

TO DUNCAN MACLEAN, Esq., M. P. P.

No. V.

SIR;

If the readers of the *Examiner* are not heartily tired of this correspondence, I can assure them I am an exception to their case; for, the farther I proceed in my reply to your letters against me, the more clearly do I perceive the inutility of combatting the assertions of so unscrupulous an assailant—not because my case is weak and your accusations strong; but because your accusations are so despicably futile—so utterly destitute of proof, that even many of your friends can barely hide their contempt for your folly. Had I consulted my own ease at the outset of this correspondence, I should have transferred to the columns of the *EXAMINER* your attacks upon me, and prefaced them thus: "The following are the productions of a disappointed man, whose malice has so perverted his judgment, that he has become a driveller of the nonsense and a retailer of the lies picked up in Charlottetown during his sojourn here while attending the Session of the Legislature.—We aid in their publication, in order to give the community at large a full sense of his mendacity."

Since I have taken, however, the trouble to answer any part of your correspondence, I shall finish the work before I resume the "we" of the editorial chair.

"Mr. Whelan's public abilities consist entirely in being a ready and clear writer, but that destitute of profundity, truth and consistency, his writings are neither powerful nor effective."

Truly, it is a misfortune that I have lost the applause of so excellent a critic as D. Maclean. It is, however, to be presumed that I have ceased to be a profound and truthful writer only since the suspension of the *Palladium* as you patronizingly acknowledged that journal to have been conducted with "considerable ability and consistency," and might have proved profitable to myself and advantageous to the Colony, had I been wise enough to conciliate the anti-Irish prejudices of a few bigots like you. I suppose I might even yet be deemed worthy of your applause and patronage, if I painted you and Donald Montgomery as the most faithful of public servants, and Sir Henry Huntley as the most implacable of tyrants down to the last hour of his administration. This would be the proof of my consistency, and the sure sign of my truthfulness and profundity as a public writer.

But while you have not established one solitary assertion which you have written to show my want of consistency and truth, I have referred to your votes in the Assembly, and to your correspondence in the newspapers as incontrovertible testimony to the absence of these qualities in your public conduct; and reckless, and unparalleled for effrontery as you are, you have not dared to gainsay a tittle of what I have written.—Your charges against me are founded upon presumption, suspicion, and second-hand conversations, such for example as: "I believe Mr. Whelan has done so and so—might do so and so—would do so and so if, &c. &c." "I have heard it stated that Mr. Whelan made such and such an assertion—I have heard it rumoured in Charlottetown that he received such and such a sum of money, and it is possible to believe any thing of such a mercenary writer." Your gullibility throughout your attacks upon me is the only ability of which you have made any great display. You remind me of the story of the three boys in the thunder storm. "Tom, can you pray?" "No," replied Tom, "Bill, can you pray?" "No," echoed the second. "Neither can I, but by hokey, something must be done." Neither Donald Montgomery, Nicholas Conroy, nor yourself, could make out a decent prayer to protect you against the storm of public opinion which threatens to overwhelm you for your manifold political transgressions, but you, being the most cunning of the trio, have wisely come to the conclusion, that "something must be done." And this "something" we have in the shape of four letters to the *Islander*, which positively amount to nothing. As another of the many illustrations I have given of your great regard for "truth," and of your "profundity" as a public writer, I beg to call your attention to the following emphatic refutation of your unblushing assertions touching the origin of my opposition to Mr. Nicholas Conroy:—

(Copy.)

Sept. 5, 1848.

"DEAR SIR—I find it stated in a letter from Mr. D. Maclean, addressed to the editor of the *Islander*, and

published in that paper, August 25, that "Mr. Conroy mentioned openly in the House of Assembly when a number of members and others were present, that some time previously having been at Govt. House, in company with the Hon. D. McDonald of Tracadie, Sir Henry—addressing himself to the latter gentleman—expatiated on Mr. Whelan's abilities as a public writer, and wound up by recommending him to unite with other proprietors, and engage him to write against the Tenantry—assuring him that he could be got cheap! and adding that they would deserve to lose their lands, if they let slip the chance. Tracadie was present and did not deny that a conversation to that effect had taken place."

"I now beg to enquire, in the first place, if you were at Govt. House in company with Mr. N. Conroy as alleged by Mr. Maclean; in the second place, if a conversation such as has been reported by Mr. Maclean occurred between you and Sir Henry, in the presence of Mr. Conroy; and, in the third place, whether, on hearing Mr. Conroy relate the conversation in the House of Assembly, "you did not deny that such a conversation really had taken place." Trusting you will favour me with an answer to these enquiries, I beg to assure you that

"I am, Sir, Your obt. Servt.

"EDWARD WHELAN.

"Hon. D. McDonald, &c. &c., Glenaladale."

(Copy.) "Glenaladale, 6th Sept., 1848.

"Dear Sir—I am in receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, and hasten to reply to the enquiries stated therein. I cannot recollect that I ever was at Government House with Mr. Nicholas Conroy, as stated by Mr. D. Maclean; and, therefore, I can have no knowledge of any conversation between Sir Henry Huntley and myself, to the effect reported by Mr. D. Maclean, or to any other effect, in the presence of Mr. N. Conroy.

"As regards the conversation last winter in the House of Assembly, on that occasion I declared my inability to recollect a conversation such as Mr. Conroy stated he was informed had taken place at Government House. I notice that Mr. D. Maclean does not state correctly what passed between Mr. N. Conroy and me. The truth is, Mr. N. Conroy stated, on the report of another person, a conversation said to have taken place at Sir Henry Huntley's Table, on an occasion of my having dined there, in that person's company, and, as I have already said, I denied any recollection of it. I must say I felt that if the like had taken place, and was improperly blabbed to Mr. N. Conroy, he should have had more discretion, and a better sense of propriety, than to repeat what, if it really took place, were the observations of a Gentleman in conversation with his guests, and could not be repeated without a breach of propriety, particularly under the influence evidently prompting Mr. N. Conroy to make such a statement.

"I hope I have thus satisfied your enquiries, and that the other parties concerned will also be satisfied. If not, I am generally to be found somewhere on Townships 35 and 36, and will be quite willing to attend to the private communications of any you; but I'll not be drawn into your newspaper warfare.

"I am Sir,

"Your obedt. Servt.

"DONALD McDONALD.

"Edward Whelan, Esq. M.P.P., Examiner Office."

I have a short answer to give to the assertions contained in your fourth letter, which you have offered to the public as 'examples' of my want of consistency and truth. A public writer, making a charge of this description, if he had any wish to render his writings 'powerful' and 'effective,' unless he believed that the public would slavishly submit their judgment to his statements, and proclaim them as oracles from the lips of an unerring judge—should produce, at least, some little testimony to the truth of what he writes. Were you a pattern of propriety—a model politician—a man who never committed a fault—never deviated from 'the even tenor of your way'—never knew what it was to be inconsistent in the most trivial matter—you could not have adopted a more dictatorial and supercilious style of address than what your present correspondence exhibits. Do you believe that Prince Edward Island is a colony of fools, that they must perforce take for granted every thing you assert without troubling themselves to look for a foundation to your assertions? Alas, the public has had experience enough of you to know that you are not above the vice of cowards,

"For none but cowards lie;"

and I can add to the testimony I have already given, to shew that their experience is not at fault.

I quote the following lines from the second paragraph of your letter:

"When the subject of the Governor's salary was debated, Mr. Whelan committed to memory a 'two hour's speech,' to be reported for the benefit of his constituents, in which he declared that, rather than vote His Excellency £500, (out of a fund over which the Assembly held no controul, by the bye,) he would cut his right

hand off, or barbecue it, like the ancient Roman, I forget which, but at any rate the right hand was to suffer."

Now, if the 'speech' was 'two hours' long, how is it that it occupies only a little over two columns of large print in the *Examiner*, which might be read in less than ten minutes. As to its being 'committed to memory,' I should like to know from what circumstance you could predicate such a thing? You neither saw me write, nor study the speech, nor did any other man living see me do so. You unwittingly compliment me upon this point, for it cannot be denied, that he who can learn by heart a 'two hours' speech must have a very excellent memory, which should be considered a fair set-off to a defective elocution. It is rather annoying that I cannot charge you with the sin of delivering a 'two hours' speech; and remembering your memorable display in the Supreme Court, when you were tried for libel, no one could believe that your memory was of any material service to you. As to my having used, in imitation of Mutius Scævola, a syllable in reference to my 'right hand,' I beg to say, Sir, with great respect, Sir, you lie. I confess this is severe language, but your conduct justifies severity, and putting as I do, my own name to the bottom of it, I am responsible for its use. In reference to your assertion, that the £500 is to be drawn from 'a fund over which the Assembly held no controul,' it is plain that you write the most flagrant nonsense. The Assembly impose the tax on Lands, and they appropriate it, yet you say, they have no 'controul' over it! What do you mean by controlling a fund? Creating and spending it, any child in the country will tell you.

Your next assertion, made on the authority of Mr. Montgomery, namely, that I intimated to Mr. W. Clark my intention to vote for the L.500, I will leave to be disposed of by Mr. Clark himself. I do not hesitate to say, that he can, and will, prove you to have falsified in every particular the conversation to which you have referred.

In reply to the very next assertion, namely that I had changed my mind a 'third time'—(we have been told of only one change)—and informed the readers of the *Examiner* on the 15th May that it was necessary for the Assembly to provide for that Salary, I beg to say that your memory has proved very treacherous to you, as you have entirely misquoted the words of the *Examiner*. In an editorial in the paper of the date referred to, speaking of the Currency Bill, I went on to shew, that if L.12,000 had been borrowed to redeem Treasury Warrants, the Land Assessment Fund, had it not been appropriated, would have "formed a security amply sufficient to lenders that their interest would be paid regularly, as well as the L.500 voted to augment the Governor's Salary provided, which of course it was necessary to secure—since it was to be given—on some fund having a real value and foundation." These are the words referred to by you, and if you can torture them into an approval of the vote of L.500, it is more than any body else can do. The obvious meaning of the words is simply this: the House of Assembly having voted the increase, should of course secure the payment of it.

In the next paragraph you commence with two falsehoods, which have half a dozen subordinate ones tacked on to them, like the tale of a kite, to give them an imposing effect. You state, that last Session I proposed some legislation on the Fishery Reserves, but that I abandoned the subject of the Reserves altogether, and proposed a bounty of six shillings per quintal on the exportation of salt fish. Now, the truth of the matter is very easily got at, and I find the facts contained in a report of the debate published in the *Examiner*. The House of Assembly resolved itself into a committee of the whole, to consider the propriety of encouraging the Fisheries. After some debate, Mr. John Longworth submitted a resolution, to the effect, that a bounty be given on fish exported to the West Indies. I submitted another resolution in amendment, embracing Mr. Longworth's views, and suggesting in addition the propriety of making the Fishery Reserves available for the encouragement of the Fisheries. This was all the 'legislation' in connection with the Fishery Reserves proposed by me; and the fact of my suggestion being warmly opposed refutes your assertion, as to my having the matter 'all my own way.' When the amendment was carried, several gentlemen opposed to me in the House, (and Mr. J. Longworth amongst them), strongly advised me not to mix up in one Bill the question of Reserves with that of Bounties—assuring me that a Bounty Bill, if separate, would secure a majority in the House, but if connected with the subject of the Reserves, that it would be lost. Anxious to see such a measure receive as much support as could possibly be obtained for it, I introduced the question of Bounties in a separate Bill. This was neither novel 'nor ridiculous in legislation;' bounties on fish exported to the West Indies were given in this colony at a former (and not very distant) period, and my Bill was framed on the old law. With respect to the amount, I did not propose six shillings per quintal as the bounty; as was customary in such cases, a blank was left for the amount to be filled up by the House. In debate I suggested that I thought four shillings would not be too high, but finding the Assembly was in no humour to give such a sum, I moved that two shillings per quintal be given on fish exported to the West Indies, in quantities not less than 700 quintals.