

The Examiner.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND NEWS.

EDWARD WHELAN]

This is true Liberty, when Free-born Men, having to advise the Public, may speak free.—EURIPIDES.

[EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

Vol. IX.

CHARLOTTETOWN, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1859.

No. 12.

Provincial Parliament.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

Concluded.

Hon. Mr. HAVILAND—The hon. member's own government afforded a pretty good illustration of a family compact. There were himself, the Surveyor General, father-in-law to his daughter, the Road Correspondent, his son-in-law, and the Sergeant at Arms, his brother-in-law,—quite a snug family party. As to the majority of votes given for the Government and the opposition respectively, it will be found, that the 16 Government members had some 15 votes more than their opponents had received; and before the prorogation that majority may be increased to 2000. The Government cannot be charged with having gone to the hustings with fraud and misrepresentation; their principles were boldly avowed, and the true reason of their being in power now is the fact, that the people had become thoroughly disgusted with the mockery of Responsible Government to which they had so long submitted. The late Government so far ignored Responsible Government, that the best claim to office was, that the appointee should have been rejected by the people; the defeated candidate then was admitted to have a claim to an office, or a right to be shovelled up into that refuge for the destitute—the Legislative Council. How many of the members of that body could get the confidence of a constituency? In fact, liberals themselves considered it, as at present constituted, a mere delusion, and a sham.

Hon. Mr. COLES—It was not so when it rejected your constitutional bill.

Hon. Mr. HAVILAND—Yes! the Council was not permitted to pass that Bill, which had for its object the exclusion of all officials but two from the House. We had a beautiful specimen of the liberality of the late Government, when Mr. Clark was publicly dared to give his vote, and made to sign an apology, which placed him in such a position that he could not, on that account, face a constituency. The hon. member had said, that the people would not have returned the members of the Government, if they had taken office, and gone back for re-election. The reverse would have been the case,—as a proof of this, I will mention, that while of our party all the members of the Government have been re-elected, of the minority the hon. member is the only office holder, out of three members of the late Government, who was not re-elected. As to the opinion promulgated by the hon. member, Mr. Whelan, that the Government had violated the provisions of an Act of Parliament, I will merely observe, that legal opinions, emanating from his side of the House will be received with more deference than at present, when his party shall have succeeded in having an Attorney General on the floor. The only guide to Sir Alexander Bannerman in the formation of his Government in 1851 was to be the well-understood wishes of the people, as expressed through their representatives. That system we have, and if the present Government does not give satisfaction to the country, we can change it for another; but hope never to see such a mongrel as the last. The objection, that the people had now no voice in the appointment to office, because the parties appointed, not being in the Assembly, had not to go back for the approval of their constituents, might have had some weight under the old election law, but in the law of 1856, any member holding any public office, a Road Commissioner for instance, can take any departmental office without vacating his seat; for instance, the hon. member, Mr. Thornton, is a Road Commissioner; now, people might have every confidence in him in that capacity, who would not approve of him as a Treasurer or Colonial Secretary. As long as such a law is on the Statute Book, it is a mere farce to talk about going back to be re-elected. Great stress has been laid upon the Government appointing their supporters to office. I would ask, when did the late Government ever appoint their opponents? It has been said that the present Government resembles that of the United States, in a want of responsibility. I deny this. The moment an adverse vote declares that the Government has lost public confidence, it goes to the wall. It is more pure than the late Government, and indirect and immediate responsibility approximates more nearly to British than American institutions; and I feel assured, that it will work more satisfactorily to the country. At present the people have more control over the public servants than they had under the late Government,—under which one official became security for another, so that if any complaint of misconduct was preferred, the members of Government had a direct interest in checking investigation, and securing the delinquent; but now no member of the Executive, nor any member of the Government side, will become responsible for any public officer. As to the absence from the Speech of allusion to the introduction of specific measures, it is not to be expected, when it is considered how short a time the present Government has been in office, and how their time has been occupied by affairs requiring immediate attention. The Speech does, however, allude generally to measures to be submitted.

Hon. Mr. COLES—Notwithstanding all that has been said about Mr. Clark's apology, and the disparaging comments which have been made with reference to his conduct in making it, I contend that it was creditable in him to have acknowledged his error when he voted by mistake. The explanation was voluntary, and the Government have made use of it for the purpose of inducing the exclusion of public officers from the House. I have heard of apologies more humble than Mr. Clark's, and made within the last fortnight. (Name, name)

Hon. Mr. HAVILAND—I never would, and never have eaten humble pie. I did say, and now repeat, that the Governor acted unconstitutionally in dissolving the late House. I accepted a seat in the Council at the wish of other members.

Hon. Mr. POPE—The amendment carries falsehood on the face of it. There is no such law as stated. The hon. member, Mr. Coles, may well talk of Responsible Government, as a very fine thing when he worked it, when his connections were shovelled into office. He was unable to have an Attorney General in the House, and so had to look to the other end of the building for one. Nearly all the late office-holders were rejected candidates, as the Attorney General, the Commissioner of Public Lands, the Registrar, and the Postmaster General. Was that Responsible Government?

Hon. Mr. THORNTON—The late system worked pretty well, but I did not approve of it altogether. I should prefer to have the Attorney General and Colonial Secretary in the House, which, however, I do not wish to see crowded with office-holders. The opinion of the people on the subject might have been tested by the acceptance of office on the part of one member of the Government, and his remission to his constituents, who would thus have an opportunity of manifesting their opinions in a constitutional mode. At present there is no responsibility. After a few unimportant remarks from one or two members, the Address was reported agreed to without amendment.

The division stood as follows:—
YEAS—Hons. Messrs. Gray, Palmer, Laird, Longworth, James Yeo, Haviland, Pope, Messrs. Davies, Douse, McNeill, Montgomery, Holm, Howat, Ramsay, Sinclair, John Yeo.—16.
NAYS—Hon. Messrs. Coles, Kelly, Wightman, Thornton, Whelan, Messrs. Conroy, Cooper, Doyle, Knight, McDonald, Sutherland, Walker.—12.

"Weigh your words," said a man to a fellow who was blustering away in a towering passion at another. "They won't weigh much if he does," said the antagonist coolly.

Literature.

THE INDIAN SOLDIER'S DREAM.

O'er the red field of battle the darkness is falling,
The deep-booming voice of the cannon is mute;
The wild noises cease, save the shrill trumpet's calling
The conquering bands from the fiery pursuit;
Then the sentinel's challenge, the moans of the dying,
The muffled drums beating are heard through the night;
But they wake not the weary worn soldier that's lying
Asleep, like a child, in the stilly starlight:—
There he sleeps, and he dreams—and of what dreams he,
But of Home in the Old Land over the sea!

He sees not the red river foaming with slaughter,
He hears not the yell of the swarthy Seroy;
But he dreams of the house by the white-flashing water,
On the merry mill-dam where he lived when a boy.
Again to his bosom his fond wife he presses!
His children—what boisterous welcome is theirs!
And his blind mother gropes from her corner and blesses
The brave soldier—son of her numberless prayers.
Thus he sleeps—and his dreams, can they sweeter be
Than of Home in the Old Land over the sea!

But with morning again the tired soldier is arming,
A terrible spirit burns in his breast;
To awake on the wild jungle beast the dark Brahmin,
Sweet womanhood's sorrows, and childhood's death.
Again the hot chase o'er the dead and the dying,
The muffled drums beating at dead of night;
And the weary worn soldier once more is lying
Asleep—dead asleep—in the stilly starlight:
But his sleep has no dreams; never more dreams he
Of his Home in the Old Land over the sea!

[From Blackwood's Magazine for August, 1859.]

THE HAUNTED HOUSE.

[Continued.]

Nothing more chanced for the rest of that night. Nor, indeed, had I long to wait before the dawn broke. Not till it was broad daylight did I quit the haunted house. Before I did so, I revisited the little blind room in which my servant and myself had been for a time imprisoned. I had a strong impression—for which I could not account—that from that room had originated the mechanism of the phenomena—if I may use the term—which had been experienced in my chamber. And though I entered it now in the clear day, with the sun peering through the filmy window, I still felt, as I stood on its floor, the creep of the horror which I had first experienced the night before, and which had been so aggravated by what had passed in my own chamber. I could not, indeed, bear to stay half a minute within those walls. I descended the stairs, and again I heard the footfall before me; and when I opened the street door I thought I could distinguish a very low laugh:—I gained my home, expecting to find my runaway servant there. But he had not presented himself; nor did I hear more of him for three days, when I received a letter from him, dated from Liverpool, to this effect:

"HONORABLE SIR,—I humbly entreat your pardon, though I can scarcely hope that you will think I deserve it, unless—which Heaven forbid—you saw what I did, I feel that it will be years before I can recover myself; and as to being fit for service, it is out of the question. I am therefore going to my brother-in-law at Melbourne. The ship sails to-morrow. Perhaps the long voyage may set me up. I do nothing now but start and tremble, and fancy it is behind me. I humbly beg you, honored sir, to order my clothes, and whatever wages are due me, to be sent to my mother's, at Waiworth.—John knows her address."

The letter ended with additional apologies, somewhat incoherent, and explanatory details as to effects that had been under the writer's charge.

This flight may perhaps warrant a suspicion that the man wished to go to Australia, and had been somehow or other fraudulently mixed up with the events of the night. I say nothing in refutation of that conjecture; rather, I suggest it as one that would seem to many persons the most probable of improbable occurrences. My own theory remained unshaken. I returned in the evening to the house, to bring away in a hack cab the things that I left there, with my poor dog's body. In this task I was not disturbed, nor did any incident worth note befall me, except that still, on ascending and descending the stairs, I heard the same footfall in advance. On leaving the house, I went to Mr. J.—'s. He was at home. I returned him the keys, told him that my curiosity was sufficiently gratified, and was about to relate quickly what had passed when he stopped me, and said, though with much politeness, that he had no longer any interest in a mystery which none had ever solved.

I determined at least to tell him of the two letters I had read, as well as of the extraordinary manner in which they had disappeared, and I then inquired if he thought they had been addressed to the woman who had died in the house, and if there were anything in her early history which could possibly confirm the dark suspicions to which the letters gave rise. Mr. J.—seemed startled, and after musing a few moments, answered, "I know but little of the woman's earlier history, except, as I before told you, that her family were known to mine. But you revive some vague reminiscences to her prejudice. I will make inquiries, and inform you of their result. Still, even if we could admit the popular superstition that a person who had been either the perpetrator or the victim of dark crimes in life could revisit, as a restless spirit, the scene in which those crimes had been committed, I should observe that the house was infested by strange sights and sounds before the old woman died—you smile—what would you say?"

"I would say this, that I am convinced, if we could get to the bottom of these mysteries, we should find a living human agency."

"What! you believe it is all an imposture? for what object?"

"Not an imposture in the ordinary sense of the word. If suddenly I were to sink into a deep sleep, from which you could not awake me, but in that sleep could answer questions with an accuracy which I could not pretend to when awake—tell you what money you had in your pocket—nay, describe your very thoughts—it is not necessarily an imposture, any more than it is necessarily supernatural. I should be unconsciously to myself, under a mesmeric influence, conveyed to me from a distance by a human being who had acquired power over me by previous rapport."

"Granting mesmerism, so far carried, to be a fact, you are right. And you would infer from this that mesmerism might produce the extraordinary effects you and others have witnessed over inanimate objects—fill the air with sights and sounds?"

"Or impress our senses with the belief in them—we never having been in rapport with the person acting on us? No. What is called mesmerism could not do this; but there may be a power akin to mesmerism, and superior to it—the power that in the old days was called Magic. That such a power may extend to all inanimate objects of matter, I do not say; but if so, it would not be against nature, only a rare power in nature which might be given to constitutions with certain peculiarities, and cultivated by practice to an extraordinary

degree. That such a power might extend over the dead—that is, over certain thoughts and memories that the dead may still retain—and compel not that which ought properly to be called the soul, and which is far beyond the human reach, but rather a phantom of what has been most earth-stained on earth to make itself apparent to our senses—is a very ancient though obsolete theory, upon which I will hazard no opinion. But I do not conceive the power would be supernatural. Let me illustrate what I mean from an experiment which Paracelsus describes as not difficult, and which the author of the "Curiosities of Literature" cites as credible: A flower perishes; you burn it. Whatever were the elements of that flower while it lived, are gone, dispersed, you know not whither; you can never discover nor re-collect them. But you can, by chemistry, out of the burnt dust of that flower, raise a spectrum of the flower, just as it seemed in life. It may be the same with a human being. The soul has as much escaped you as the essence or elements of the flower. Still you may make a spectrum of it. And this phantom, though in the popular superstition it is held to be the soul of the departed, must not be confounded with the true soul; it is but the eidolon of the dead form. Hence, like the best attested stories of ghosts or spirits, the thing that most strikes us is the absence of what we hold to be soul—that is, of superior emancipated intelligence. They come for little or no object—they seldom speak, if they do come; they utter no ideas above that of an ordinary person on earth. The American spirit-seers have published volumes of communications in prose and verse, which they assert to be given in the names of the most illustrious dead—Shakespeare, Bacon—heaven knows whom. These communications, taking the best, are certainly not a whit of higher order than would be communicated from living persons of fair talent and education; they are wondrously inferior to what Bacon, Shakespeare and Plato said and wrote when on earth. Nor, what is more notable, do they ever contain an idea that was not on the earth before. Wonderful, therefore, as such phenomena may be (granting them to be truthful), I see much that philosophy may question, nothing that is incumbent on philosophy to deny—viz: nothing supernatural. They are but ideas conveyed somehow or other (we have not yet discovered the means) from one mortal brain to another. Whether in so doing tables walk of their own accord, or fiend-like shapes appear in a magic circle, or body-less hands rise and remove material objects, or a Thing of Darkness, such as presented itself to me, freeze our blood—still am I persuaded that these are but agencies conveyed, as by electric wires, to my own brain from the brain of another. In some constitutions there is a natural chemistry, and these produce electric wonders. But they differ in this from Normal Science—they are alike objectless, purposeless, peevish, frivolous, they lead on to no grand results; and therefore the world does not heed, and true sages have not cultivated them. But sure I am, that of all I saw or heard, a man, as human as myself was the remote originator; and, I believe, unconsciously to himself as to the exact effects produced, for this reason: no two persons, you say, have ever experienced exactly the same dream. If this were an ordinary imposture, the machinery would be arranged for results that would but little vary; if it were a supernatural agency, permitted by the Almighty, it would surely be for some definite end. These phenomena belong to neither class; my persuasion is that they originate in some brain now far distant; that that brain had no distinct volition in anything that occurred; that what does occur reflects but its devious, motley, ever-shifting, half-formed thoughts; in short that it has been but the dreams of such a brain put into action and invested with a semi-substance.

"That this brain is of immense power, that it can set matter into movement, that it is malignant and destructive, I believe; some material force must have killed my dog; it might, for aught I know, have sufficed to kill myself, had I been so subject to terror as the dog—had my intellect or my spirit given me no countervailing resistance in my will."

"It killed your dog! that is fearful! indeed it is strange that no animal can be induced to stay in that house; not even a cat. Rats and mice are never found in it."

"The instincts of the brute creation detect influences deadly to their existence. Man's reason has a sense less subtle, because it has a resisting power more supreme. But enough; do you comprehend my theory?"

"Yes, though imperfectly—and I accept any crochets (pardon the word), however odd, rather than embrace at once the notion of ghosts and hobgoblins we imbibed in our nurseries. Still to my unfortunate house the evil is the same. What on earth can I do with the house?"

"I will tell you what I would do. I am convinced from my own internal feelings that the small unfurnished room at right angles to the door of the bedroom which I occupied, forms a starting point or receptacle for the influences which haunt the house; and I strongly advise you to have the walls opened, the floor removed—nay, the whole room pulled down. I observe that it is detached from the body of the house, built over the small back-yard, and could be removed without injury to the rest of the building."

"And you think if I did that—"

"You would cut off the telegraph wires. Try it. I am so persuaded that I am right, that I will pay half the expense if you will allow me to direct the operations."

About ten days afterwards I received a letter from Mr. J.—, telling me that he had visited the house since I had seen him; that he had found the two letters I had described, replaced in the drawer from which I had taken them; that he had read them with misgivings like my own; that he had instituted a cautious inquiry about the woman to whom I rightly conjectured they had been written. It seemed that about thirty-six years ago (a year before the date of the letters), she had married, against the wish of her relatives, an American of very suspicious character; in fact, he was generally believed to have been a pirate. She herself was the daughter of very respectable trades-people, and had served in the capacity of a nursery governess before her marriage. She had a brother, a widower, who was considered wealthy, and who had one child about six years old. A month after the marriage the body of this brother was found in the Thames, near London Bridge; there seemed some marks of violence about his throat, but they were not deemed sufficient to warrant the inquest in any other verdict than "found drowned."

The American and his wife took charge of the little boy, the deceased brother having by his will left his sister the guardian of his only child—and in the event of the child's death, the sister inherited. The child died about six months afterwards; it was supposed to have been neglected and ill-treated. The neighbors deposed to have heard it shriek at night. The surgeon who had examined it after death said that it was emaciated as if from want of nourishment, and the body was covered with livid bruises. It seemed that one winter night the child had sought to escape; crept into the back-yard; tried to scale the wall; fallen back exhausted, and been found at morning in a dying state. But though there was some evidence of cruelty, there was none of murder; and the aunt and her husband had sought to palliate cruelty by alleging the exceeding stubbornness and perversity of the child, who was declared to be half-witted. Be that as it may, at the orphan's death the aunt inherited her brother's fortune. Before the first wedding year was out, the American quitted England abruptly, and never returned to it. He obtained a cruising vessel, which was lost in the Atlantic two years afterwards. The widow was left in affluence; but reverses of various kinds had befallen her: a bank broke; an investment failed; she went into a small business and became insolvent; then she entered into service, sinking lower and lower, from housekeeping down to maid-of-all-work; never long retaining a place, though nothing peculiar against her character was ever alleged. She was considered sober, honest, and peculiarly quiet in her ways; still nothing prospered with her. And so she had dropped into the workhouse, from which

Mr. J.— had taken her, to be placed in charge of the very house she had rented as mistress in the first year of her wedded life.

Mr. J.— added that he had passed an hour alone in the unfurnished room which I had urged him to destroy, and that his impressions of dread while there were so great, though he had neither heard nor seen anything, that he was eager to have the walls bared and the floor removed as I had suggested. He had engaged persons for the work, and would commence any day I would name.

The day was accordingly fixed. I repaired to the haunted house; we went into the blind dreary room, took up the skirting, and then the floors. Under the rafters, covered with rubbish, was found a trap-door, quite large enough to admit a man. It was closely nailed down, with clamps and rivets of iron. On removing these we descended into a room below, the existence of which had never been suspected. In this room there had been a window and a flue, but they had been bricked over, evidently for many years. By the help of candles we examined this place; it still retained some mouldering furniture—three chairs, an oak settle, a table—all of the fashion of about eighty years ago. There was a chest of drawers against the wall, in which we found, half-rotted away, old-fashioned articles of a man's dress, such as might have been worn eighty or a hundred years ago by a gentleman of some rank, costly steel buckles and buttons, like those yet worn in court-dresses; a handsome court sword; in a waistcoat which had once been rich with gold-lace, but which was now blackened and foul with damp, we found five guineas, a few silver coins, and an ivory ticket, probably for some place of entertainment long since passed away. But our main discovery was in a kind of iron safe fixed to the wall, the lock of which it cost us much trouble to get picked.

In this safe were three shelves and two small drawers. Ranged on the shelves were several small bottles of crystal, hermetically stopped. They contained colorless volatile essences, of what nature I shall say no more than that they were not poisons; phosphor and ammonia entered into some of them. There were also some very curious glass tubes, and a small rod of iron, with a large lump of rock-crystal, and another of amber; also a loadstone of great power.

In one of the drawers we found a miniature portrait set in gold, and retaining the freshness of its colors most remarkably, considering the length of time it had probably been there. The portrait was that of a man who might be somewhat advanced in middle life, perhaps forty-seven or forty-eight.

It was a most peculiar face—a most impressive face. If you could fancy some mighty serpent transformed into man, preserving in the human lineaments the old serpent type, you would have a better idea of that countenance than long descriptions can convey: the width and flatness of frontal; the tapering elegance of contour disguising the strength of the deadly jaw; the long, large, terrible eye, glittering and green as the emerald—and with a certain ruthless calm, as if from the consciousness of an immense power. The strange thing was this: the instant I saw the miniature I recognized a startling likeness to one of the rarest portraits in the world, the portrait of a man of a rank only below that of royalty, who in his own day had made a considerable noise. History says little or nothing of him; but search the correspondence of his contemporaries and you find reference to his wild daring, his bold profligacy, his restless spirit, his taste for the occult sciences. While still in the meridian of life he died and was buried, so say the chronicles, in a foreign land. He died in time to escape the grasp of the law, for he was accused of crimes which would have given him the headsman. After his death, the portraits of him, which had been numerous, for he had been a magnificent encourager of art, were bought up and destroyed—it was supposed by his heirs, who might have been glad could they have razed his very name from their splendid line. He had enjoyed vast wealth; a large portion of this was believed to have been embezzled by a favorite astrologer or soothsayer—at all events it had unaccountably vanished at the time of his death. One portrait of him was supposed to have escaped the general destruction; I had seen it in the house of a collector some months before. It had made on me a wonderful impression, as it does on all who behold it—a face never to be forgotten; and there was that face in the miniature that lay within my hand. True, that in the miniature the man was a few years older than in the portrait I had seen, or than the original was even at the time of his death. But a few years! why, between the date in which the miniature was evidently painted there was an interval of more than two centuries. While I was thus gazing, silent and wondering, Mr. J.— said:

"But is it possible? I have known this man."

"How, where?" cried I.

"In India. He was high in the confidence of the Rajah of —, and well nigh drew him into a revolt which would have lost his Rajah his dominions. The man was a Frenchman; his name de V—, clever, bold, lawless. We insisted on his dismissal and banishment; it must be the same man, no two faces like his, yet this miniature seems nearly a hundred years old."

Mechanically I turned round the miniature to examine the back of it, and on the back was engraved a pentacle in the middle of the pentacle a ladder, and the third step of the ladder was formed by the date 1765. Examining still more minutely, I detected a spring; this, on being pressed, opened the back of the miniature as a lid. Within the lid was engraved "Mariana to thee; be faithful in life and death to —." Here follows a name that I will not mention, but it was not unfamiliar to me. I had heard it spoken of by old men in my childhood as the name borne by a dazzling charlatan, who had made a great sensation in London for a year or so, and had fled the country on a charge of a double murder within his own house; that of his mistress and his rival. I said nothing of this to Mr. J.—, to whom reluctantly I resigned the miniature.

We had found no difficulty in opening the first drawer within the iron safe; we found great difficulty in opening the second: it was not locked, but it resisted all efforts till we inserted in the chinks the edge of a chisel. When we had thus drawn it forth, we found a very singular apparatus in the nicest order. Upon a small thin book, or rather tablet, was placed a saucer of crystal; this saucer was filled with a clear liquid; on that liquid floated a kind of compass, with a needle shifting rapidly round, but instead of the usual points of a compass were seven strange characters, not very unlike those used by astrologers to denote the planets. A very peculiar, but not strong nor displeasing odor, came from this drawer, which was lined with wood that we afterwards discovered to be hazel. Whatever the cause of this odor, it produced a material effect on the nerves. We all felt it, even the workmen who were in the room; a creeping tingling sensation from the tips of the fingers to the root of the hair. Impatient to examine the tablet, I removed the saucer. As I did so the needle of the compass went round with exceeding swiftness, and I felt a shock that ran through my whole frame, so that I dropped the saucer on the floor. The liquid was split; the saucer was broken; the compass rolled to the end of the room; and at that instant the walls shook to and fro, as if a giant had swayed and rocked them.

The two workmen were so frightened that they ran up the ladder by which we had descended from the trap-door; but seeing that nothing more happened, they were easily induced to return.

Meanwhile I had opened the tablet: it was bound in a plain red leather, with a silver clasp; it contained but one sheet of thick vellum, and on that sheet was inscribed, within a double pentacle, words in old monkish Latin, which are literally to be translated thus: "On all that it can reach within these walls; sentient or inanimate, living or dead; as moves the needle, so work my will? Accursed be the house, and restless be the dwellers therein."

We found no more. Mr. J.— burnt the tablet and its anathema. He razed to the foundations the part of the build-