

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.

Nos. 1 to 52,
From 28th June, 1821, to 20th June, 1822.

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,
Quitoutjours sur un ton semblent psalmodier. BOILEAU.

PRINTED BY JAMES LANE, IN MONTREAL.
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SAMUEL H. WILCOCKE, at Burlington, Vermont.

.....
1822.

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THE SCRIBBLER.

MONTREAL.

THURSDAY, 9TH MAY, 1822.

No. XLVI.

—*Accipe, si vis,
Accipiam tabulas; detur nobis locus, hora,
Custodes: videamus uter plus scribere possit.*—HORACE.

Come let's take pen and ink, fix place and time,
The where, the when, the how, in prose or rhyme;
Write as you list, and the more space you fill,
I'll answer, and refute, and overcome you still.

“Fill'd up at last with interesting news;
Who danced with whom, and who are like to wed,
And who is hang'd, and who is brought to bed.” COWPER.

It is with regret that I now find myself compelled to occupy some pages of the Scribbler that might perhaps be devoted to better purposes with my replies to the letters under the signature of MORES, which have appeared in the Montreal Gazette against my work. But my maxim being, as before said, *never to suffer any thing to go unanswered*, and the editor of the Gazette having thought proper to decline inserting my second letter, declaring that “my justification in answer to Mores, is *too deep a subject for public inspection*,” I can not coincide with the profound depth of this observation so much as to suppress that vindication which the virulent, but well written, attack of Mores calls forth. It is true the editor of the Gazette declares that the future communications of Mores will likewise be inadmissible; so that I can not complain of much partiality. But it is not my desire that the controversy should end in this negative manner; and, as I know the other English papers published in this town are too pusillanimous, and too averse to encroaching upon their usual quantum of sixteen or twenty columns of lucrative advertisements, to admit of any thing that may not be perfectly agreeable to the powers that be, which my productions are not, or which are against the current of public opinion, which those of Mores are, I think it right not only to make my own paper the vehicle of my justification, but to apprise Mores that, if he wishes to continue his remarks, I will give insertion in the Scribbler to his letters, in order that I may have the pleasure of refuting them in the same, or the following numbers.

From what was said in No. 43 on this subject, such of my readers as have not seen the Gazette will perceive that the charges brought against the Scribbler by Mores, are those of indecency, immorality, and personal malignity. To these he has added accusations of impiety, sophistry, inability, bombast, etc. I might boldly refer my readers to all the former numbers of the Scribbler, and know I should stand acquitted of these imputations; whilst posterity, (for I have the confidence that men of some genius can not fail to feel, that my work will descend to future times,) will scarcely believe that such charges were ever made, even though they see them stated in this, the only memorial that will then remain of them; yet, I proceed, in my reply as follows.

SIR,

Your second letter contains little else than a repetition and amplification of your assertions in the former. You seem to take it for granted that I desire to evade, or am unable to refute, the charge you have brought against the Scribbler of immorality and indecency. Had you attentively read my last letter, which was principally employed in repelling your personal insinuations against me, you would have seen that I only deferred your charge of obscenity till another opportunity; and since it seems that that is the very head and front of my offence (at least the ostensible motive for your animadversion,) I will enter upon that subject before adverting to others which you have touched upon, or which arise from the dissension.

But first I would ask you, how comes it that your sense of propriety and the “indignation of insulted virtue,” as you call it, did not at an earlier period, call forth your vituperation? I have carefully looked through the pages of the Scribbler, and though I can conscientiously and fearlessly say that, with one solitary exception, (a rebus, wrapped up however in an allusion that can alone be understood by those who understand Latin,) there is no one expression of the tendency you insinuate which I could wish to blot, yet I have found that in the earlier numbers, say the first twenty-four, there are a variety of passages, which false delicacy, fastidious hypocrisy, or impurity of thought, may torture into indecency; whilst, in the latter part, and since I have changed my plan as to the exclusion of personal satire, it will be difficult to fix on any. Now does not this plainly indicate that it is not the supposed obscenity of my phrases and ideas, not the offence given to the chastity of thought that you wish to make it be believed is so inherent in the good people of Montreal, when you say my writings will not “do for the people of this age and country;” that has at this late period, called you into the lists? No, it is evident that it is the pointed tone of personal satire I have found it necessary to adopt, that has generated the “austerity you feel when you see virtue in danger”! During the first six months of the unchecked career of the “hosts of contamination,” which you would fain have the world believe I have “marched into the fair fields of virtue,” where was this rigid censor, this inflexible moralist? For shame! say not another word about that being your real motive for attacking me: the real cause is “rank, and smells to heaven.” It is because the follies of your friends and patrons have been attacked in their persons.

To revert, however to your *cheval de bataille*, the *refrein* of your song, indecency and immorality; you have adroitly anticipated a challenge I should naturally have given you to refer to instances of the immoral tendency you so largely attribute to the Scribbler; but that shall not deter me from throwing out to you, or any one, that challenge, and declaring my ability utterly to refute the charge in every instance you can adduce, (the single one above mentioned excepted,) either by shewing its falsity, and untenableness, or by producing authorities or parallel passages in books of unquestioned repute, and unimpeached morality, and such as are universally perused, and never even secluded from youth.

It is a trite but true observation that “delicate people are people of the nastiest ideas,” which holds good as well with regard to licentious minds, as to dirty ones. From the interpretations such minds may give to phrases and words, it is impossible to shield even the purest and the holiest truths, and it is labour in vain to hunt for words to which their gross ideas will not affix latent meanings that none but themselves dream of. Perhaps it offends the nicety of your feelings, or your ear, that I should write “breeches,” instead of “small clothes,” or “inexpressibles,” that I should call a bawd, “a bawd,” and not a “procuress,” or that I should

print “damned” instead of d——d.^[1] You would probably like to see my pages chequered with dashes, and stars, and blanks, forgetting that there is ten times more bawdry, (aye, you may stare, but I hold it decent in such cases to call a spade, a spade,) in the dashes, and stars of one duodecimo of Sterne, an author who is a favourite with old and young, than in the most licentious publications of the present day. You would wish to banish from all writings every playful wandering of the fancy, every allusion to that commerce of the sexes which is the grand bond that holds the world and society together, the inspiration and the theme of poetry, the source of all happiness terrestrial, nay the sacred means which the deity has consecrated for peopling his celestial regions with beatified souls, and for which he has much and minutely legislated. You would desire that every word should be weighed and every letter considered, for fear some forward miss, or prurient master, should find food in them for precocious fancies that would make your sanctity shudder to think of. Away with such mawkish, such puling, such boarding-school affectation. Away with such mock modesty, such mockery of holiness. I write neither for boarding-schools, nor for conventicles; neither for Sunday-schools, nor for tabernacles; neither for boys nor girls; I desire not to be registered amongst the saints; nor to be extolled by hypocrites. But I write for men and women, men of sense, and women of feeling and sentiment; for society as it exists, consisting of both good and bad, for those that can be amused and amended, without being exclusively devoted to hymn-books, and forms of prayer; and tho’ I do not desire to be put in the calendar of the puritans as an S. S. I contend that I am entitled to a place amongst the moralists, reformers and benefactors of society.

You, however, select the letters from Pulo Penang, to vindicate your charge. I do not wonder at it; they have given great offence to certain persons who consider themselves as assimilated to the characters described in those letters, and who would willingly bury in oblivion some shameful and infamous transactions they have been engaged in, which strongly resemble the events recorded in that narrative. Allow me, Sir, to observe first, that it is not I who have drawn the “attention of the moral reader to the manner and elegant style of these letters,” but yourself: you first described them as clothed in “a fair and alluring garb,” and thereby confirmed me in my opinion that they were well written, for it was evident they were written from the heart, and that seldom fails to carry pathos and beauty into its diction. But where, in the name of heaven, can you find in any of them the least word that would startle the most timid purity? In the exordium of the story a connection is intimated between S—— and A—— which you are charitable enough to stigmatise as adultery. Do you know what adultery is? It is connection with a married woman. Neither the law of God, nor the law of England, nor the codes of Theodosius and Justinian, which are the foundation of the civil law, know any other; it is true the senseless law of Scotland looks upon the connection of a married man and a single woman in that light; but you know, or ought to know, that many eminent men amongst the ancient fathers, as well as the first reformers, with Luther and Melancthon at their head, held a very different opinion, as did Bishop Burnett and most others of the church of England. Adultery therefore did not exist between the parties, for no where will you find Louisa stated to have been a married woman; nor is there any plea to charge S—— with seduction, an offence producing far more disastrous consequences, in the present state of society, than any other connected with the sex. But waiving these questions, it seems to have escaped you that S—— is stated to have been driven to the arms of Louisa by the unblushing infidelities of his wife. Where such ample grounds existed for divorce, altho’ from tenderness

towards the delinquent, from repugnance for public exposure, or perhaps from pecuniary inability to pay for justice (for a parliamentary divorce, the only legal one in England, costs at least £500 sterling). S—— may have avoided so signal a measure; would he not be divorced *in foro conscientiae*, when the strongest legal and scriptural grounds existed for it? So much in defence of the exordium of that narrative; but let it be remembered that your charge, even if founded, would have nothing to do with the base, brutal, and unmanly oppression, that it was the avowed intention of the writer of those letters to expose, and of which the sequel will be found to exceed the turpitude of what has gone before,

“Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.”

I have already exceeded my bounds, and must therefore defer the vindication of my motives for the present course of satire I pursue, my attack upon your affectation in pretending not to know who L. L. Macculloh is, and my defence of nick-naming, as you call my designations of character; but I can not avoid exulting in the true portraits it appears I drew in my last of those characters “who are so well known and so justly despised in this town,” so that, tho’ I named them not, you instantly recognised them and put your finger upon them as *the North West Company*.

In the interim I remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

L. L. MACCULLOH.

[1] Altho’ Voltaire may not be supposed the most unexceptionable author to quote on such a subject, yet an observation of his is extremely applicable to the subject in discussion, and to the exterior mask of starched purity that is attempted to be worn in this place by an host of hypocrites and concealed libertines. “La pudeur,” says he, “c’est enfiuée des cœurs, et c’est réfugiée sur les levres;” adding, “plus les mœurs sont dépravés, plus les expressions deviennent mesurées, et on croit regagner en langage ce qu’on a perdu en vertu.”

DOMESTIC INTELLIGENCER No. VI.

An erroneous list of the appointments and promotions in the Vapour-establishment having got abroad, the following account, with a schedule of the force to be employed on the station, is transmitted with instructions for the same to be announced in general orders with the least possible delay.

PAUL CRIMPS,

Secretary to the Vapour-board.

Port Morgan, 22 April.

G. O.

The following equipments and appointments compose the combined force under the command of commodore Keep-moving, and have this day been sanctioned by the vapour-board.

Capt. Fitzmary junr. to command the fast sailing ship Nonesuch of 60 Guns;

Capt. Oakum, the Lady Rattler of 60 guns;

Capt. Macnael, the Old Morgan Rattler,^[2] of 50 guns;

Capt. Saymore, the Scotia, of 44 guns;

The following have independent commands and roving commissions;—

Capt. Hairbroom, the Caravan of 50 guns;

Capt. Bergami, the Spitfire of 48 guns;

Capt. Atlantic, the brig Flagstaff, of 28 guns.

A mutiny amongst the sons of the brush is said to have taken place in the vapour-yard, but neither the object of the mutineers nor the result of the disturbance, have transpired.

[2] It was the intention of the commodore to have hoisted his flag on board of this ship, but the better to facilitate *other objects*, and to enable him to be present in every action, he determined to take the command alternately in all of the ships of his squadron.

By the kindness of a friend we have been favoured with the following Mercantile Circular.

Stadacané, 21st April, 1822.

A material change is observable in things within the last week. Prospects for wheat are rather unfavourable, two hours of fine weather yesterday having caused a depression of 25s. 6d. a quarter. In rums some little spirit was afloat with speculators, but the intoxication has subsided and there is now no demand. Last week we had brisk enquiries for low wines in anticipation of large orders from the Commissariat. Some bottles of Fayal and Blackstrap passed from hand to hand, and found their way to the consumers. Reports are in circulation that the duty on Baltic timber will soon be removed, and a small additional tax of 25s. per load imposed on that from B. N. A. which, with the opening of the W. I. ports to the U. S. will tend very much to the advantage of H. M. N. A. colonies. On the other hand the opposition will have it that government has ceded the Canadas to the Chickasaws, reserving only Deadman's island in the Gulph of St. Lawrence, as a nursery for seamen and navy timber; whilst some do not scruple to say that a plan of Sir Isaac Coffin is to be put into execution, for sinking the whole of Canada in Lake Ontario, by means of torpedoes.

We find it difficult to move raw sugars; refined a shade better; ashes still heavy; essence of spruce very brisk; hides flat; importers of indigo begin to look blue; masts of the larger dimensions are generally high; grain is expected to rise as the season advances; should you conclude to ship us 20 or 30 cargoes of wheat on receipt hereof, we think they might be worked off, but we could not advise a larger quantity till the fall. Oil is a slippery article; glue sticks on our hands; grindstones are coming round again; grates are at a stand; stoves unsaleable; paint, however, looks well; guns are expected to go off when the ducks come down; some report about powder, but we think it will all end in smoke; lead a dead weight on our hands; Glauber salts and Jesuits' bark are mere drugs.

Your obedient servants,

RANDOM, SPEC & Co.

EXPECTED NUPTIALS.

The Chevalier de Bellevue, it is reported, is shortly to lead to the altar of Hymen, Mademoiselle des Neiges, with a fortune of 10,000 crowns.

Archy M'Fergus Esq., to the amiable Miss Rumbledale.

The Countess of Cork, whose residence in the Haymarket is well known as a "cheap store," lately purchased at a recent auction in St. Antoine suburbs, a handsome carriage. It is

said her ladyship means to take unto herself a husband, and to pass the honey moon at Saratoga springs.

DROWNED. Lately, Tony Crouch, an illegitimate son of Lord Goddamnhim, to the great grief of that noble lord, and of the other relations of the youth.

Printed and published by Dicky Gossip at the sign of the Tea-table.

A MEMBER O' THE KIRK's complaint from Quebec shall be attended to. JOHN BULL is too prolix, but part may come in. A READER is thanked for his information. TRAMPER's present communication will not do, but as he, with unaffected humility; requests that "if he is undervalued a hint may be given as modestly as possible," he is informed any deficiency of talent, grammar, or writing, will never be an objection to the receipt of any communications, the *substance* of which may be admissible. TIM TUGMUTTON's anecdote of MISS LOVERULE, J. H. P. Z. R. and F. F.'s lines to the violet, rejected.

Two pence a piece will be given for every copy of the following numbers of the Scribbler that are not soiled or torn, by Mr. Alexander Downie, Grocer, Notre Dame Street, viz. Nos. 5, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30, 31, and 32.

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 1822-05-09 Volume 1, Issue 46* edited by Samuel Hull Wilcocke]