christian religion. Suppose a native should agitate for a form of oath in Indian law courts, such as swearing on the head of a tiger, or by the holy water of the Ganges, is it likely such an innovation would be forced on Protestant witnesses? Yet there would be as much reason in its favour. There must be some limit placed to the spread of French Canadian intolerance.

#### CHRISTIAN CONSISTENCY.

IT is not possible for persons in Toronto who desire to attend a church at some distance from home to obtain a conveyance on Sundays. They must either give up their particular place of worship or tire themselves out with long walks backward and forward. On the other hand any number of idle loafers and pleasure-seeking parties may cross and recross the water to and from the Island on Sunday. Is this consistent? Is it more wicked to travel on land than on water? Is driving a street-car a more sacrilegious action than propelling a steam-boat? There seems to be some wide error of judgment somewhere in the present system of Sunday travelling.

#### WAR OR PEACE.

STILL rumours of war. War scents every breeze in Europe and whole provinces are turned into camping grounds. Italy, as poor as Ireland, and not so populous as England boasts two millions of men ready to take up arms. All are trying to hide the tremors of fear with an over-loud assumption of valour, for none knows how soon a mine may be sprung that will shatter the whole political system of Europe. England alone looks quietly on, strengthens her fleet, and celebrates her Jubilee. We ought to be happy here, where the tax-gatherer sometimes goes to bed and the conscription is unknown. Yet there are signs that seem hopeful to the lovers of peace even now. The nations are more ready to arm and make ready for war than to declare it. The load of taxation is almost intolerable in France, and her free institutions will before long allow the voice of the over-burdened taxpayer to be heard. If France disarms, Germany and Italy will follow the example, and the chief danger to the peace of Europe will be the attitude of Russia and Austria. Then, the peace of Europe will depend on the will of one man, reported to be partly insane and liable at any moment to lose his power and his crown along with his life.

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JOHN CHARLES DENT,

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Room U, Arcade (Victoria St. entrance), Toronto.

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## SEPARATE SCHOOLS.

TO those who remember the violent language, unfounded accusations and severe recriminations hurled hither and thither during the last Provincial election contest, it must be a pleasure to read the moderate tone of the debates last week on the proposed amendments to the Education Act affecting the status of Separate School supporters. Mr. Fraser very caustically remarked that Mr. Meredith roared "as gently as any sucking dove," but it must be remembered that Mr. Meredith's election address only committed to the safe and moderate principle of equal rights for all, and that it was the speeches of his followers and not his own that overstepped the bounds of prudence. No one seriously believes that Mr. Mowat has entered into a compact with Archbishop Lynch to sell the Protestant horse for the Roman Catholic vote, but the question is still debated whether he has given any undue advantage to the Separate Schools. That question appears to us to lie within very narrow limits. Before 1878 every ratepayer, Protestant or Catholic, was set down as a Public School supporter, and it was at his option to remain so or to give due notice that he was a supporter of a Separate School. The amendment passed in 1878, and to which neither Mr. Meredith nor his followers objected, allows the assessor to put down every Roman Catholic as a Separate School supporter until he chooses to exercise his option by giving notice that he wishes to pay his taxes into the Public School exchequer. This gives the Separate Schools an advantage they did not before possess, and the question under debate is whether this is an act of wise toleration or of injudicious encouragement. We do not think it can be judicious to encourage a rival to our excellent school system—a rival confessedly inferior, for it will never admit comparisons which might be odious by placing itself under one uniform system of inspection. To weaken the Public Schools is to lower the standard of education, for no Protestant community would tolerate for a year the Public School system of Quebec. Toleration is essentially a Protestant principle, but toleration is not approval. It is essentially concession, prompted by justice or generosity, made to something of which we do not entirely approve. Now, we do not approve of Separate Schools. They appear to us in the light of a necessary evil, and as such should be tolerated in the name of justice, for conscience sake, and with only that generosity which their weakness can claim. The other question, that of the pay-

ment of taxes, is so much simpler that little has been said about it since election time. We then held that the law on that point was perfectly clear, in spite of the frantic protests of newspaper correspondents and clergymen who professed to know as much about law as about divinity. Perhaps they did, but in that case we sympathize with their congregations. The law says distinctly that the tenant shall pay the taxes and determine by which school they shall be appropriated; and that no agreement between landlord and tenant can evade that rational and just rule. That is as it should be; for the tenant has children to send to school, and they need education and the freedom of choice as much as the children of the landlord. H.

## Book Notice.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE CANADIAN PEOPLE. By George Bryce, M.A., LL.D. London, Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington. Toronto, W. J. Gage & Co. 1887.

UPON this volume Professor Bryce has evidently bestowed much hard and conscientious labour. In its pages he has brought together a great deal of valuable information not to be found in any other of the so-called histories of Canada, and by issuing it at a moderate price he has performed an essential service on behalf of the youth of this country. We should be glad to think that he is likely to reap a substantial pecuniary recompense for his labours, for he has produced a book which, in spite of its defects, is decidedly the best "short history" which has yet appeared. This latter clause, however, be it understood, involves no extravagant eulogy. It involves, indeed, but a very limited modicum of praise, for the previous attempts in the same direction have for the most part been altogether beneath criticism. Nothing but a regard for the feelings of still-living writers—writers towards whom we personally entertain nothing but good-will—prevents us from telling the plain, unvarnished truth about certain so-called "histories" which have been foisted upon the Canadian public, and which, not to mince the matter, are a crying disgrace to everybody concerned in their production. Professor Bryce speaks his own mind on this subject with tolerable plainness. He refers to writers who have made Canadian history "a mere means of gaining a livelihood without rendering value to unsuspecting book-buyers." "Some partisan purpose to serve," he writes—"the *cacoethes scribendi*, or the unworthy motive of receiving government patronage, have [has] induced a somewhat prolific crop of political biographies, local 'histories,'—mere uninteresting and unsympathetic collections of facts [the writer might here have added 'collections of fictions'], dry and raw manuals known as 'school histories,' all dishonouring to the name historian, and producing on the public a nauseating effect on the mention of the name of history." A Toronto contemporary, in commenting on these perfectly true and just remarks of Professor Bryce, characterizes them as being "not in the best taste, nor in the most Christian spirit." Taste, forsooth,—and Christian spirit! When one hears such remarks

from such a source one is perforce reminded of the youth who, when convicted on the clearest evidence of having made away with his father and mother, appealed to the judge not to hang a poor orphan.

But this by the way. Our present concern is with this latest "Short History" by Professor Bryce. The author has long been known as a diligent student, and as an industrious worker in connection with an important educational institution. His book on Manitoba was a valuable contribution to the history of that Province, and prepared us to look forward with some expectation to the appearance of the present work, which was announced some time since. We have read it with care and attention, and if we cannot speak of it with unstinted praise, we can at any rate vouchsafe to it a cordial welcome as a vast improvement on its predecessors. It is at least a book which its author's posterity need not feel ashamed of his having turned out, which is more than could truthfully be said of those alluded to in the foregoing paragraph.

The first half of the book is beyond all comparison the best, and it is on this portion that the author has evidently bestowed the most pains. The accounts of prehistoric and early America and the ancient inhabitants of Canada are, generally speaking, full and accurate. The author's archaeological researches have here stood him in good stead, and he has laid bare a store of material not readily accessible to general readers. It may perhaps be said that this part of the work is somewhat out of proportion to the sequel, but the just balancing of the various sections of a previously unwritten history is no easy task, and is indeed one of the greatest difficulties which an author has to encounter in dealing with more or less recondite materials. In no book intended for popular use has this part of our history been treated with anything like the same amplitude of detail. The publications of learned societies are practically unavailable to the common run of readers, and Professor Bryce has here rendered a valuable service with much care and judgment. He has presented all the most essential results of modern historical research, and has tabulated his authorities for the use of those who may wish to prosecute further enquiries. To have accomplished so much is to have done a good deal of useful work.

With respect to the more modern portions of our history, the author has not been equally successful. His summary is often bald and even crude. His treatment of many important events of the last half century is altogether inadequate to the subject-matter. On some of these events he has bestowed but little study, and there are not a few which it seems to us that he has wholly failed to understand. It is clear, for instance, that he has failed to grasp the main features of the rebellion of 1837, and that his examination of the authorities which he quotes has been of the most desultory and perfunctory kind. The same may be said of his treatment of the events immediately following the union of the Provinces in 1841 and the struggle for Responsible Government. It would appear as though he had grown weary of his task, and anxious to get it off his hands. This is to be regretted, because those events form the key to

much of our current politics, and without an adequate comprehension of them no one can be said to have a just understanding of the present attitude of Canada before the world.

One other remark we feel constrained to make. It has already been hinted at, but it needs to be emphasized; and it is this. The author is not master of an attractive style. "To make history picturesque," he says, in his preface, "must be the aim of the modern historian." This is true, but the Professor has not realized his ideal. Some of the most stirring events are set down in language as dry as the multiplication table. This is a serious defect, for it will prevent the facts from being readily taken in and assimilated by the memory. We notice, too, a good many minor errors, some of which may charitably be attributed to slips of the pen and of the press, but it is well to call attention to them with a view to their elimination from subsequent editions. On p. 9, we are told, apropos of the boundary question, that "in 1833 President Jefferson made a proposition to Lord Palmerston," etc. President Jefferson had ceased to be President Jefferson about a quarter of a century before the date indicated, and for seven years had slept his last sleep beneath the mausoleum of Monticello. It was of course President Jackson who made the proposition to Lord Palmerston. Again: the names of Sir William Johnson and his son are everywhere mis-spelled, and the spelling is not even uniform, being sometimes Johnston and at other times Johnstone. The name of Lord Durham's successor is also mis-spelled, as is likewise that of Sir Allan MacNab. The inhabitants of Castile are spoken of as "Castillians" (p. 2), and on p. 5 we are informed that in 1881 the Dominion contained no less than 3,715,492 native born Canadians. The author doubtless knows that "less" is an adjective of size and not of number. The author of *The Scot in Canada* is mentioned on p. 281 as "A. Rattray." The late Mr. Huntington is thrice referred to (p. 251) as Mr. Huntington. We have marked several score of such mistakes as these—none of them perhaps of very great importance, but their aggregate is large, and in such a work accuracy in such matters is desirable.

We shall probably find time to say something more about this book in a future number.

---

## Correspondence.

*McMaster University.*

Editor ARCTURUS:

THE Bill creating the above university has passed its third reading, and will doubtless become law; but whether it will ever be an accomplished fact is matter of grave doubt. There are many reasons why it should not, and I propose to point out a few grounds on which the founding of such a useless and superfluous institution should be strenuously resisted. In stating my objections as a Baptist to the scheme, I wish to avoid the abuse and personalities to which some opponents of the measure have resorted, and yet frankly and fearlessly to express my views (and the views also of the vast majority I believe of Canadian Baptists) on this question.

1. No demand has ever been made by the Baptists for such a bill or such a university.

2. The matter has never been honestly or openly brought before the denomination and considered by them. Excepting the

promoters and a few of their friends, it was not even known that such a measure was proposed, or if it has been mentioned, its full import has not been understood.

3. The only channel of communication for those who wished to oppose the measure, viz., the columns of the *Canadian Baptist*, has (notwithstanding all that may be stated to the contrary) been practically closed against them and discussion discouraged or virtually stifled.

4. That the vote of the Paris Convention, where we are assured the measure was "solidly" carried, was in no sense the vote of the denomination, and the reason for this is not far to seek, viz., that when delegates were appointed for that convention no instructions were given them as to how they should vote, and if they voted they could not voice the will of the denomination, because they did not know it—many of them not even being aware that such a measure would be introduced.

5. The majority of that Convention consisted of ministers who go as such, and not as representatives of the churches, and I contend that many of them were unable on hearing such a hasty and one-sided view of the matter as took place at the Paris Convention to pass a sound judgment on a question involving such delicate and intricate issues as this, and were doubtless largely influenced by the eloquent and learned promoters of the measure.

6. That the promoters of this scheme are not representative Canadian Baptists, and do not understand, and are not in true sympathy with Baptist work in Canada. Their training is foreign, their inclinations alien, and some of them, I believe, not even Canadian subjects; and to say the least, it comes with a very bad grace that excepting the professional advocate the measure should have to be supported by those whom rumour says are to be the future grantors of these much-coveted degrees.

7. There are only about 20,000 Baptists in Ontario, and the majority of these are women, and the idea of a Baptist university for say 5,000 male Baptists is too absurd to be seriously considered and even for 20,000 Baptists it is scarcely less absurd.

8. That the mere money guarantee of \$700,000 is no assurance, as to the status of the proposed university. There may be the greatest abuses notwithstanding. Nor is the extra restriction that the curriculum shall be equal to that of the Provincial University any extra protection, as Baptist examiners will be dealing with Baptist students.

9. No dissatisfaction or even a whisper of such has ever been heard against the Provincial University by Baptists. Many of our best men have graduated there, and look on this "Yankee" innovation with distrust and disfavour.

10. Canadian Baptists do not wish to be ecclesiastically annexed to the United States, and least of all do they wish to copy the worst features of American education, and they are beginning to ask why should our young men be saddled with a degree which will bring a blush of shame to their cheeks in the presence of an enlightened and liberal-minded community.

11. The idea is mainly a "one man" idea, and, instead of being tempted by the glittering endowment, Canadian Baptists will be the gainers in self-respect and effective Christian work if they refuse the shekels that are promised them on such conditions.

12. We have in McMaster Hall and our own Provincial University all that can be desired by honest and upright students who wish to compete fairly in the race with the students of other denominations, and to call such a scheme as is involved in this Bill "higher education" is a delusion and a snare.

It is utter folly to say we are diverting Christian liberality if we oppose this scheme. We shall be poorer if we accept beneficence when hampered and handicapped by a so-called "University," and reply that the men who are diverting Christian liberality are those who are supporting this measure at a time when our Home and Foreign Missionary Finances are in such a deplorable condition, and almost frantic appeals have to be made (and even these fail) to provide our missionaries with the necessities of life and the hungry and perishing thousands with the true bread from Heaven.

Baptists, take warning by Laval University. Let history speak. Is the folly and mistake of Victoria to be repeated by us? Take a lesson from our Methodist friends; learn from their ex-

perience and enter the Federation scheme, and Baptists will then have all the "University" they need. Yours truly,

BAPTIST.

## Poetry.

### TWO SONNETS.—DEAD LOVE.

My heart is a volcano, cold and dead,  
From which in years before its final sleep  
Fierce flames of jealousy did laugh and leap  
And cast around its hue of hellish red;  
Hot lava streams of love, profusely fed  
From the abysmal fires of life's deep,  
O'er all my soul enveloping did creep  
Whilst cruel ashes poured around my head.  
Doubts were the tremors that did shake my faith  
In subtle premonition of the fire,  
That signal of the slow-consuming pyre,  
From which arose an ever-present wrath.  
The Pompeii of Passion, buried 'neath love's pain,  
Can ne'er from rack and ruin rise and rule again.  
E. G. GARTHWAITE.

### IN THE CONSERVATORY.

THE morrow's tempest which the night denied  
A silver circle round the moon denoted;  
The lingering hours to love were all devoted  
With her, now soon to be my life-long bride.  
The lily marvelled in its maiden pride  
And o'er the air a subtle perfume floated,  
The moon-gleams on its blossom glanced and gloated  
As I gazed at her beauty by my side.  
"Tell me, my love," she said, the silence breaking,  
"Which is more fair—the lily or the moon?"  
Her passion pallid slept; but waking soon  
Flushed with the crimson of her love's own making  
The moon retired. Anon, upon her beating breast  
Beauty's own sacrifice; the lily lay at rest.  
E. G. GARTHWAITE.

### WHY ENGLISH TRADE IS DECLINING.

THE latest English "Blue-Book" exposes the fact that English trade is falling behind in most countries, while German commercial interests are gaining the ascendancy. The reasons for the change are somewhat complicated, but the principal ones may be summed up in the assertion that English merchants have lapsed into a kind of indifference about pleasing and accommodating their customers, while the Germans are taking great pains to ascertain and meet their wants. The reasons assigned for the superior vigour of German trade in Italy are a "higher standard of technical education, greater activity in the employment of commercial travellers speaking Italian, greater attention paid to the wants of the Italian market, and greater facilities for delivery and for payment." In Bulgaria, "some Jew from Vienna comes every week offering something wanted." The remark applies to several countries. "Ask an English manufacturer to alter the shape of an article to meet the requirements of foreign markets, and he generally refuses. The German manufacturer, on the other hand, has no prejudices; if he find that an article of a certain shape commands a ready sale in any particular country, he makes it, however foreign it may be to his own tastes and wants." So it is in Greece, Roumania, Servia, Turkey, Spain, and South America. The lesson is drawn from these facts by the *Spectator* that the English manufacturer must display more intelligence, more adaptiveness, more energy, more sympathy, if he is to hold his own against the increasing rivalry of the highly educated, active and expanding German. His commercial education must be improved. Boys must be taught the modern languages, and be given a speaking as well as a grammatical acquaintance with the tongues of the peoples with whom they are to stand in commercial relations. But these and other branches of commercial importance still hold only a subordinate place in English secondary schools, while men of commerce and manufacture are trained almost entirely in subjects rather suitable for the professions.

## NARRATIVE OF OCCURRENCES

IN

TORONTO, UPPER CANADA, IN DEC., 1837.

[THE following valuable and interesting narrative was written by Col. James Fitz Gibbon, the hero of Beaver Dams, within a few days after the occurrence of the events recorded therein, and while they were still fresh in the writer's memory. Some years afterwards the gallant Colonel prepared and published a small pamphlet, giving a more extended account of those events, but the pamphlet has long been out of print, and is very rarely met with. The earlier narrative, moreover, enters into certain little minute details which are not included in the subsequent one, and has therefore a value of its own. Through the courtesy of surviving members of Col. Fitz Gibbon's family, the editor of this paper was enabled to make several extracts from the following narrative when preparing his *Story of the Upper Canadian Rebellion* last year, but the narrative has never before been published *in extenso*, and will doubtless be read with vivid interest by those who still remember the stirring days of '37.]

WHEN Sir Francis Head was asked by His Excellency Sir John Colborne how many Troops he could spare from Upper Canada, he answered, *All*.

All were accordingly sent in October, except the Detachment from Penetanguishene. On its approach to Toronto, I ventured to advise His Excellency to detain it here\*—but he said he would not keep a Soldier in the Province: that he would throw the entire care of the Province upon the Loyalists, and if they were not able and willing to defend themselves, the sooner the Province was given up the better.

Before the last Division left Toronto for Lower Canada, the Rebels assembled for training in many parts of the Home District, and no notice was taken of them by the Government. I thought they made these displays to prevent all the Troops from being sent below, that the Rebels there might be so far relieved from the pressure of so many as should be kept here. I did not then think that any considerable portion of the disaffected in Upper Canada would peril their all on the risk of Rebellion. But as November advanced I became day by day more impressed with an apprehension that the peace of the Province would be disturbed. Six thousand stand of Arms were ordered from Kingston, and His Excellency delivered them to the safe keeping of the Civil authorities of the City, and they were deposited in the Market Buildings. His Excellency told

\* To account for my offering advice to His Excellency, I beg leave to state that he usually walked for exercise every morning after 8 o'clock to the Government wharf. Over part of this route lay my way to my own office, and I frequently met him. On these occasions he often entered into conversation with me on the state of the Province, and finding my opinions as to approaching danger so very different from his own, so earnestly entertained, and expressed with constantly increasing apprehension, I did think that he argued as if determined to convert me to his opinions. But from day to day I had closely observed the management of the affairs of this Province since the return of Lieut. Gov. Gore to it in 1815, and he laid the foundation of our troubles. So early as the year 1824 there was reason to apprehend a rebellion. Having then one daughter and four sons, infants, I often mentally prayed to the Almighty that it may not break out until my youngest son became 16 years of age, so that my boys may stand by me in the field with arms in their hands. On the 7th. December, 1837, the two youngest were with me on horseback, the youngest 16-years and 8 months old, and the other 18 years.

me that he preferred putting them into the care of the Civil authorities rather than the Militia, that the disaffected should not have cause to say that he intended them to be used in the work of coercion. Volunteers mounted Guard over them every night for three or four nights, when His Excellency directed that no further guard should be kept, as he apprehended no danger whatever—and said to me that he was much inclined to have them brought to the Government House and placed under the charge of his own domestics, and would do so; but that he did not like to alter the arrangement he had made, so confident was he that no attempt would be made to disturb the peace of the Province. The Volunteer Guard was, in consequence, dismissed from the City Hall. The Order to this effect I received from His Excellency and delivered to the Volunteers.

During the week ending with November and beginning with December I took the liberty of urging His Excellency to have some preparation made for resistance should an insurrection break out, for that the facts day by day made known to me impressed me strongly with the necessity of being on our guard—but he uniformly resisted every suggestion for openly preparing ourselves.

Unwilling to leave myself and my neighbours entirely at the mercy of contingent dangers I made a list of the persons and their sons living West of Yonge Street, in the City, upon whose loyalty I thought I could depend, and I proposed to His Excellency to let me warn them to be ready every night before retiring to bed, by having their arms loaded, and their clothes ready to dress quickly and run to the Parliament House on the ringing of the College Bell: and also to permit me to Counsel the Mayor and corporation with their neighbours to be in a like state of preparation in the City East of Yonge Street, and on alarm to assemble at the City Hall. The College Bell and City Bells to be used to give the alarm; I undertaking to have the College Bell rung to give the first alarm. His Excellency permitted me to do this, and it was in part performed by me West of Yonge Street, before the outbreak; but the Mayor neither gave warning nor had any one to ring the church Bells, and I lost half an hour of the most valuable time on the night of the outbreak before I could have those Bells set a ringing.

On Saturday the 2nd December I received such information from Markham and places to the North as to convince me that not a moment should be lost in taking measures of defence, and I went instantly to the Government House. While on my way I met the President of the Bank of Upper Canada and I urged him to take immediate steps for the defence of the Bank. On arriving at the Government House, I found assembled with His Excellency, the Chief Justice, Messrs. Allan and Sullivan of the Executive Council, the Attorney-General and Solicitor-General, Mr. Justice Jones and the Speaker of the Assembly.

I reported the information I had received and the name of the principal person, a Magistrate, from whom I had received part of the information. Little weight was attached to it, and the gentleman in question was sent for, and in an adjoining room examined by His Excellency and the Attorney-General, who soon returned, and the Attorney-General declared that what they heard did not at all amount to what I had stated. Mr. Allan of those present alone concurred in my opinions, and he strongly supported them, as for example:—When the Attorney-General returned he said, "Why, the information brought by this Magistrate is at third or fourth hand, and does not at all make the same impression as what Col. Fitz Gibbon said." I answered, "Not at fourth hand, Sir, but what impression has it made on Mr. L's own mind?" Mr. Allan said,

"Gentlemen, do you expect the Rebels will come and give you information of their doings at first hand? I am as long in the Country and as well acquainted with the people as most of you here present, and I tell you that I concur in every word Col. Fitz Gibbon has said, and think that not a moment should be lost in making preparations to meet the approaching danger."

After three or four hours conference His Excellency said, "I hold the same opinions I always held—that there is no danger whatever—but if, as I am told, the Magistrates and principal Inhabitants of the City are apprehensive of danger let them address me to that effect, and I will tell them that my opinions remain unchanged, and that I entertain no fears for the public peace; but to allay theirs, and in compliance with their solicitations, I will order measures of precaution to be taken."

It was agreed that the Magistrates should address His Excellency. In fact they had, it was said, already intended to do so, and that the Mayor was then in an adjoining apartment waiting to see His Excellency.

During this discussion I earnestly urged the putting into the garrison, that very day, all the Half Pay Officers and discharged Soldiers who could be found in and around the City, to which His Excellency said, "What will the people of England say if they hear that we are thus arming?" and he said, "It will offend the Militia to pass them by and employ the Military." I could not help expressing emphatically a contrary opinion, and that they would be glad to have the Military assembled as a nucleus to rally round. From the whole tenor of His Excellency's observations it was plain to me that he had it entirely at heart to prove to the Government and People of Britain that he could preserve Upper Canada in tranquillity during the Winter by his own management, without a single Soldier, or a step being taken to guard against or to prevent disturbance. Even the ordinary promotions in the City Regiment which I commanded, His Excellency would not make, although I had only two subalterns in the Regiment, and he held in his hand my list of recommendations, which he examined and approved of, but he said he would not then confirm them, having determined to leave all things as they were during the Winter.

On returning to my House in the evening Mr. Hawke, a gentleman employed in the Government, called on me to converse on the state of Public Affairs, and I told him that I feared we should lose the Province through the course His Excellency was taking. I mention this fact believing that Mr. Hawke will most probably recollect the conversation because of the emphasis with which I spoke, and because being a near neighbour he was intimately informed of my opinions on the state of the Province.

On Monday, December the 4th, further information reached me, and again I called to urge His Excellency to take measures of defence, when I found him with an Order in his hand appointing me to act as Adjutant General of Militia—and also a Militia General Order appealing to the Militia and directing the Colonels to make arrangements to enable their Regiments to act with effect should any emergency render their services necessary.

Late in the afternoon, upon my again pressingly urging upon him the importance of organizing the Half Pay Officers and discharged Soldiers in the garrison, he permitted me to do so, but it was then too late to take one step that day in furtherance of this measure.

I determined to sleep in the Parliament House that night and I invited several persons to join me there with such arms as they possessed, and about twenty gentlemen came in consequence.

About eleven at night I was told that the Rebels were assembling at Montgomery's Tavern four miles north of the City, and that they intended coming in and attacking the City that night. In consequence I immediately borrowed and mounted a horse to go out and reconnoitre, and Messrs. Brock and Bellingham, two young students at law, mounted their horses and accompanied me. But before we started I galloped to the Houses of the principal gentlemen in the City West of Yonge Street, and called them up to repair at once to the City Hall and Parliament House to defend them. I also called on His Excellency, who had retired to rest, and told him what I had heard and what I had done, and assured him that if any further event occurred I would quickly make it known to him, that he might act upon it without delay; and he again retired to rest.

I then rode out two miles out of Town, and meeting no one I became doubtful of the truth of the assemblage at Montgomery's, and expressed my regret that I had not brought a few more mounted gentlemen to go out and reconnoitre as far as Montgomery's, as my own time would be best employed in organizing the people then arming in Town. Mr. Brock in an animated tone said, "I will go," but he being the son of a valued friend, and a youth I loved, I would not at first permit him to go. But young Bellingham offering to accompany him, and both pressing me, I consented, and returned towards Town to proceed with the arrangements there already directed by me.

Immediately after, while returning, I met Messrs. Powell and McDonell, mounted, and I requested of them to follow and support Messrs. Brock and Bellingham. They did so; but before they could overtake those young men the latter were taken prisoners by the Rebels; and so also were Messrs. Powell and McDonell. But Mr. Powell, watching a favourable opportunity, shot the man who guarded him and made his escape and returned to Town, and made known these facts to His Excellency, and I also called at the same time and met Mr. Powell in the Government House. At this moment, too, I ordered the College Bell to be rung; but I lost nearly half an hour before I could set the City Bells a ringing.

His Excellency immediately quitted the Government House and repaired to the City Hall, whither I escorted him, and I spent the remainder of the night visiting and connecting our several Posts and Piquets. Mr. Justice Jones formed the first Piquet and marched it as far as the Toll-gate on Yonge Street, and there remained with it until daylight.

After daylight I rode within a quarter of a mile of Montgomery's tavern, accompanied by His Excellency's Aide-de-Camp, Lieut.-Col. Halkett, and four others, and from the view I had of the Rebels and their position I felt confident that with the force we had then formed in Town I could disperse them. I galloped into Town and pressed His Excellency to let me take the force with me for an immediate attack, but he said "No, no,—they must fight me on my ground, I will not go to them."

All day Tuesday, December 5th, was continued in arming and preparing men as they assembled, and in the evening His Excellency desired me to confine all the men to the Posts occupied in Town—namely, the Parliament House—Government House—City Hall—and the Two Banks—And forbade me positively to quit the City Hall—"For," he said, "if you go abroad as you have done you will be taken prisoner, and if we lose you what shall we do." This he said holding one of my arms with both his hands. I begged of His Excellency not to lay such imperative commands upon me, as it was most important that I should be in

many places, and be permitted to use discretionary power under unforeseen circumstances, and when His Excellency could not be near to issue Orders to me. I then used the following expressions, "I assure Your Excellency I am a cautious man, I will take especial care that I be not taken, but I cannot bear to have those Ruffian Men beard us in Town without due notice of their approach." His Excellency said "We cannot save the Town; we have not men enough—let us defend our Posts."

Notwithstanding this, I soon after posted a piquet under the command of the Sheriff (Mr. Jarvis) half a mile from the City, on Yonge Street, and gave such instructions, on the spot, as I thought would suffice to guide him during his stay there. On returning to the City Hall and stating this fact to His Excellency, he expressed his disapprobation of my having done so, after the injunction he had laid upon me. A short time after, being then talking with His Excellency, it was reported to me in his presence that the Sheriff and his piquet were taken prisoners, which naturally made His Excellency repeat his disapprobation of my having posted this piquet. It ultimately turned out that the whole rebel force approached, fired on the piquet, and was fired upon in return, so effectually as to drive them back with some loss. It is now universally admitted that but for this Piquet the Rebels would have then entered the Town and set it on Fire, and yet although this Piquet was posted contrary to His Excellency's express order, he stated in his Despatch writteu twelve days after that he sent it out, and thereby prevented the Incendiary Mackenzie setting fire to the City.

From all that has been said it is now believed by many and I think it most probable that the capture of Messrs. Brock and Bellingham, the killing of the Rebel Anderson by Mr. Powell, and the ringing of the Bells on Monday Night, and the fire from the Sheriff's Piquet on Tuesday night, saved the City on each occasion from being set on fire.

About ten o'clock on Tuesday night His Excellency received an anonymous letter assuring him that the Rebels had determined to set fire to the City in several places before next morning, and he in consequence gave me orders to have the arms and ammunition then remaining in the City Hall removed thence to the Parliament House during the night—the Men laying aside their own arms and each carrying four or five muskets through the Streets to the Parliament House, and having delivered them there to return and take another load, and so continue until the whole should be carried up—and after the arms were carried then to carry the ammunition. It appeared to me that thus to transport them during the night was almost impossible—that the disorder and confusion incident to such a movement in the night must be great, and would probably be irreparable; for should the Rebels attack at any time during the operation, and they must have been well and constantly informed of what we were doing, we should be prevented from reuniting, and must be ruined. The men were tired, cold, and most eager to go to their several homes for rest and refreshment—and had they been so employed during that night great numbers would not again have returned. I entreated of His Excellency not to give the Order, but he firmly insisted upon it. I begged of him to give me some time to consider how it could best be done and I continued for some time to show His Excellency the extreme difficulty of so transporting the arms and the ruin that I thought must certainly follow our attempting to remove them in the night.

As my arguments were nearly, and as I thought fruitlessly exhausted, the arrival of Col. MacNab with a reinforcement of Men from the District of Gore was announced,

and I gladly availed myself of their arrival to assure His Excellency that now there was no need to make the effort, and it was not made.

I should have stated that His Excellency's reason for so hastily removing from the Market House was, that should the Town be set Fire to, the Market House, as he thought, could not be saved in the midst of the surrounding Houses, so combustible and so near as many of them were—whereas the Parliament House and the Two adjacent houses were far removed from all danger from other houses.

The next morning, before day, I occupied the Court House with men to protect the block of buildings surrounding the market square, so that the Rebels could not come near that quarter.

During Wednesday, December 6th, the arms and ammunition were removed in waggons and carts, and a portion of the force was sent also—and His Excellency removed with them to the Parliament House. In the afternoon reinforcements arrived in the Traveller Steam Boat from Niagara and more from the District of Gore in the Burlington, and the Town was crowded with men.

Our numbers now seriously embarrassed us. It became imperatively necessary to attack the Rebels the following day, and to do so required an immediate order that some sort of organization for that purpose might be commenced.

I enquired for His Excellency at the Government House, after sunset, and at the Parliament House, and was told at each place that he was soon expected from the Archdeacon's. I waited till near nine—and at length determined to go to him there, and I requested of Mr. Allan and the Solicitor General to accompany me to urge the necessity of the attack on the next day. We called and found His Excellency with the Archdeacon, Mr. Sullivan of the Executive Council, and the Attorney General, and after a very long discussion His Excellency consented that the attack should be made—but with an apparent reluctance which I could not then understand. Just as we were about to rise to depart Mr. Allan said he saw that there was a misunderstanding existing as to who should command—for that from my conversation now it was plain I expected to command—and Col. MacNab had told him during the afternoon that His Excellency had promised him that he should command. I then imputed His Excellency's reserve during the conversation to his consciousness of the injustice he was about to do me in giving the command to the Speaker. For here, let it be observed that I was a Colonel of Militia before Mr. MacNab had any rank in that Force, and he was almost wholly without military knowledge. A long discussion grew out of this statement of Mr. Allan, and from the part borne by the Attorney General I was convinced he had had much to do in bringing about the appointment of Col. MacNab, who, as Mr. Allan stated, proposed to attack the Rebels at three o'clock in the morning—a time which I declare to be such as to render any successful attack impossible—because it was utterly impossible to organize the confused mass of human beings then congregated in the City during night-time, for then it must be done, to be ready to march from the City after one o'clock so as to reach Montgomery's at three. But I declared it to be impossible to induce unorganized men to make a night attack in great numbers, under any circumstances. Such an attempt would have ruined us, for there were many Rebels then in the City waiting only the turning of the scale to declare themselves. A reverse must therefore have been most injurious to us, if not disastrous.

Too much was said at the Archdeacon's to be stated here, but I could not help feeling the strongest indignation at the idea of any man then in the City being appointed to

the command other than myself. For most assuredly I, of those then present was best qualified to plan, arrange and successfully make that attack. In me, above all others, was full confidence placed by all. For three days and two nights was I incessantly employed in putting all in a state of preparation in the City. I was best known in the Province as a disciplinarian, and in me all had most confidence—and to me would their obedience be more readily given than to any other man in Upper Canada. It is painful to be obliged to make this statement of myself. But not having a shadow of doubt of its truth, and Sir Francis Head having wronged me as he has, I feel myself constrained to so defend myself.

The meeting at length broke up, the Lieutenant-Governor having decided on having the attack made during the next day—but he did not then decide who should have the command.

I rode round the Piquets and in the advance until one o'clock, when I returned to my office in the Parliament House and slept till four—being three hours' sleep—I had had one hour's sleep the preceding night, but I had not slept at all on Monday night. Never before, even in my youth, did I undergo so much hardship and privation in so short a time, nor previously thereto did I think myself capable of it. At four in the morning of Thursday December the 7th I arose and sketched in writing a short plan of the attack, arranging the divisions, their commanders, &c., &c., and at half-past four, being yet uncertain who should command, I requested Mr. Justice Macaulay and the Hon. John Macaulay, Surveyor General, to wait upon His Excellency and obtain his decision. They went to his room in the Parliament House, and soon Col. MacNab and I were summoned, and we attended. His Excellency then, at great length, gave his reasons for having promised Col. MacNab the command, and from the tendency of his observations I feared he would confirm the appointment. I interrupted His Excellency and requested he would hear me before he pronounced finally on the question—and he did hear me—I said that at my time of life, with my rank in the Militia, of such long standing, being then the Senior Colonel in the City, and my character in the Province, I could not have expected that any Militia Officer in Upper Canada would rise up to compete with me. I spoke strongly and vehemently, and His Excellency requested us all to withdraw—except Col. MacNab—and after the loss of about another half-hour of the most valuable time we were again called in, when his Excellency took many minutes more to explain the tenor of his conversation with Col. MacNab, and at length decided that I should command, Col. MacNab having released him from his promise.

It was now broad daylight, and I had to commence an organization of the most difficult nature I had ever known. I had to ride to the Town Hall—to the Garrison and back again, repeatedly. I found few of the officers present who were wanted for the attack. Vast numbers of Volunteers were constantly coming in from the country without arms or appointments of any kind, who were crowding in all directions in my way. My mind was burning with indignation at the idea of Col. MacNab or any other Militia Officer being thought of by His Excellency for the command, after all I had hitherto done for him. My difficulties multiplied upon me—time, of all things the most precious, was wasting for want of ammunition—for want of officers—for the want of most of my men from the Town Hall—whose Commander was yet absent—till at length the organization appeared impossible. I became overwhelmed with the intensity and contrariety of my feelings: I walked to and fro without object until I observed the eyes of many

fixed upon me, when I fled to my room and locked my door, exclaiming audibly that the Province was lost—that I was ruined—fallen. For let it not be forgotten, that it was admitted at the conference at the Archdeacon's the evening before, that if the attack of the next day should fail that the Province would be lost. This, however, then was not my opinion, but I thought of my present failure after the efforts I had made to obtain the command, and the evil consequences likely to flow from that failure, and I did then despair.

In this extremity I fell upon my knees and earnestly and vehemently prayed to the Almighty for strength to sustain me through the trial before me. I arose and hurried to the multitude, and finding one Company formed, as I then thought providentially, I ordered it to be marched to the road in front of the Archdeacon's House, where I had previously intended to arrange the force to be employed—and having once begun I sent Company after Company and gun after gun until the whole stood in order.

Then for the first time I learned that His Excellency intended to place himself at the head of the Militia, which he did, and gave the word "March." This was the only command he gave till the action was over. I led the column to the attack; directed every movement personally, and so were they combined that the Rebels, finding their flanks unexpectedly attacked, soon after they were all warmly engaged in front, they became panic struck and fled from the field. The Militia then surrounding Montgomery's House broke the doors and windows and some time after set it on fire.

I then led on from point to point in the hope of finding the Rebels reassemble, drawing my men after me by sounding the "Advance." I had recourse to this expedient rather than lose time in reforming the Companies, which under the excited state of the men would have been extremely difficult, and I doubted not that by riding onwards with my Bugler, occasionally sounding the "Advance," I should soon draw them after me, and the Rebels being dispersed I was confident the show of any Force, however irregular, would make them continue their flight. At length, hearing that the Rebel Mackenzie was a short way from me, Lieut.-Col. Halkett, Lieutenant and Captain in the Coldstream Guards, Captain Mathias late of the Royal Artillery, a very gallant young man named Maitland, a son of the Chief Justice, a son of mine, both lads of eighteen, and two mounted Militiamen—pursued, full speed, for upwards of three miles, until he took shelter in the woods beyond Shepherd's Tavern and in rear of the other Shepherd's Farm House.

On returning to the main road I met a detachment marching outwards, and asking why they were not going back to Town, was answered that they were going to burn Gibson's house (Gibson was a Member of Parliament and a leading Rebel). I let them pass and proceeded homewards—but soon met a messenger from His Excellency with an Order that Gibson's house should not be burned, whereupon I sent Captain Strachan to recall the party—and he did recall them.

Another messenger from His Excellency now met me desiring to see me immediately. I rode after His Excellency whom I soon saw at a considerable distance returning rapidly towards Town, and I had to ride above a mile before I could overtake him—when he ordered me to see that Gibson's house was burned and then return to Town. I was about to pray of His Excellency not to have Gibson's House burned, but he would not hear me, and repeated the order to burn it.

It was now late in the afternoon, and the house was nearly four miles distant. I then directed Lieut.-Colonel Duggan to take command of a party, which I wheeled out

of the Column and countermarched, and see the house burned—when he entreated of me not to insist on his doing so—for that he had to pass Yonge Street almost daily, and he probably would on some future day be shot from behind a fence. I said "If you will not obey orders you had better go home Sir." Again he spoke, and I then ordered him to go home—but he continued to express his reasons for objecting, and I said "Well, I will see the duty done myself," and I did so: for I had no other officer of high rank near me to whom I could safely entrust the performance of that duty, and with the party I advanced and had the house and barns burned at sunset, and then returned to Town, nine miles.

I arrived at my house about seven o'clock, reduced to the last degree of exhaustion by fatigue—cold and want of food and rest: but suffering most from deeply wounded feelings from the treatment of His Excellency, whose conduct had so nearly brought ruin and disgrace upon me—I mean the disgrace that would have fallen upon me had I failed that morning to organize the Militia for the attack after the efforts I made to obtain the command. For my belief was that His Excellency did not care one straw for me more than as an instrument to be used to forward his own objects—and that as Col. MacNab had Parliamentary influence he would sacrifice me to conciliate him.

On awaking the following morning and reviewing the events of the previous days, my mind became exasperated at the wrongs which had been intended for me, after my having made efforts almost superhuman in defence of the City and the Province—and recollecting, too, that on former occasions, during the late war, and subsequently, repeated attempts had been made to take from me the fruits of my Military knowledge and personal energy and exertions, I resolved to retire from the Militia staff of His Excellency, from a conviction that no cordiality or good will could exist between us—and I did retire.

And here I may state that seeing the Government of this Province for many years assailed by unprincipled men I spared no pains, and too often expended money to strengthen and support it, but I did so without regard to Party. I trusted to the force of my own personal efforts to earn for me, at last, the means of redeeming myself from debt, under which I had suffered since I borrowed £150, to equip myself as an Adjutant on my promotion from Sergeant Major in 1806. And now when the extraordinary and unexpected events of December had occurred, and I had fairly and honorably earned the approbation of this Government, and when, in all human probability, His Excellency himself would have been immolated but for my personal exertions, then, under such circumstances, to find myself not only not likely to be rewarded, but placed by that very Governor, who was so deeply indebted to me in a state of hostility with him which might probably bring utter ruin upon me, was most grievous to me, and nearly destroyed the tone of my mind. I have, however, survived it and will still continue my efforts in the public service and again hope that my just claims will be admitted and myself rewarded.

13th December, 1837.

7th April, 1838.—Having this day read Sir Francis Head's Despatch of the 19th December last, just received from London, I now add the following: When I met the party going out, and was told that they were going to burn Gibson's house I asked "Have you orders to do so?" and was answered "Yes" and again "Are you sure you have Orders?" "Yes we have" was the answer.

When Sir Francis ordered me to burn Gibson's house I was about to speak, meaning to pray of His Excellency not

to have the house burned, but he quickly said "Stop, hear me," at the same moment laying his right hand on my bridle arm "Let Gibson's house be burned forthwith, and keep the Troops (Militia) here until it be done," and then checking his rein he rode on towards the City. Let this statement be compared with his despatch.

I thought it cruel to keep the men standing still in the cold, probably for more than two hours, for Gibson's house was distant upwards of three miles, and part of the road was so deep that a horse could only walk over it. I therefore did not halt the column, but wheeled out one company under Captain Raymond Baby, and all the rest returned to the City.

JAMES FITZ GIBBON.

#### SLIP-SHOD IN LITERATURE.

THERE is the vice of the Slip-shod or Slovenly. In popular language it may be described as the vice of bad workmanship. Its forms are various. The lowest is that of bad syntax, of lax concatenation of clauses and sentences. It would be easy to point out faults of this kind which reappear in shoals in each day's supply of printed matter—from the verbs misnominatived, and the clumsy "whiches" looking back ruefully for submerged antecedents, so common in the columns of our hasty writers, up to the unnecessarily repeated "that" after a conditional clause which some writers insert with an infatuated punctuality, and even the best insert occasionally. Should the notice of a matter so merely mechanical seem too trivial, there is, next, that form of the slip-shod which consists in stuffing out sentences with certain tags and shreds of phraseology lying vague about society, as bits of undistributed type may lie about a printing-room. "We are free to confess," "we candidly acknowledge," "will well repay perusal," "we should heartily rejoice," "did space permit," "causes beyond our control," "if we may be allowed the expression," "commence hostilities,"—what are these and a hundred other such phrases but undistributed bits of old speech, like the "electric fluid" and the "launched into eternity" of the penny-a-liners, which all of us are glad to clutch, to fill a gap, or to save the trouble of composing equivalents from the letters? To change the figure (see, I am at it myself!), what are such phrases but a kind of rhetorical putty with which cracks in the sense are stopped, and prolongations formed where the sense has broken short? Of this kind of slip-shod in writing no writers are more guilty than those who have formed their style chiefly by public speaking; and it is in them also that the kindred faults of synonyms strung together and of redundant expletives are most commonly seen. Perhaps, indeed, the choicest specimens of continuous slip-shod in the language are furnished by the writings of celebrated orators. How dilute the tincture, what bagginess of phraseology round what slender shanks of meaning, what absence of trained muscle, how seldom the nail is hit on the head! It is not every day that a Burke presents himself, whose every sentence is charged with an exact thought proportioned to it, whether he stands on the floor and speaks, or takes his pen in hand. And then, not only in the writings of men rendered diffuse by much speaking after a low standard, but in the tide of current writing besides, who shall take account of the daily abundance of that more startling form of slip-shod which rhetoricians call Confusion of Metaphor? Lord Castlereagh's famous "I will not now enter upon the fundamental feature upon which this question hinges," is as nothing compared with much that passes daily under our eyes in the pages of popular books and periodicals—tissues of words in which shreds from nature's four quarters are jumbled together as in heraldry; in which the writer begins with a lion, but finds it in the next clause to be a water-spout; in which icebergs swim in seas of lava, comets collect taxes, pigs sing, peacocks wear silks, and teapots climb trees.

Pshaw! technicalities all! the mere minutie of the grammarian and the critic of expression! Nothing of the kind, good reader! Words are made up of letters, sentences of words, all that is written or spoken of sentences succeeding each other or interflowing; and at no time, from Homer's till this, has anything passed

as good literature which has not satisfied men as tolerably tight and close-grained in these particulars, or become classic and permanent which has not, in respect of them, stood the test of the microscope. We distinguish, indeed, usefully enough, between matter and expression, between thought and style; but no one has ever attended to the subject analytically without becoming aware that the distinction is not ultimate—that what is called style resolves itself, after all, into manner of thinking; nay, perhaps (though to show this would take some time) into the successive particles of the matter thought. If a writer is said to be fond of epithets, it is because he has a habit of always thinking a quality very prominently along with an object; if his style is said to be figurative, it is because he thinks by means of comparisons; if his syntax abounds in inversions, it is because he thinks the cart before he thinks the horse.

And so, by extension, all the forms of slipshod in expression are, in reality, forms of slipshod in thought. If the syntax halts, it is because the thread of the thought has snapped or become entangled. If the phraseology of a writer is diffuse; if his language does not lie close round his real meaning, but widens out in flat expanses, with here and there a tremor as the meaning rises to take breath; if in every sentence we recognize shreds and tags of common social verbiage—in such a case it is because the mind of the writer is not doing its duty, is not consecutively active, maintains no continued hold of its object, hardly knows its own drift. In like manner, mixed or incoherent metaphor arises from incoherent conception, inability to see vividly what is professedly looked at. All forms of slipshod, in short, are to be referred to deficiency of precision in the conduct of thought. Of every writer it ought to be required at least that he pass every jot and tittle of what he sets down *through* his mind, to receive the guarantee of having been really there, and that he arrange and connect his thoughts in a workmanlike manner. Anything short of this is—allowance being made for circumstances which may prevent a conscientious man from always doing his best—an insult to the public. Accordingly, in all good literature, not excepting the subtlest and most exuberant poetry, one perceives a strict logic linking thought with thought. The velocity with which the mind can perform this service of giving adequate arrangement to its thoughts, differs much in different cases. With some writers it is done almost unconsciously—as if by the operation of a logical instinct so powerful that whatever teems up in their minds is marshalled and made exact as it comes, and there is perfection in the swiftest expression. So it was with the all-fluent Shakespeare, whose inventions, boundless and multitudinous, were yet ruled by a logic so resistless, that they came exquisite at once to the pen's point, and in studying whose intellectual gait we are reminded of the description of the Athenians in Euripides—"those sons of Erectheus always moving with graceful step through a glittering violet ether, where the nine Pierian muses are said to have brought up yellow-haired Harmony as their common child." With others of our great writers, it has been notably different—rejection of first thoughts and expressions, the slow choice of a fit percentage, and the concatenation of these with labour and care.

Prevalent as slipshod is, it is not so prevalent as it was. There is more careful writing, in proportion, now than there was thirty, seventy, or a hundred years ago. This may be seen on comparing specimens of our present literature with corresponding specimens from the older newspapers and periodicals. The precept and the example of Wordsworth and those who helped him to initiate that era of our literature which dates from the French Revolution, have gradually introduced, among other things, habits of mechanical carefulness, both in prose and in verse. Among poets, Scott and Byron—safe in their greatness otherwise—were the most conspicuous sinners against the Wordsworthian ordinances in this respect after they had been promulgated. If one were willing to risk being stoned for speaking truth, one might call these two poets the last of the great slipshods. The *great* slipshods, be it observed; and, if there were the prospect that, by keeping silence about slipshod, we should see any other such massive figure heaving in among us in his slippers, who is there that would object to his coming on account of them, or that would not gladly assist

to fell a score of the delicacies with polished boot-tips in order to make room for him? At the least, it may be said that there are many passages in the poems of Scott and Byron which fall far short of the standard of carefulness already fixed when they wrote. Subsequent writers, with nothing of their genius, have been much more careful. There is, however, one form of the slipshod in verse which, probably because it has not been recognized as slipshod, still holds ground among us. It consists in that particular relic of the "poetic diction" of the last century which allows merely mechanical inversions of syntax for the sake of metre and rhyme. For example, in a poem recently published, understood to be the work of a celebrated writer, and altogether as finished a specimen of metrical rhetoric and ringing epigram as has appeared for many a day, there occur such passages as these:—

"Harley's gilt coach the equal pair attends."

"What earlier school this grand comedian rear'd?  
His first essays no crowds less courtly cheer'd.  
From learned closets came a sauntering sage,  
Yawn'd, smiled, and spoke, and took by storm the age."

"All their love  
Illumes one end, for which strives all their will;  
Before their age they march invincible."

"That talk which art as eloquence admits  
Must be the talk of thinkers and of wits."

"Let Bright responsible for England be,  
And straight in Bright a Chatham we should see."

"All most brave  
In his mix'd nature seem'd to life to start,  
When English honour roused his English heart."

That such instances of syntax inverted to the mechanical order of the verse should occur in such a quarter proves that they are still considered legitimate. But I believe—and this notwithstanding that ample precedent may be shown, not only from poets of the last century, but from all preceding poets—that they are *not* legitimate. Verse does not cancel any of the conditions of good prose, but only superadds new and more exquisite conditions; and that is the best verse where the words follow each other punctually in the most exact prose order, and yet the exquisite difference by which verse does distinguish itself from prose is fully felt. As, within prose itself, there are natural inversions according as the thought moves on from the calm and straightforward to the complex and impassioned—as what would be in one mood "Diana of the Ephesians is great," becomes in another, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians"—so, it may be, there is a *farther* amount of inversion proper within verse as such. Any such amount of inversion, however, must be able to plead itself natural—that is, belonging inevitably to what is new in the movement of the *thought* under the law of verse; which plea would not extend to cases like those specified, where versifiers, that they may keep their metre or hit a rhyme, tug words arbitrarily out of their prose connection. If it should be asked how, under so hard a restriction, a poet could write verse at all, the answer is, "That is *his* difficulty." But that this canon of taste in verse is not so oppressive as it looks, and that it will more and more come to be recognized and obeyed, seems augured in the fact that the greatest British poet of our time has himself intuitively attended to it, and furnished an almost continuous example of it in his poetry. Repeat any even of Tennyson's lyrics, where, from the nature of the case, obedience to the canon would seem most difficult—his "Tears, idle tears," or "The splendour falls,"—and see if, under all that peculiarity which makes the effect of these pieces, if of any in our language, something more than the effect of prose, every word does not fall into its place, like fitted jasper, exactly in the prose order. So! and what do you say to Mr. Tennyson's last volume, with its repetition of the phrase "The Table Round?" Why, I say that, when difficulty mounts to impossibility, then even the gods relent, even Rhadamanthus yields. Here it is as if the British nation had passed a special enactment to this effect:—"Whereas Mr. Tennyson has written a set of poems on the Round Table of Arthur and his Knights, and whereas he has represented to us that the phrase 'The Round Table,' specifying the central object about which these poems revolve, is a phrase which no force of art can work pleasingly into iambic verse, we, the British nation,

considering the peculiarity of the case, and the public benefits likely to accrue from a steady contemplation of the said object, do enact and decree that we will in this instance depart from our usual practice of thinking the species first and then the genus, and will, in accordance with the practice of other times and nations, say, 'The Table Round' instead of 'The Round Table' as heretofore." But this is altogether a special enactment.—*David Masson.*

#### A Visit to Tennyson.

I saw the poet to the best advantage, under his own trees and walking over his own domain. He took delight in pointing out to me the finest and the rarest of his trees—and there were many beauties among them. I recalled my morning's visit to Whittier at Oak Knell, in Danvers, a little more than a year ago, when he led me to one of his favourites, an aspiring evergreen which shot up like a flame. I thought of the graceful American elms in front of Longfellow's house, and the sturdy English elms that stand in front of Lowell's. In this garden of England, the Isle of Wight, where everything grows with such a lavish extravagance of greenness that it seems as if it must bankrupt the soil before autumn, I felt as if weary eyes and over-tasked brains might reach their happiest heaven of rest. We all remember Shenstone's epigram on the pane of a tavern window. If we find our "warmest welcome at an Inn," we find our most soothing companionship in the trees among which we have lived, some of which we may ourselves have planted. We lean against them, and they never betray our trust; they shield us from the sun and from the rain; they spring welcome as a new birth, which never loses its freshness; they lay their beautiful robes at our feet in autumn; in winter they "stand and wait," emblems of patience and of truth, for they hide nothing, not even the little leaf-buds which hint to us of hope, the last element is their triple symbolism.

This digression, suggested by the remembrance of the poet under his trees, breaks my narrative, but gives me the opportunity of paying a debt of gratitude. For I have owned many beautiful trees, and loved many more outside of my own leafy harem. Those who write verses have no special claim to be lovers of trees, but so far as one is of the poetical temperament he is like to be a tree-lover. Poets have, as a rule, more than the average nervous sensibility and irritability. Trees have no nerves. They live and die without suffering, without self-questioning or self-reproach. They have the divine gift of silence. They cannot obtrude upon the solitary moments when one is to himself the most agreeable of companions. The whole vegetable world, even "the meanest flower that blows," is lovely to contemplate. What if creation had passed there, and you or I had been called upon to decide whether self-conscious life should be added in the form of the existing animal creation, and the hitherto peaceful universe

should come under the rule of Nature as we now know her,

"red in tooth and claw?"

Are we not glad that the responsibility of the decision did not rest on us?

I am sorry that I did not ask Tennyson to read or repeat some of his own lines to me. Hardly any one perfectly understands a poem but the poet himself. One naturally loves his own poem as no one else can. It fits the mental mould in which it was cast, and it will not exactly fit any other. For this reason I had rather listen to a poet reading his own verses than hear the best elocutionist that ever spouted recite them. He may not have a good voice or enunciation, but he puts his heart and his interpretative intelligence into every line, word and syllable. I should have liked to hear Tennyson read such lines as

"Laborious orient ivory, sphere in sphere;" and in spite of my good friend Matthew Arnold's *in terrorem*, I should have liked to hear Macaulay read,

"And Aulus the Dictator  
Smoothed Auster's raven mane,"

and other mouthable lines, from the "Lays of Ancient Rome." Not less should I like to hear Mr. Arnold himself read the passage beginning,—

"In his cool hall with haggard eyes  
The Roman noble law."

—*Oliver Wendell Holmes, in the Atlantic.*

#### George Saintsbury on Wm. Hazlitt.

THE only exception to be taken to the well-known panegyric of Ella is that it bestows this eulogy on Hazlitt "in his natural and healthy state." Unluckily, it would seem, by a concurrence of all testimony, even the most partial, that the unhealthy state was quite as natural as the healthy one. Lamb himself plaintively wishes that "he would not quarrel with the world at the rate he does"; and De Quincey, in his short, but very interesting, biographical notice of Hazlitt (a notice entirely free from the malignity with which De Quincey has been sometimes charged), declares, with quite as much truth as point, that Hazlitt's guiding principle was, "Whatever is, is wrong." He was the very ideal of a literary Ishmael; and, after the fullest admission of the almost incredible virulence and unfairness of his foes, it has to be admitted likewise, that he was quite as ready to quarrel with his friends. He succeeded at least once in forcing a quarrel even upon Lamb. His relations with Leigh Hunt (who, whatever his faults were, was not unamiable) were constantly strained, and at least once actually broken by his infernal temper. Nor were his relations with women more fortunate or more creditable than those with men. That the fault was entirely on his side in the rupture with his first wife is, no doubt, not the case; for Mrs. Hazlitt's, or Miss Stoddart's, own friends admit that she was of a peculiar and rather trying disposition. It is indeed evident that she was the sort of person (most trying of all others to a man of Hazlitt's temperament) who would put her

head back as he was kissing her to ask if he would like another cup of tea, or interrupt a declaration to suggest shutting the window. As for the famous and almost legendary episode of Sarah Walker, the lodging house keeper's daughter, and the *Liber Amoris*, the obvious and irresistible attack of something like erotic madness which it implies absolves Hazlitt partly—but only partly; for there is a kind of shabbiness about the affair which shuts it out from all reasonable claim to be regarded as a new act of the endless drama of "All for Love, or The World Well Lost!" Of his second marriage, the only persons who might be expected to give us some information either can or will say next to nothing. But when a man with such antecedents marries a woman of whom no one has anything bad to say, lives with her for a year chiefly on her money, and is then quitted by her with the information that she will have nothing more to do with him, it is not, I think, uncharitable to conjecture that most of the fault is his.—*Macmillan's Magazine.*

SOME years ago a quondam brigand chief was raised to the presidency of Bolivia. He was noted for his long shaggy hair and beard, on which he never bestowed the slightest pains. On the day of his election he had to attend mass in obedience to the usual custom, and a barber was called in to comb and dress the matted hair and beard of his excellency. When the tedious and painful operation was over, an official came in to inform his excellency that there was a criminal sentenced to death and awaiting execution, but that it was customary for a newly-elected president to commute the sentence into a lighter one. "Well, and what other punishment am I to give him?" inquired the president, still smarting from the recent operation. "Which ever your excellency may please." "Then let him have his hair combed, and have done with it!" was the reply.

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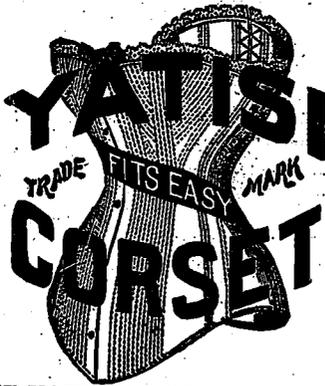
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The Rev. G. M. Milligan, pastor of Jarvis Street Presbyterian Church, writes,

384 Sherbourne St., Toronto,  
July 26th, 1883.

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GEO. M. MILLIGAN.

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I remain, thankfully yours,

Malvern, P.O.

L. D. CROSSIN, M.D.

St. Marys, Oct. 13th, 1884.

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