

THE
SCRIBBLER,

A SERIES OF WEEKLY ESSAYS PUBLISHED IN MONTREAL, I. C.
ON LITERARY, CRITICAL, SATIRICAL, MORAL, AND
LOCAL SUBJECTS :

INTERSPERSED WITH PIECES OF POETRY.

By LEWIS LUKE MACCULLOH, Esquire.

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FORMING
VOLUME I.

*Sunt bona, sunt quædam mediocria, sunt mala, plu. a,
Quæ legis.....* MARTIAL.

Voulez vous du public meriter les amours,
Sans cesse en ecrivant variez vos discours.
On lit peu ces auteurs nés pour nous ennuyer,
Quitoujours sur un ton semblent psalmodier. BOILEAU.

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.....
1822.

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THE SCRIBBLER.

MONTREAL.

THURSDAY, 4th OCTOBER, 1821.

No. XV.

Sed Dea——
Ingemuit, flexitque rotam.——CLAUDIAN.

But Fortune frown'd and ceaseless turn'd her wheel.

——*Alba nautis*
Stella refulsit,
Defluit saxis agitatus humor,
Conçidunt venti, fugiuntque nubes;
Et minax (sie dii voluere) ponto
Unda recumbit.

HORACE.

In tranquil slumbers rest the threat'ning waves;
The bosom of the lake reflects the stars;
the winds are hush'd and cloudless in the sky.

Of the mutability that attends all human affairs, examples are abundant in history; the rise and downfall of states and empires are reflected in the biographies of more than one half of all the eminent characters that have figured upon the stage of public life; and are again multiplied in the pictures that domestic histories, and those fictitious narratives which are founded on them, display of the vicissitudes of life, from the throne to the shepherd's hut, from the remotest ages of which any records remain, to the times in which we live; times pregnant with more eventful changes, with more varied instances of chequered fortune in individuals than perhaps were ever before experienced. The contemplation of particular examples of this waywardness of fate is always useful, and instructive, frequently interesting and entertaining. Few will be found more adapted to awaken reflection than the history of the rise and fall of the noble family of Dudley.

Connected with many remarkable events in English history, the name will frequently be found in the pages of our historians; but there are some circumstances derived from family papers, and local accounts that will probably give the following short sketch a title to be considered as an original memoir.

To begin with Edmund Dudley, descended from a younger branch of the ancient Lords Dudley; he became a favorite at the Court of Henry VII. and was, under that rapacious and stern, but politic and ungrateful prince, one of the great instruments of the oppression under which his subjects groaned. Henry's coffers were filled, and so were Dudley's, but he was at last given up by his sovereign to the resentment of the people, together with Empson, and was executed. His estate, however, was restored to his son: who, in the succeeding reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI got highly into favour, and was created Viscount Lisle, Earl of Warwick, and Duke of Northumberland. Insatiable in his ambition, and persevering in his enmity and envy, he contrived to ruin the Duke of Somerset, and Lord Thomas his brother, the uncles of King Edward VI, and

marrying his fourth son to lady Jane Seymour prevailed on that prince to appoint her his successor. The tragical fate of that amiable young queen (for queen she undoubtedly was as much as Richard III was king, although she does not appear in the chronological tables of our sovereigns) and her consort, is well known, and here also ended the career of the ambitious Duke of Northumberland, who was beheaded by Queen Mary. On Elizabeth's accession the good fortune of the family seemed to return; the eldest son was restored to the titles of Lisle and Warwick; and the second son made Earl of Leicester.

Robert Dudley Earl of Leicester, the distinguished favourite of Elizabeth, sometimes at the pinnacle of power, sometimes in the depth of disgrace, who as it were made and marred, the fortunes of himself and his family, contracted a clandestine marriage, and left no issue but one noble and accomplished son, the Sir Robert Dudley of the reign of James I. The unhappy story of the concealed nuptials of the earl, and of the consequent misfortunes of his son, is too long for narration here; but the sequel gives an opportunity of exemplifying the wretched state of those who are subject to the oppression of an arbitrary government.

After that most iniquitous court, the Star-chamber, had stifled the proceedings which Sir Robert had instituted to prove his mother's marriage and his own legitimacy, he resolved to leave the kingdom; but as in those arbitrary days, he could not do so without the king's license, he applied for and obtained it. His estate, however, mutilated as it was, was a tempting bait; he was ordered to return, and not obeying the mandate, was prosecuted in the Star-chamber, and easily found guilty, and his castle of Kenilworth, (the principal scene of one of Sir W. Scott's popular novels) seized into the king's hands. The magnificence of the place rendered it an object of Prince Henry's wishes. A proposal was made to purchase it: royal commissioners were sent to make a survey, with special direction to find all things *under their true worth*. How well they observed their orders may be collected from their report of the value, which they made to be about £38,000—though from their return it appears that the castle stood on seven acres of ground; was in perfect repair; fit to receive His Majesty, the Queen, and the Prince, with their households, all at one time; that the value of the woods amounted to £20,000—and that the circuit of the castle, manors, parks, and chace lying round it, together extended to nineteen or twenty miles. Out of this £38,000—£10,000 was deducted as a fine for Sir Robert's contempt of the court of Star-chamber in not appearing to the summons. The wood, (which, though confessed to be worth £20,000—they had valued at no more than £12,000)—was also to be deducted, because Sir Robert's lady had a jointure therein, and if she outlived him, might sell it. After these defalcations, the prince most generously offered to give for this estate (“the like of which” says the very report of the commissioners, “for strength, state and pleasure, was not to be found in England,”) the sum of £14,500.

Sir Robert knew too well what he had to expect from the justice of James or his courts, and, having determined never to return to England, agreed to accept the money. The conveyances were executed, though no more than £3,000 was paid at the time, (and which, by the failure of the merchant who was to remit it, never came to Sir Robert's hands,) and the prince dying soon after, he never received any part of the remainder. Prince Charles, however, had no scruple of conscience in taking possession, as heir to his brother; and even in his patent, when king, creating Sir Robert's mother, Dutchess of Dudley, he recognizes the whole transaction.

Perhaps a stronger instance can scarcely be selected, of the intolerable oppression proceeding from a government unrestrained by law, and courts stained with oppression, the abolition of which seems cheaply purchased by all the misfortunes and temporary confusion occasioned by the struggles against them in the period immediately succeeding; whilst in the victims of that oppression, we behold a family, originally rising upon iniquity, and, in the course of about fifty

years attaining almost to royalty itself, set in obscurity in nearly as short a time.—Ye sons of greatness, ye minions of a court, who in sacrificing to your inordinate ambition, scruple not to risk the safety of governments, and to hazard the welfare of nations—attend to the instructive lesson offered to you in the story of the Dudley family.

Here a troublesome fellow, who does not often visit me when I am scribbling away, and who calls himself *Sound Judgment*, twitched my elbow, and told me, all this was very well and might do in Europe where there were noblemen, and court-favourites, and family-pride, and ambitious projects, and oppression under colour of law, and so forth; but was here misplaced. “But,” said I, Mrs. Vanity prompting me on the other side, “suppose the Scribbler should take a voyage over the Atlantic and be noticed in the Edinburgh or Quarterly Reviews; nay, suppose even it to descend to posterity and be deemed a classical work in the future ages of some vast American empire or kingdom, when courts and pageants and other trappings of transatlantic origin may arise with gorgeous and gigantic——” “Hold thy tongue, friend Lewis,” interrupted my monitor, “mind what I say, and listen not to the suggestions of that cheating gipseey that is whispering such nonsense in thine ear, but get into a strain more congenial to the country you are in, or you’ll never sell Scribblers enough to pay the printer.” This was a cogent argument, and so I began, as the phrase is, to pull in my horns; but I could not help pointing out that, whatever may be the case now, there was a time, even in this good city of Montreal, when juridical abuses wanted correction, and I referred to the 27th vol. of “*Arrêts et reglemens du Conseil Supérieur de Québec, et ordonnances et jugemens des Intendants;*” being a collection of such edicts, ordinances and judgments, as the committee of council appointed for printing the statutes of Lower Canada, did not consider it necessary to publish, and where p. 41 v^o. under date 25th June, 1739, there is an “Ordinance for remedying sundry abuses which exist in the administration of justice in Montreal,” and in which *inter alia*, “4thly, it is ordered that the clerk of the court shall not receive any money in deposit, *pour épices,*” and the judge shall not receive them from the clerk of the court, and still less from the parties to any suit, before judgment be given,” and “5thly, *that every judge shall abstain from frequenting the houses of any female clients, or parties to law-suits, under any pretence whatsoever.*”

“This is certainly a curious morceau,” rejoined my Mentor, “but still it is nothing to the present purpose; try your hand at something else.” “My own invention is at a stand,” said I, “but what think you of the following extract from a poem entitled “a Sumner’s Evening” which was published a short time ago in Upper Canada, and which, from the signature, I recognise to be the production of my ingenious correspondent whose “Ode to the Moon” and “Home,” have given so much satisfaction?”

“Now lingers twilight on the verge of heaven
 In sober dappled grey: the peeping stars
 Shine out and gem the azure firmament
 With countless specks of ruddy flame, while round
 The evening sighs its latest breeze, and floats
 On silenced wing the roaring of the surge
 That, restless, beats on Erie’s rugged rocks,
 Roused by the gale of noon, or tumbles rough
 Round the projecting point where Huron’s shores,
 Winding along, stretch with indentures deep;
 Or where Ontario spreads his blue expanse,
 Begirt with rugged stones. The listening ear
 Pays willing homage to the soothing sound
 That breaks at intervals the solemn pause
 Of sober evening—first abrupt, then low,
 Retreating, dying, till succeeding waves
 Waken afresh the melancholy roar,
 Half slumbering on the bosom of the night:
 And the hoarse bull-frog from his stagnant pool
 Chimes to its murmur, solemn, deep, and grave;
 While with his note acute, the whipper-will
 Begins his night-song ’neath the spreading bush,
 And rouses echo from the neighbouring wood
 To whistle back his uncouth melody,
 That ceases not till morn. The fire-fly starts
 Out from his sedgy covert where he lay
 Secure while Phœbus shew’d his golden eye,
 And flies abroad, and lights his tiny lamp,
 Ambitious to be seen. Along the stream
 Smooth gliding ’twixt its peaceful banks, he shews
 His little ray, or where the marshy soil
 Shoots up its reedy burthen. All the air
 Is presently illumined with the sparks
 Of insect flame, that, like a shooting star,
 Dart in a train of fire, and disappear
 But to be seen again. When evening comes
 With clustering stars, how pleasant ’tis to walk
 Beside the river’s brink—the surface smooth
 And mirror faced, reflects th’empyrean vault
 And seems a heaven below, the counterpart
 Of that above:—to hear the dashing oar
 That breaks the glassy bosom of the wave,
 Which not a zephyr dimples, while the barge
 Is passing by with music; half obscured
 Behind the whitish mist that hovers low
 Upon the placid surface of the stream;
 Harmonic numbers swell the trembling air
 That wafts the breathing melody of flute
 And dulcet voice, rich, soft, deep, full, and sweet.
 The balanced oar keeps time, and marks the bars,
 With downward stroke *vibrating*, and the blade
 Dips true. Now brisk the bolder numbers rise,
 Now sunk in cadence sweet, pathetic now,
 And now they die away in murmuring strains,
 Mellow’d by distance till th’attentive ear
 Listens in vain.”

ERIEUS.

Port Talbot, September, 1821.

Sound Judgement himself could not avoid allowing that this was *ut pictura poesis*, a picture in verse. Its imagery is true to nature, whilst it breathes the essence of poetry. The word *vibrating* is however wrongly accentuated; would not “With downward quick vibration” be better?

L. L. M.

For Sale at the Office of the Publisher of the Scribbler.—*Traduction libre et abrégée des leçons de chymie de DAVY, par A. G. DOUGLAS.*

Voyage de Franchère, 1 vol. 8vo. br.

L'Arithmétique de Bibaud, 12mo. dem. rel. & br.

La Géographie en Miniature, max. fol.

Histoire abrégé de l'ancien testament, avec la vie de N. S. Jésus-Christ.

There will be a "Musical entertainment" this evening at 8 o'clock at the City Tavern, by M. CRISTIANI. Tickets 5s. which, if taken beforehand, will admit a lady and gentleman.

The third annual course of DR. SLEIGH'S anatomical lectures and dissections commenced on Monday 1st October, and continues till May.—10 guineas for the course.

TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Misspelled words and printer errors have been corrected. Where multiple spellings occur, majority use has been employed.

Punctuation has been maintained except where obvious printer errors occur.

[The end of *The Scribbler 1821-08-09 Volume 1, Issue 15* edited by Samuel Hull Wilcocke]