

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, 24th JANUARY,
1822.

No. XXXI.

Rideam vanitatem, an exprobrement cæcitatem.—TERTULLIAN.

Shall I ridicule their folly, or deplore their blindness?

Claudentur belli portæ.—VIRGIL.

The brazen doors of war are permanently shut.

There is no species of knowledge the utility of which is more generally allowed than that which is called knowledge of the world, or perhaps more properly, worldly knowledge. It has often been remarked that men of acknowledged ability and of literary talents, have been found more deficient in this kind of knowledge than the illiterate and the vulgar. Some have ranked this acquisition so low, as to suppose it unworthy of the attention of such men: others have, perhaps erroneously, looked upon it as too high for their attainment; and others again, with more reason, have ascribed their frequent want of it to the imperfection of human nature. But as the excellence of this attainment is very universally admitted, it may not be improper to ascertain as nearly as possible the different meanings which different sets of men attach to *knowledge of the world*. With a very large class of the community it means a knavish kind of understanding, abounding in tricks, craft, and cunning, by which a man advances his own interest without regard to the ruin of the unwary or the contempt of the upright. The man of trade, whom his own arts, his own industry, have enriched, is fully convinced that to his knowledge of the world he is indebted for his present exemption from the cares of business, for the enjoyment of his country retirement, and the envy of his neighbours. In his great veneration for this kind of knowledge he forgets that the same arts which hasten the acquisition of wealth very generally supply temptations to impair honesty. Some think they arrive at this knowledge, by running from country to country, by having been ruined by an opera-girl at Paris; by associating with the black-legs, lords, and bullies of pugilistic notoriety in the British capital, by racing and gambling in the Southern States of our American neighbours; or staring at ex-kings, ex-generals, and other xx's at Saratoga or Ballstown springs. To some, a very easy path leading to the acquisition of this knowledge is opened by the ace of spades; and superior sagacity in discovering the run of the cards, or when to bet on the odd trick, is the standard of merit in their eyes. It is knowledge of the world which directs Mrs. Treacle in the choice of her gown, or the cut of her cap, as well as in the putting up of her pickles, and in the patterns of her furniture. It is knowledge of the world which persuades the spendthrift that in expence alone consists the art of *savoir vivre*; and which teaches the usurer to withhold his loan till the premium is doubled; and the increase of this knowledge, which all these people consider as residing in themselves, begets that comfortable contempt which one class

entertains for the other; it justifies the man of riches in his detestation of his poorer neighbour, and instructs the man of pleasure to despise the sons of tallow and tobacco. It is likewise knowledge of the world by which the man of fashion acquires his reading in the different forms of salutation; the due degree of reserve with which he treats an inferior, and the courtly adulation with which he approaches the fool greater than himself. The sceptic in religion discovers his knowledge of the world by asserting his right to think for himself; by searching with eager enquiry after what must be for ever before his eyes; and doubting the truth of that which nature loudly proclaims thro' all her works. Shall it be said then that this boasted wisdom, by which the tradesman acquires wealth; by which the fashionable tourist endeavours to astonish the natives; by which the gambler gains the satisfaction of ruining his friends, and himself too; which teaches to one the art of flattery, and to another the craft of low and sordid policy; to which the sceptic is indebted for his reputation, and the upstart for his consequence and influence; shall it be said that this is a species of knowledge too high alone for the attainment of men of abilities, of science, and of literature? This is surely a position to which no logical fallacy can give the appearance of truth. Yet whence does it arise that the same man who can successfully combat the wild theories of speculative theologians, may become the dupe of a low-minded and designing mechanic? Or he, who can with accuracy examine the claims of contending philosophers, or illustrate and criticise the noblest flights of ancient and modern poetry, how is it that he may be made to bow down before the superior wisdom of a tricking pedlar? It is from an honest benevolence of heart, the peculiar concomitant of an enlightened mind, which neglects to fortify itself against the attacks it has never provoked, and disdains to suspect intentions to which his own bosom is a stranger; it is hence that men of superior talent so frequently fall into the snares of the sagacious sons of prudence, and become victims to the arts of designing calumny. It is not to be wondered at that they whose attention has been diverted from the concerns of the world to objects of an higher nature, should perform those offices which are necessary to society with less skill than others whose lives have been consumed in the noise and bustle of business, and whose pursuits have been selfish and sordid. In the performance of those offices, the frequent superiority of ignorance over learning is evident and confessed. The former often effects with ease what the latter in vain attempts, and then becomes wise in its own conceit. Yet let those who excel in worldly wisdom bear their triumph with moderation, when they are reminded that wealth, which only gratifies the avarice or the passions of its possessor, without being the instrument of benevolence, is neither honourable nor ornamental; and that power, and influence, only shew themselves illustrious when they are exerted to suppress injustice, and redeem the fallen. Let them likewise be reminded of the deceitfulness for which the promises of worldly wisdom are not a little renowned; for, in the quaint verse of Quarles,

“The world’s a crafty strumpet, most affecting
And closely following, those that most reject her;
But seeming careless, nicely disrespecting
And coyly flying those that most affect her;
If thou be free, she’s strange; if strange, she’s free;
Flee, and she follows; follow, and she’ll flee;

Than she there’s none more coy; there’s none more fond than she.”

The insertion of the following lines on the battle of Lundy’s Lane, due as it is both to their merit and to the esteem I feel for their author, requires nevertheless an apology for the apparent revival of a national quarrel and rivalry that it is most desirable to bury in oblivion. With the same origin, the same tongue, and the same manners, (allowing for the differences of climate and situation) I have always considered the American republic as a branch of the Great British family empire; one that will in future carry the name, renown, and language of my native country to the

most distant extremities of the globe, and to the remotest ages. The ambition of dominion on the part of England, and the jealousy of predominance, on the part of America, if they have not wholly passed away with the generation that saw and felt their baneful influence, will, it is hoped, have entirely subsided, before our sons can have taught their children to imbibe prejudices on both sides, which time will shew are——only prejudices. I may take a future opportunity of enlarging on this subject: In the mean time, my poetic readers of both nations will I think be gratified by

THE BATTLE OF LUNDY'S LANE.

In imitation of Campbell's Hohenlinden.

O'er Huron's wave the orb of light
Sunk low in his diurnal flight,
And close behind the shades of night
Spread out their sable canopy.

To Lundy's lane the foemen flew,
And thick arrayed in hostile view,
E'er the resplendent arch withdrew,
That high o'erarch'd Niagara.

But as the parting glance of day
Shed its last beam upon the spray
That crown'd the tumbling flood, the play
Of battle hasten'd rapidly.

The bugle shrill the war-note spoke;
The maddening drum with furious stroke——
But louder, more appalling, broke
The thunder of th'artillery.

Faint thro' the war-cloud, dense and dun,
The moon with crimson'd crescent shone,
While gleam'd the battle's lightnings on,
T'illumine the awful scenery.

Fight on ye brave! but who shall know,
Or where to aim th'uncertain blow,
Or whether bleeds a friend or foe,
To stain the wreaths of victory?

Ceased has the fight's tremendous roar;
The cannon's thunders peal no more;
But death's dark harbinger hangs o'er
The battle's utmost boundary.

Charge, charge, amain! the bugle sounds;
At once the clashing steel resounds;
And forward, fierce, each foeman bounds
To boldest deeds of chivalry.

Hard pant the combatants for breath,
While bloodier grows the blood stain'd heath,
And gloomier yet the work of death,
Deep veil'd in night's obscurity.

To glory rush, ye brave, rush on!
Seize, seize the laurel! lo! 'tis won.
The vanquish'd yield——the work is done
Huzza! the shout is victory——

Sunk is the beam of midnight low;
The fires of death have erased to glow,
But morn, a bloody field shall show,
Along thy banks, Niagara!

His silent stand the watchman takes,
Or by his wounded comrade wakes,
Whilst the last groan of misery breaks
Oft midst the dying soldiery.

Ne'er saw these fields so fierce a fight
Since first this flood, with rapid flight,
Majestic, from his giant height
Roll'd thro' his rugged scenery.

And while his cloud-capt surge shall pour,
May his deep thunder-voice no more
Be mingled with the battle's roar,
Along his steep declivity.

ERIEUS.

Flamborough West, July 1816.

These lines (altho' a little altered since then by the author,) appeared first in the "Gleaner," an Upper Canada paper. The same motive which weighed with me for the insertion of the *Stanzas written in prison* in No. 19, namely the probable preservation of them longer than in the transitory sheets of a news-paper, are adduced by Erius for his desire of their appearance in the Scribbler. It must be allowed that a more delicate compliment could not be paid to the vanity of
His obedient servant,

L. L. MACCULLOH.

FOR THE SCRIBBLER.

A CURE FOR A FEELING HEART.

I on my knees did beg a kiss
From Julia, and most roundly swore
If she would grant me that sweet bliss,
I'd never ask for more.

The maid knew how to play her part,
"Was ever such a love-sick elf!"
By Hymen's torch, and Cupid's dart,
I vow'd I'd shoot myself.

My prayers and tears her heart did move;
'Twa'n't made of iron, brass, or steel,
And her reply did fully prove
That she had learnt to feel.

At length my senses to entrap
She this request did softly roar;
Tip me a gill of right black strap,
And, damn me; take a score.^[A]
SKIMMERHORN.

^[A] The point of these verses will not fail of reminding the classical reader of the 66th

epigram of the 12th book of Martial. I have a juvenile version of that epigram somewhere amongst my scraps: if I can find it, I will consider whether it is worthy of the public eye.

The *Disappointed Amateur of Music* must excuse the publication of his advertisement; besides it is now too late.

A SUB-DEPUTY ASSISTANT'S report is certainly replete with much information, and would have been highly useful at an earlier state of the campaign. Tho' circumstances prevent the insertion of the present communication, his future favours will be very acceptable, *if in time*. Mr. Macculloh will endeavour to prevail upon the Irish widow to remonstrate with Miss Connecticut and Miss Vermont, tho' she is as bad as they are, in sometimes being squeezed sadly out of joint, when the whim takes her.

ELDULAH'S second attempt is inadmissible. It is a mere jumble of high sounding words without meaning. He will do better to store his mind by reading our best poets for some years before he composes any more verses; besides he should recollect that many a good carpenter, mason, tradesman and lawyer have been spoiled to make bad poets.

The letter from *Aunt Peg in the Country*, will probably appear next week.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

Just Published. *The Emigrant's Assistant, or remarks on the agricultural interests of the Canadas. Part II.* By A. J. Christie, A. M. printed by N. Mower.

Remarks on the La Chine Canal, to be had of James Brown, price 1s. 3d.

Abstract of the trial of S. H. Wilcocke for forgery, with his defence at large, is preparing for the press, and will appear shortly.

At a late sale of a choice collection of books of Mr. Vandersluys, who is about leaving the Province, they sold at uncommon good prices; they were indeed in excellent condition and had the appearance of having been little read, consequently were considered as very good articles of furniture. An exception occurred as to Stavorinus' voyages by S. H. Wilcocke, which being handed to a very learned and literary gentleman of the ci-devant N. W. Co. for his inspection, he no sooner saw the title than he threw the work on the table with great disdain, which so awed the company that for some time not a bid was heard, and when at last 5s. per volume was offered, it drew forth a tremendous frown and look of truculence from the literary and liberal gentleman aforesaid, which made all those tremble who are afraid of the ghost of the defunct concern of which he was so vociferous a member.

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 1822-01-24 Volume 1, Issue 31* edited by Samuel Hull Wilcocke]