

With this request I was anxious to comply; but I was unable to write a line, until a sentence in Rousseau suggested a whole poem, and coloured all its language. Now, in this case, I was not like a Clergyman seeking a text, that he may write a sermon; for the text was not sought but found—or it would have been to me a lying and a barren spirit.

From my sixteenth to my twenty third year I worked for my father at Masbro', as laboriously as any servant he had, and without wages, except an occasional shilling or two for pocket money; weighing every morning all the unfinished castings as they were made, and after wards in their finished state, besides opening and closing the shop in Rotherham, when my brother happened to be ill or absent. Why, then, may I not call myself a working man? But I am not aware that I ever did so call myself;—certainly never as an excuse for my poetry, if bad; or, if good, as a claim for wonder. There are only two lines in my writings which could enable the reader to guess at my condition in life. I wrote them to shew that, whatever else I might be, I was not of the genus, "Dunhill Spinner"—for in this land of castes the dunghill-sprung, with good coats on their backs, are not yet generally anxious to claim relationship with hard-handed usefulness. But, as a literary man, I claim to be self-taught; not because none of my teachers ever read to me, or required me to read a page of English grammar, but because I have, of my own will, read some of the best books in our language, original and translated, and the best only—laboriously forming my mind on the highest models. If unlettered women and even children write good poetry, I, who have studied and practised the art, during more than forty years, ought to understand it, or I must be a duce indeed.

I have laid before the reader a history of my boyhood and youth. What excuse can I plead for troubling him with these common-place incidents in the history of a common-place person? That I write, not for the strong but for the weak, who may learn from this narrative, that as by the mere force of will such persons can write poetry, no honest man of good sense need despair of accomplishing much greater, because more useful, matters. The history of my manhood and its misfortunes (your famous people have a knack of being unfortunate, and of calling their faults misfortunes) remains to be written. I am not yet prepared—not yet sufficiently petrified in heart and brain, by time and trouble—to tell a tale, in telling which I must necessarily live over again months and years of living death.

When I made the astounding assertion, many years ago (in *Tait's Magazine*), that the food taxes were costing, or destroying, or preventing the earning of more than a hundred millions sterling a-year, I knew well that in a short time the truth of that assertion would be confirmed by the wisest and best informed of my countrymen. It has been objected to my political poems, that I sometimes repeat in them the same thoughts and words. Why should I not repeat the same thoughts and words, if they are wanted and I cannot find better? My countrymen were robbed of knowledge as well as food; and it is not my fault that, born dull and slow, I find thoughts and words with difficulty.—I husband my materials because I am intellectually poor. No man can, "by taking thought, add an inch to his stature; but any man may do the best he can with the means in his power; and he who would usefully live in his deeds "must fight for eternity with the weapons of time." Newspaper-taught as I am, and having no ideas of my own, I can only seize those of others as they occur, earnestly applying them to current occasions. If I have been mistaken in my objects, I am sorry for it; but I have never advocated any cause without first trying to know the principles on which it is based. On looking back on my public conduct—thanks to that science which poor Cobbett, ever floundering, yet great and brave, called in scorn "Poetical Economy"—I find I have had little to unlearn. And when I shall go to my account, and the Great Questioner, whose judgments err not, shall say to me, "What did thou with the lent talent?" I can truly answer,

"Lord, it is here; and with it all that I could add to it—doing my best to make little much."

EBENEZER ELLIOT.
Sheffield, 21st June, 1841.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EXAMINER.

SIR—

A writer in the *Islander* of Friday last, styling himself a "Responsible Liberal"—one of those, I presume, who have been lately converted for the men of no principles, or the men of any principles, to side with the strongest party,—seems to know a great deal about the political affairs of this Island, and to be quite an adept in finding out the qualifications, mental and pecuniary, of several gentlemen who are members of the new House of Assembly. As he is such a knowing fellow, perhaps he will answer a few questions on other matters he has not thought proper to bring under our consideration.

1st—What "qualification" could Mr. John Ings set up, either for a member of the Assembly, or for a first or second class teacher? Will "a Responsible Liberal" guarantee that the aforesaid individual is capable of writing three lines of decent English, or blessed with the smallest possible share of common sense?

2nd—How many gentlemen, now holding offices of emolument under Government in Charlottetown, could qualify, if required, to be members of Assembly? How many would obtain constituencies, if they sought them?

3rd—How was the "commission" for issuing Treasury Notes managed some years ago, when it was found necessary to change old Notes for new ones? Are all the old Notes yet destroyed?

4th—How many paid Treasury Warrants, that ought to have been cancelled, were allowed to be in circulation?

5th—How many private promissory Notes were given, in place of Government securities, to parties who invested cash in the Treasury?

6th—What has the country saved by giving to certain officers (in *Tait's Magazine*) in lieu of fees?

7th—How many public offices is it allowable for one man to hold? Is there any limit to the number? How many public offices are held by persons out of the Legislature, and not responsible to the country?

8th—In what other country (than Prince Edward Island), under the British Crown, or under any Crown, has the system of buying and selling public offices prevailed? How much did a former Treasurer give a Lieut. Governor's nephew annually for his office? How much, in round figures, did the Prothonotary's office cost?

9th—At what time of life under the old system, was a young man eligible for office? Was 18 too green an age?

10th—How many public officers are there under the Government of this Colony who are not related the one to the other?

11th—Are there any public officers in the Island who have pocketed the salaries attached to certain situations before performing the duties of such?

12th—In what manner has the Glebe Land Fund been appropriated? Has it been used for the advantage of the Church, or for the enrichment of an individual?

13th—How many of our Government officials have attained pre-eminence in arts, literature or science? Which of them is remarkable for eloquence—for any order of intellectual superiority? How many of them can boast of blameless moral lives—of high birth and lineage—of proud aristocratic influence?

A "Responsible Liberal," having discussed the merits of some of those out of office, I have herein hastily given him a few hints to enable him to review the claims of those who are in. A separate answer to each separate question would be the best way of treating the subject. When he shall have disposed of them, I have another series of questions to "propound." Besides, I am anxious to give the *Islander* a lift, for if it have not a communication once in a while to draw public attention from the barrenness of its editorial columns, the illustrious John Ings and his coadjutors will be voted real Numsculls by every

INQUIRER AFTER TRUTH.
February 25, 1850.

MR. EDITOR,—

In your Paper of Saturday last, alluding to the late Election for the Second District of King's County, you observe—"we may remind the public that at the Head of St. Peter's Bay every voter was sworn—a scheme resorted to by some of the unsuccessful Candidates," &c.

I do not pretend, Sir, to deny the truth of your statement; but the style in which it is made is liable, in my opinion, to objection. MR. THEOPHILUS DESBRISAY was one of those "unsuccessful candidates," and you are aware that that gentleman not only did not ask any Elector to be sworn, but abstained from objecting to votes there given, except in one instance, thus acting similarly to yourself and to the representative of your colleague, DR. JARDINE. It is the undoubted privilege of a Candidate to swear every voter if he thinks proper so to do; I hope those "unsuccessful candidates" who "resorted" to this expedient at the Head of St. Peter's Bay, were actuated by no improper motive; but as swearing a voter—from the fact that it implies doubt of the voter's veracity,—is calculated to render the candidate who requires the oath to be administered, odious to the people,—and as it may not be generally known that Mr. Desbrisay is free from blame in that respect, I think it is no more than simple justice towards him to make the exception distinctly in his favour; and I have taken the liberty of introducing his name into your Paper entirely without his knowledge.

Though I rejoice in the re-election of the former Members for the Second District of King's County, because they were true to their principles in the Assembly, and because I believe those principles are best calculated to promote the general interests of the Island,—yet, having witnessed the conduct of Mr. Desbrisay at the Head of St. Peter's Bay, I cannot but acknowledge that no candidate could have acted in a more straight-forward and honourable manner than he did.

ONE WHO WAS THERE.
February 26, 1850.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EXAMINER,

It is not, my dear Sir, with a wish to confer on my name a Poet's memorial, that I now at my leisure do take so much pleasure in writing this short Editorial.

But, Sir, when I've seen John Ings was so green
As to print, for his readers' perusing,
The facts which in vain he tried to explain,
I thought it was really amusing.

It is true, I'm aware, that trembling with fear,
He was to his window attracted,
By a sound which to him seemed deathly and grim,
And which left him completely distracted.

For, Sir, it appears, with his eyes full of tears,
In anguish he cried to his devil,
"I am brought to the pinch, for here comes Judge Lynch,
To punish me surely for evil."

"O no, my dear Sir," cries the little black cur,
"They won't hang you for being a Tory.
Let your mind be at ease as soon as you please,
'Tis the Liberals appearing in glory."

But, alas, for that sight had put reason to flight,
And of senses completely deprived him;
And whilst in that state he commenced to relate
To the Tories what it was which so grieved him.

And on his confession he cries "the procession,
The procession of Liberals in glory!
Such a sight to behold makes my heart's blood run cold,
Would to God I had ne'er been a Tory."

But it would be in vain to try to explain
The thoughts which of him took possession.
Then let it suffice to utter his cries,
"From the Tories I've naught but oppression."

O, then, from his heart how he wished for a pat
Of their fat greasy Pork or their Whiskey,
For as he himself said it actually made
The men at the ropes look quite frisky.

But, alas! for John Ings, to taste those good things,
A Tory was never intended;
His lips he might lick until he was sick
If he on the Tories depended.

And now to conclude without being rude,
Mr. Whelan, I wish you good morning;
And I hope Mr. Ings will look at the things
Which are given to him for a warning.

A. L. E.

The Examiner.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1850.

THE NEW HOUSE.

No. I.

So long have the destinies of this Island been dependent upon the rule of a Legislature irresponsible to the People—so great an amount of corruption has eaten its way into almost every department of the Government, that we cannot feel surprised at the intense interest with which the country anticipates the action of the new Assembly. The change about to take place in the persons who are to form the Administration, will be matter of only secondary moment, so far as the welfare of the Colony is concerned.—With that change we have a right to look for better laws—for cheaper Government than have yet been given to the Island, else the change in the persons of the individuals constituting the Administration, will be absolutely in vain.

What are the grievances of which the Island has complained, and what are the remedies proposed? The revenue, in many instances, has been misapplied; in some few, it has been embezzled. It will be the duty of the new House to husband that revenue with care, and to