

be plundered under pretence of saving the nation by 'an equitable adjustment,'—or (to descend to calamities still less enormous) that no man of birth, no man of rank, no man of sound principles, great fortune, or cultivated intellect could find admission to the councils of the nation under the Reform Bill, but that a delegated committee of the rabble would rule and misgovern this great and enlightened nation,—such alarmists must be equally convicted of folly and insanity. How then will it work?

In the second place, Reform will not realize the extravagant anticipations of some who expected unheard-of prodigies of talent and knowledge in the new members of the ensuing Parliament, or the more senseless alarms of others, who imagined that all the influence of former reputation, of wealth, of public service, and of known capacity, was to be excluded under the ostracism of the bill. In this literary, political, and scientific country, where men, who are destined to distinguish themselves in public life, or in senatorial contests, have so many opportunities of prelude to their future reputation, by showing their talents and acquirements to the narrower sphere of their friends, or in schools, colleges, courts of justice, and magisterial offices,—it is not likely that any great light would be 'hid under a bushel' till a change took place in our system of representation. We have therefore heard of no new Reform candidate whose election is likely to change the face of society, or whose vast talents are expected to be traced in an immediate revolution in our code of laws and system of policy. The new electoral act, however it may procure honest, independent, and able men as a substitute for former drones, corruptionists, or slaves, is not likely to reveal to us immediately any great capacity which was formerly unknown, or to bring into the Senate a member with a panacea for our political evils, of which the world was hitherto ignorant. On the other hand, there is no reason to be alarmed that any really very useful member will be excluded, though his principles may not be universally popular. A liberal landlord and enlightened magistrate is not likely to be driven from the county representation which he has hitherto adorned, or to which by fortune, knowledge, and principle he may aspire, merely because a few hundred additional voters—more, he is remembered, under the influence of the great landed proprietors than the former freeholders—are advanced to the county constituency. Nor will a man of commercial importance, of great capital, and of known probity, be less likely to obtain the suffrages of a city or borough than a disreputable flatterer of the mob, merely because the former cannot use his purse as formerly. A Bank Director, a West India planter, or a great proprietor of East India stock, may not so easily obtain admittance to the House in those capacities, since the abolition of Schedule A, as before; but we anticipate no individual hardship or national loss as the probable result of this contingent exclusion. When these representatives—not of English boroughs or English interests, but of their own money, or their own monopoly—could gain access to Parliament by the corrupt purchase of seats, the Government left them to battle with their opponents on their exclusive claims, instead of attending to them, as a part of the general interests, and acting towards them on their own responsibility. If these parties should now be excluded, the Government will be obliged to resume their abandoned functions in this respect, and the change cannot fail to be beneficial. But if there is to be no new wonder of talent created by the bill,—if good landlords, respectable merchants, great capitalists, and men of fortune,—if talent, reputation, and wealth, still have their influence under reform as of old,—then it may be asked 'What have we gained by the bill?' 'How will it work?'

To this appeal we now apply more directly, in the third place, that, strip of all the exaggerations with which hope and fear have invested it, our great Bill of Rights may be confidently viewed as the source of innumerable political blessings—the parent of perpetual legislative improvement—and guarantee of future good government. It is not to a change in the rank or the class of men sent to Parliament that we look for a change in the spirit of our legislative proceedings—it is to a change in the influence by which they are returned, and in the control exercised over their conduct. Many of the reform members who sit in the present undissolved Parliament will sit in the new—many even of the anti-reformers will gain admission into the latter under a law which they resisted; but both will occupy their seats by a new tenure, and on new conditions. From some of them liberal pledges have been required to which they have agreed—pledges which at no former period would ever have been thought of; and where pledges are not required, the character of the candidate is reckoned a sufficient guarantee of his legislative conduct. While the great body of candidates whose names are before the public, and whose characters are generally respectable, are thus bound to support certain measures of utility which have been long discussed, and may be reckoned as decided in public opinion, we have seen no reason to be alarmed, except in one or two cases, either at the extravagance of the propositions to be made in the new Parliament, or to the chance of its being disgraced by disreputable or dangerous demagogues. 'How, then, will it work?' We answer, without hesitation, 'nobly for the public interest.'—SEPTEMBER 3.

From Mr. Cobbett's Lecture to the Electors of Finsbury.

Above all things, pledge candidates; make them promise to do what it is wanted they should do. Oh, what a monstrous thing to pledge men of honour;—such a thing was never heard of before! Nonsense in every transaction of business and life, pledges and covenants are exacted. What a pretty thing it would be, to hear an agent who was sent to America or anywhere else, refuse a contract, and say that he would do as he liked with the ship, cargo, and money! No man could refuse to pledge himself unless he had an intention of robbing. But high-blooded men never entered into a sort of covenant in their dealings: they never took a house upon lease. Oh, no; they say, we'll take your house, that's enough, no lease or agreement is necessary—our word's enough! There was one thing, however, they were obliged to pledge and bind themselves in—he meant the affair of marriage. The women, sensible creatures, took right good care of that, and bound them pretty tightly both in church and out of it, and in various other places and ways (Laughter.) In marriage, as in every thing else, it was money the aristocracy was raking after, and whenever they found it they made a dead set like a staunch pointer at a partridge. When the Marquess of Bath discovered that Mellish (the butcher) had a rich daughter—his son made a dead point at her. When Shaftesbury found out that old Rundel's public money, got by snuff-box making and bathing-machine making, for that Supreme Monarch George the Fourth, passed into the hands of one Neal, an attorney, his Shaftesbury's daughter

fell in love with the attorney, and could not live a month without him. It was afterwards found out that the attorney was for keeping his money, the lady then separated, requiring a settlement—for she had in the beginning bound him down and pledged him. She was right, and he was for imitating Lord Shaftesbury's daughter in election matters (great Laughter.) One of the highest blood of all—one descended from Kings—had taken a play-actress as his wife. To be sure she had passed through a banker's hands, and was so far purified. But he sure she took good care to pledge the Duke, and that she had him bound hand and foot. It was all nonsense; no man should be sent into Parliament without pledges, and the electors would not be doing their duty if they sent them there unshackled. The city of London had put forth pledges, which, save a slight objection or two, were good ones. Until taxes were taken off, the Corn Bill could not be repealed. What this country wanted was, a cheap Government. He did not wish to upset that Government, but to render it economical; and though he frequently mentioned the word President, he preferred the title of King when it could be had at a cheap rate. About the laws of this country he would say a parting word. They were made, it was said, for the preservation of persons and property. That brought into his head a little anecdote:—A farmer's wife had some bee-hives, and she had a little dog that was always teasing the bees and hindering them at their work. She used to flog and scold the dog, saying, however, that it was not for the sake of the bees, but for the sake of the honey.—(Laughter.)—So it was with the laws—they protected persons in order that the makers may have the honey of their labour. All that was now wanted was, that some of the bees should get into the House, and be enabled to protect themselves without any assistance from the drones. Let each candidate then be asked whether he was a bee or a drone—whether he did anything to make anything come in? To be sure he had a great respect for the order of drones, but yet, after all, he was so vulgar as to prefer the bees.

From Tuill's Magazine for September.

PARLIAMENTARY PLEDGES.—If the duration of Parliament was for one year, any very large number of pledges, on the part of the representative, would not be required. If the time were extended to two, or even three years, the number would, perhaps, not need to be very great; but when the enormous period of seven years is the limit for Parliament's existence, a system of the most minute and specific questioning and pledges ought necessarily to be instituted. Within a few months past, great outcry has been raised against a plan, lately introduced, of requiring of the candidate a pledge to take a particular side on certain important questions; and much very idle talk has been employed to prove the great evil likely to arise from thus throwing shackles on the judgment of the legislator. It must, however, be remembered, that on these points the people have made up their minds, and want not the assistance of the judgment of the representative, but his vote. They do not merely take a view of his general character, and upon this to elect him to exercise a perfect discretion. But, in addition to general investigation, which is employed to determine their opinion as to the wisdom of giving him a certain degree of discretion. But, in addition to general investigation, which is employed to determine their opinion as to the wisdom of giving him a certain degree of discretion, they think it wise to proceed one step farther, and, for the purpose of insuring a particular conduct which they deem absolutely necessary to their own well-being, to receive a specific undertaking or pledge; thus making the office of a representative partly discretionary, partly merely ministerial. The same thing has always been done, after a clumsy fashion, by all persons who give their vote according to the party which a candidate espouses. When the elector demands of the candidate, "Are you a Whig?" and gives or refuses his vote according to the answer, what does he do but require of the candidate a pledge to adhere to certain measures of principles? He binds him, in a certain degree, to a particular course; and thus far shackles his judgment. The binding a candidate to support the Reform Bill, is but a somewhat more efficient and specific application of the same principle. All this outcry, moreover, has been raised by persons advocating the advantages of a class system of representation. What, however, is the principle of this very system, but the imposing upon every representative the necessity of exactly representing his class, of being, in fact, their ministerial officer?

One evil regulation generally entails the necessity of another to nullify its effect. The system of demanding pledges to any great extent may certainly be deemed an evil;—it does shackle the judgment of the representative. This evil, however, is rendered necessary by the Septennial Act. In order to nullify the evil consequences of the long impunity which that act creates, the smaller evil of making the representative more completely a ministerial officer has been restored to. In short, the people would rather run the risk of harm from their own ignorance, than from their representative's dishonesty. They would do well to continue the practice they have adopted, until the legislature shall be a more perfect representation of the people, and the period of its existence so short, as to preclude all hopes of impunity in the minds of evil-disposed representatives.

It is objected, however, that pledges, since they cannot, except in a few cases, be specific, must necessarily, be useless. For example, it is stated in the case of

economy, in our expenditure, that since it is impossible to go through the various items of expenditure, it is impossible to have any safeguard for the representative's good conduct but his own honour; that we must leave him to his own discretion, and trust to it. This difficulty, however, may in a great measure be avoided by pledging the representative to well stated principles. In the case above mentioned of economy, if the electors were to bind their representative to this principle, viz. 'that he would at all times endeavour to obtain the greatest intellectual and moral aptitude for every office at the least possible expense,' he would find it difficult to be so lax in his interpretation of the rule, as to put at naught the pledge he had given. Supposing the difficulty, however, to be as great as stated, still it is of some importance to have men bound even to specified good intentions.

Our fear however is not, that the people are likely to be imposed on as regards the intentions or probity of the representative. On this point they will for the most part, when they have the power of choosing, decide correctly. It is as regards the fitness, as respects knowledge, that they will chiefly err. Unfortunately, there is a very general opinion now existing, that any good man of what is called common sense is fit for a legislator. There is little care exhibited as respects the intellectual fitness of the various candidates, attention for the most part being absorbed by his mere opinions. It seems never to be remembered, that a fool may hold right opinions, and that a knave may feign them. These declarations by the candidates are but poor evidence on which to determine his efficiency. His previous life, his habits, his education, his former opinions, ought to be carefully, minutely, and openly inquired into. Until the electors do this, they must be content to be dupes.

One other opinion now prevalent respecting the office of representative, although already spoken of, must again be alluded to, in consequence of the conduct that is being persuaded by the liberal party throughout the kingdom. The electors, because men of riches and title still seek the office of representative, will deem it one of mere honour. They forget that he has duties to perform; that the performance of these duties is the only object for which the office exists, and that, unless they be performed, the trouble of choosing a representative is trouble thrown away. Now the persons most capable of performing them efficiently, are seldom in a condition to undergo expense, and compete with the rich rivals whom they necessarily meet. The richer, but more efficient, least honest candidate therefore usually succeeds, or rather none but those inferior men offer themselves. If the people would no longer be possessed of the idle notion respecting the honour they confer; if they would consider the matter as one of mere business; would deem it *their own* interest about which they were employed; and view the expense as *their own* affair, they would persuade the best men among them to become their representatives. But until this change takes place, the most apt and efficient will never appear on the theatre of public life. Let the public be scrupulously jealous of the honour and the capacity of their representatives, and let them be sufficiently careful of their own interests to pay for their own business, and they will quickly possess an enlightened legislator.

SCHEDIASMA.

MIRAMICHI.

TUESDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 15, 1832.

To the politeness of Wm. Abrams, Esq. we were last week put in possession of a Greenock paper of the 31st August: and to the kindness of Capt. Harland, of the bark *London*, we are indebted for London papers to the evening of the 3rd ult. The arrival, however, of H. M. Packet *Reynard*, at Halifax, in 31 days passage, puts us in possession of London dates two days later; and the Halifax editors acknowledge the receipt of Falmouth papers to the 8th ult. We have gleaned a variety of matter—but the intelligence conveys nothing of much importance.

Last week we gave under the head of the Spirit of the British Press, several articles on the affairs of Europe, from the Tory papers wishing to act impartially, and to enable our readers to judge for themselves, we have copied this week several clever articles from the Whig Journals.

QUIT RENTS.—Our opinion has been frequently solicited on the subject of the expediency of paying this obnoxious and debasing Land Tax; and we shall now make a few passing observations for the use of those of our patrons who are not acquainted with its relations. The people of this Province are so unused to direct taxes, that it is not at all necessary for us to caution them against suffering the introduction of so pernicious a mode of collecting a revenue. To maintain the rea-