

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 écrivant variez vos discours.
On lit peu ces auteurs nés pour nous ennuyer,
Quitoutjours sur un ton semblent psalmodier. BOILEAU.

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.....
1822.

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THE SCRIBBLER.

MONTREAL.

THURSDAY, 15th JUNE,
1822.

No. LI.

Puto multos potuisse ad sapientiam pervenire, nisi putassent se jam pervenisse.
SENECA.

Many might acquire wisdom, if they did not think themselves already wise enough.

Domestica feremus, ut censes. CICERO.

Well, since you expect another Domestic Intelligencer, here it is.

In former days, it is within my remembrance, that young men were not ashamed of being ignorant for a much longer period than would now be tolerated. A youth, for example, of fifteen, knew scarcely any thing, avowed his ignorance, and sat in silence that he might acquire knowledge, as he acquired strength, in the course of nature. A young man of twenty was not less willing to be ignorant, and when introduced into the company of his elders and superiors, was attentive and submissive, retiring with some acquisition of knowledge, but still convinced of his ignorance, and so little ashamed of it, that he often confessed it as a thing unavoidable at his age. I can remember too that even at the age of twenty five or more, it was not the fashion for men to suppose themselves universal scholars, or that nature and science had poured into their capacious minds the whole of their stores. They still did not blush to be unacquainted with what they had no means of knowing, and were content to wait the slow process of time and study to remove their ignorance in a satisfactory and substantial manner. I can even recollect that some men pretty far advanced in life, preserved the same wise principles, and maintained the distinction between unavoidable and voluntary ignorance.

A very different plan is now pursued in the world; with what success I shall not say, but it is certain that we can find very few in the early periods of life who are content to be ignorant. The greater part seem to have overcome every difficulty when they have acquired the alphabet, and the multiplication-table, and other kinds of knowledge pour in upon them so fast, that long before the period of manhood they have acquired all that they desire, and are old in every thing but years.

Among other consequences of this plan it has given rise to the breed of puppies, a description of the human species very different from that known under the same name by my predecessors in periodical writing. Puppies in former days were ignorant, and contented to be so; knowledge

was not in their way, and they contrived to fill up departments in society, where it was not wanted. Our modern puppies, however, are distinguished by an uncommon affectation of knowledge, from the arcana of state down to the figure of a quadrille, from the system of the universe down to razorstrops and toothpowder. This is so much worse than downright ignorance as it is more difficult to remove. The wise man has indeed long ago determined that there is more hope of a fool than of a young man “wise in his own conceit,” and I am happy to strengthen my own opinion by so venerable an authority.

All knowledge is comparative; but, although amongst wise men, some are content to know one thing, and some another, and although all are convinced that human life is insufficient for universal science, yet the puppy of the present time is one who knows every thing, or says he does so, which with him is much the same thing. He holds this indeed as a point of honour, and is so tenacious of it, that the most respectful mode of setting him right, is construed into a rude contradiction, which he is bound to resent; and hence it is that so many argumentative positions are now-a-days adjusted by means of a bet, or a case of pistols.

An unhappy accompaniment of unacknowledged ignorance is a certain degree of confidence, which, in matters of this kind, is peculiarly offensive and forms one of the justest objects of ridicule. On the contrary, it is one of the happiest consequences of a legitimate desire for knowledge, that it lessens a man’s confidence, because the more he knows the more he finds it necessary to be unassuming, and hence, in company, we universally find that the best informed men are the least presumptuous, and that all that disturbs social conversation and renders it useless, as to the purposes of knowledge, arises from the pert forwardness of those who know nothing, or but a little at second hand, and who are permitted to deliver their opinions only because modern politeness requires that they should not be desired to hold their tongues.

The consciousness that knowledge is difficult to be acquired, and that the employment of the longest life can give but the advancement of a few steps, would cure this propensity to reach the end without availing of the means. “A little learning,” says Pop, “is a dangerous thing”; and it is more dangerous in our days than in his, because superficial knowledge is more easily acquired, and from the forward habits of the age becomes more imposing. The learning which would have been deemed little in his time, would furnish a dozen pericraniums of the present, with all they wish to know, and all they choose to acquire: a fund for impertinence, on which they may draw to supply the deficiencies of study and experience.

L. L. M.

DOMESTIC INTELLIGENCER, No. VIII.

They write from the South, that a violent commotion took place at the village of Backbite lately, in consequence of the reports that had been

made public of Mrs. Cotty O’Giggle’s grand entertainment. The Rev. Proser M’Glutherem, bounced about and swore like—himself; and a combination was entered into by the various leaders of fashion who felt themselves aggrieved, to discountenance the industrious efforts of two young merchants, whom they chose to select as the supposed communicators of the reports.—Poor souls! these leaders (who like other leaders sometimes bolt out of the course,) had not the sense to discover, that it required more *Piercing* implements, and less *Wood*, to have cut them up in that style, than were to be found in the store of those gentlemen, whom they in so liberal, so consistent, and so noble-minded a manner, determined to visit for the sins of others.

N. B. A correspondent remarks that the good people of Backbite ought to consider themselves much honoured in having so much notice taken of them.

The following speech is said to have been delivered last summer at the Isle of Bullfrogs, by the commander of the green-coats, upon the occasion of Col. Dash-at-all, (who has at times a pious call,) having delivered an exhortation or sermon against intemperance on the field, to the regiment every Sunday, whilst he slily opened the back-door of his store on that day and sold rum to the men, whereby the poor messman, who was debarred from opening his canteen, found himself aggrieved and complained to the commandant.

“Mishter Dash-at-all, Shir, you are a bad man, shur,—you preach sobriety,—you pray—after dat you open your back-door, shur, to sell de rum to de men. Shur, I will put de triangle at your door, shur, and flog de men dere for a text for your next shermon, shur.”

MR. EDITOR,

In a late publication I observed some strictures upon the venders of early vegetables in Mount Royal. Permit me to make public a still more pregnant instance of the liberality and highmindedness that is so characteristic of some of our great folks here, who come from the land o’cakes. I was not long ago accosted by an old woman who had a number of second hand ladies’ shoes, odd gloves, handkerchiefs, etc. to sell. On examining the articles I perceived the names of several ladies, who had owned the shoes, written on the lining of them (as is usual in the trade when they send their goods home,) and amongst many whom I did not know, I saw one with whom I was well acquainted in London after her return from Canada, Lady Rottentown; upon questioning the saleswoman further, judge how I was surprised to be told these shoes etc. were what had been collected as the *exuviae* of the balls and parties, of a certain North-West nabob, at which those ladies had been, who had changed these their day-shoes, for dancing ones, and forgot the former, etc. and, that the accomplished hostess, who I believe has a name somewhat resembling

McGilliwiffit, had collected and preserved these spoils, and sends them round for sale on her own private account!!!

ECHO.

BY THE COURT. *It is ordered that in future no person attending this august court in an official capacity shall henceforward presume to make his appearance in any other but a black suit, in order to keep up that dignity of which the OUTSIDE SHEW is so necessary in*

The Petty Court of seven-pence half-penny
causes, and for the cognizance of
broken noses and other enormities.

The Hon. BARON GRUNT,	}	
The Hon. MARQUIS OF ARGENTCOURT,	}	& Co.
The Hon. MRS. SLIPSLOP MACROPE,	}	

On the 5th instant, a grand party, and fête champêtre, took place to the shad-fishery, at Friar's falls. Baron Grunt, Mr. Giles Lightfoot, and others of our leaders of fashion, were there, and the ladies were very numerous, and in general much pleased with the amusement they had derived from the excursion.

Pigeons are in the greatest plenty this season. Apropos: It is reported that the most liberal offers continue to be made to a gentleman, (who because he really knows what life is, was supposed by many who know nothing about it, to be in want of their aid to get rid of his cash,) of various articles for purchase, which the owners would on no account part with for double their value to any one but their very dear friend.—Mr. MacSlaughterem, it is said, wants him to buy his house; Mr. Jarrett offers him bank-stock; Mr. Giles Lightfoot, his sideboard of plate; nay, Lord Goddamnhim, it is said, has proposed some of the second-hand articles in which he deals, warranting them as good as new. But they have found that openness of disposition and liberality of sentiment, are not always accompanied by a weak head, and want of discrimination.

It was in contemplation a short time ago to have practised a hackneyed London hoax in this town. Orders for carpets, looking-glasses, tables, chairs, china ware, decanters, goblets, etc. were intended to be sent in the name of a gentleman who had a variety of those articles demolished at a late merry meeting at his house; but the cautious demolishers were afraid their pockets might be touched, and that is what his guests care most for, being in that respect widely different from their host.

Culinary. Parsnips, carrots, and cabbage, the true old English concomitants of a boiled round of beef, it is reported, are intended to be discarded, and potatoes alone substituted, at the instance of a certain fair

knight who thinks he has not dined unless he has had the murphies served up to him, however ill they may accord with the principal dish.

MR. EDITOR. Being not at all book-larned, whilst I am afeard I may want to go to the Montreal general hospital, I beg you will explaine to me what is meant in the notice that has been put in the papers to the paupers and poorfolk that may have occasion to apply, by the words *mania*, & *uterogestation*, and oblige, your's to command

PHILLIS KNOWLITTLE.

BIRTH. After a short pregnancy of three months, at Visitation hall, Mrs. Beauclere of a son and heir.

Quick work young Damon always made, for when he gain'd admission
At good old Ben's, his young wife quick he taught, without permission,
A lesson apt, and practised it in garret, parlour, stable;
And quick a smothered flame broke out; and quick he left the table,
And quickly in Ben's debt he ran, and quickly off he started;
And quick the lady sicken'd then, at thoughts of being parted,
Then quick the doctors did arrive, and for their patient sickly,
In double quick time did the job, so she was buried quickly.
Then Damon, 'mongst the girls and women revelling, whom he kist all,
Got quickly caught in wedlock's noose, all thro', it's said, a pistol:
No wonder then, since for quick work young Damon, has such fame,
In three quick months a son and heir, to bless the union came,
In one short year he cuckolded the old man, all for fun,
He broke a heart, kissed all the girls, got married, and a son.

MORAL.

Ye sinners all, both young and old, pray to this maxim stick,
Whate'er you do, good, bad, or bold, be sure to do it quick.

EXPECTED NUPTIALS. The well known modern Don Quixotte, alias Dr. Wm. Pestle, is shortly to lead to the temple of hymen, a mountain *daisy*, in full bloom. It is hinted that the bride-cake is to be shortened with antimony, and blue vitriol. An address or epithalamlum will probably be spoken on the occasion, unless it should share the fate of that which was prepared for the late meeting of the bible-society, but which, the learned doctor having forgot to get his lesson perfectly, he was obliged to pocket and sit down without delivering, to the great disappointment of the erected ears of all around him.

Miss Ilium has captivated the iron heart of Mr. Hardtimber, and will shortly convert him into a very Benedict.

FRACAS. A merchant of this town, (not Mr. Frost) had a dust the other day, with a man of *letters*, who threw a bag of despatches at his head in return for the compliment of an attempted blow. Report does not state the origin of the quarrel, only that it was begun by the merchant, and afforded much amusement to the bye-standers.

A few days ago one of the sect of the pharisees, whose name is somewhat similar to Lucifer's, bustling along Court-street, flourishing his cane with the most delightful gesticulation, and gazing at the heavens with the aid of a monstrous pair of spectacles, chanced to fling one of his feet

so high that it came in contact with the posteriors of a young disciple of lawyer Boreas; and further this deponent saith not.

DIED, in this city on the 13th day of the 14th moon, of a violent fit of hydrophobia, or some other similar disorder, the renowned PHILOLOGICAL SOCIETY, to the great grief of his friends, and dire confusion of the attending physicians.

FASHIONABLE MOTIONS. Harry McHairy, Esq. the bum-bailiff is expected to visit the Springs this season. He will do well to avoid the east side of Lake Champlain, for fear the accommodations of the States' hotel may not be very comfortable to him.

Printed and published by DICKY GOSSIP, at the sign of the Tea-table.

The Montreal Herald, and Montreal Gazette, since the change in its proprietorship, having both, in utter dereliction of their public duty, declined to publish the advertisements sent them relative to the Scribbler, it is only in the more liberal and less pusillanimous columns of the Canadian Courant, that the friends of this paper need look for any particulars relative to it.

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 *title* edited by Samuel Hull Wilcocke]