

fore the tempter. (Cheers) But let us never listen to those who, by the very breath of morning, would seek to blight the wreath bound round the forehead of the muses' sons by a people's gratitude. (Cheers) Let us beware of those who, under affected zeal for religion, have as often violated the spirit of both by gross misrepresentations and exaggerations, and denunciations of the common frailties of our nature in illustrious men—in men who, in spite of their aberrations, more or less deplorable, from the right line of duty, were nevertheless, like Burns, in their prevailing moods, devoted worshippers of virtue in the general tenor of their lives, and noble examples to all of their brethren. Burns, who while sorely oppressed in his own generous breast by the worst of anxieties—the anxiety of providing the means of subsistence to those of his own household and his own hearth—was notwithstanding no less faithful to that sacred gift with which by Heaven he had been. Obedient to the holy inspiration, he ever sought to strew in the paths of poverty that love which is indeed from Heaven. From his inexhaustible fancy, warmed by the sunshine of his heart, even in the thickest gloom, he strewed along the weary ways of the world flowers so beautiful, that even to eyes that weep—that are familiar to tears—they looked as if they flowed dropped from heaven. But in a more humane—in a more Christian spirit, men have now consented to judge of the character of their great benefactor; therefore at a hazard I may call them sacred scenes, the anniversary of the birth or death of one who had completed so great an achievement. But they have still sought to make manifest the honour they intended him, to make manifest if possible in some degree the demands made upon them by the imagination and the heart. In what other way than that could genius ever have dared to seek to perpetuate in elegies and hymns the expression of a whole people's triumph, and a whole people's grief for the death of some king, sage, priest, or poet? (Loud applause.) What king from the infirmities of his meanest subject ever was free? We know that there are throbs which come from a king's heart, and up to the brow which is mounted by a kingly crown. His passions or ideas are as fatal as those that torment the heart of the meanest hind on his pallet of straw. But then the king with all his sins had been a guardian, a restorer, a deliverer. Thus, his sins were buried with his body, and all over the land, not only in his day, but in after generations, the cry was, "O King, live for ever!" (Cheers.) The sage has seen how liberty rests upon law; how rights are obligations; how the passions of man must be controlled in order that he may be free. See, too, how often has he struggled in vain with his own passions—with the powers of evil that beset him in that seclusion in which reverend admiration would fondly believe that wisdom for ever severely dwells? The servant of God, has he always kept his breath pure from the earth, nor ever lifted prayer with spotless hands? The humbled confession of his own unworthiness would be his reply, alike to the scoffer and to him that believed. But the one tried by plague or pestilence, he had carried comfort into the house deserted by all, except the son of despair; he had sallied forth from the quiet home of the Christian, where he had long in peace hovered, and for the sake of his divine Master, and for the sake of them who were sitting in darkness and the shadow of death therefore shall his name be blessed, and all Christendom point to him as a chosen servant of God. That must show that there is a debt due to these benefactors of our race—a deep debt of gratitude to those who have done true service to mankind exerting their powers of fancy and of imagination, and by means of the great powers of thought. After some other eloquent remarks, Professor Wilson concluded amidst applause.

My Lord, ladies and gentlemen, we have now accomplished the main purpose of this assembly. We have done honour to the memory of Burns, and we have welcomed his sons to the land of their fathers (Hear, hear) After the address—which I may be permitted to call the address of manly eloquence—which you have heard from our noble chairman—after the oration, which I may be permitted to designate as solemn and beautiful, which you have heard from our worthy vice-chairman—it would be inexcusable were I to detain you long with the subject which has been intrusted to me. The range of English poetry is so vast—it is profuse in so many beauties and excellencies, and many of its great names are appreciated with so much habitual veneration, that I feel great diffidence and difficulty in addressing you on a subject on which my opinions can have little weight, and my judgment is no authority; but to you, whose minds have been stirred with the lofty thoughts of the poets of England, and familiar with their beauties, nothing is needed to stimulate you to admire that which I am sure has been the object of your continual admiration, and the subject of your unfeigned delight. (Applause.) We have been sometimes accused of a nationality, which is too narrow and exclusive; but I hope and believe that the accusation is founded on misapprehension of our principles. It is true that as Scotsmen we love Scotland above any other spot on earth—it is true that we love it as our early home, and our father's house. We cherish our feelings of nationality as we cherish our domestic affections, of which they are in truth a part; but while we have these feelings we glory in the might and the majesty of that great country with which, for the happiness and the comfort of both, we have long been united into one nation. (Applause.) We are as proud of the victories of Cressy, of Agincourt, and of Poitiers, as if

they had been won by our ancestors. (Renewed applause.) And I say there is not in this great assembly one person who is not proud to look on Spenser, and Shakespeare, and Milton, and Wordsworth, as belonging to the list of glorious Englishmen who have shed a lustre on English poetry more bright and enduring than that which illuminates the living literature of our land. There is, I think, in the history of the progress of the human intellect nothing more surprising than the sudden birth of letters and history in England, and its advancement to a healthy growth. No sooner had tranquillity been restored after the long civil wars of the Roses—no sooner had men's minds been set free to enter the fields of speculation, opened up by the Reformation, than in the short space of the life of one man—than in the space of 70 years, there arose such men as Spenser, and Milton, and Shakespeare, and Sydney, and Raleigh, and Bacon, and Hondes, and a whole phalanx of great men (great cheering)—though inferior to them in the brightness of original genius. (Applause.) How glorious must have been the soil which could bring to maturity a harvest of such teeming abundance! There are probably many among us who can even now remember with gratification when the first ray of light was cast on their minds from the genius of Spenser—when it came to them as the first gleaming of day comes to him whose sealed eyes are opened to the light of heaven; and if in our maturer years, we return with him to the grand regions of fancy which entranced our spirits, and find that the illusions are broken for ever, we still discover in every stanza beauties which arrest us by their rich play of fancy, like the eastern fountains, whose spring descends in pearls and in gems. (Applause.) But when we look upon him with mature feelings and eyes we can appreciate that lofty strain of goodly philosophy of which he is the father, which he has bequeathed, and which has been followed by his successors. When we call to mind the influence produced on a people by the poetry of a nation; when we call to mind that whatever is desired to be inculcated, whether for good or for evil, the power of poetry has been employed to advance it, even from the times of the monarch of Israel,—when we thus think of these things we may learn how much of gratitude is due to the man on whose head has been poured the precious ointment of poetic lore, and who, in his own person, has shown that poet and prophet were the same. Such men are Spenser, Milton, and Wordsworth. (Applause.) Of Milton I shall not venture to speak. He stands alone in his sanctuary, which I would not profane, even by imperfect praise. But it is my duty to speak of Wordsworth. Dwelling in his height an lofty philosophy, he finds nothing that God has made common or unclean—he finds nothing in human society too humble—nothing in external nature too lowly to be made the fit exponents of the bounty of the goodness of the Most High. It may be that the lofty position of such a mind has much that is obscure to every inferior intelligence. It may be that its vast expanse can only be but dimly visible—it may be that the clouds of intense splendour from the altar may veil, from common eyes, some portion of the stately temple they perfume; but we pity the man who can turn from the sublimity of the edifice he has been invited to survey, which has been reared by the might of creative genius, for there he will find "sermons in stones, books in the running brooks, and good in everything." Sir John then proposed a bumper to Wordsworth and the poets of England, which was enthusiastically honoured.

Sir D. H. Blair, Bart, of Blairpohar, proposed the "Countess of Fingoun and the other ladies who have graced this meeting with their presence," a toast which was received with great applause.

Mr. Wilson, the vocalist, was here loudly called upon for a song; but he craved to be excused, as he was suffering severely from cold.

Several other toasts were drunk, and the convivialities of the meeting were prolonged to a late hour.

## Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI:

CHATHAM, SATURDAY, SEPT. 14, 1844.

POST OFFICE AFFAIRS.—The Montreal Herald of the 28th ult. contains the following judicious, and very sensible remarks on the present working of the Post Office Department. The Publishers of Newspapers in New Brunswick have the same hardships to contend with with respect to their exchanges, and we question very much if they are better circumstanced than their Canadian brethren to meet the expresses:—

"One great great hardship to which newspaper offices have been subjected by the change which took place in January last, consists in the heavy amount of postage which they have now to pay upon exchange papers. Under the former system, although we had to pay for papers sent to subscribers (against which no objection could be made, except as to the mode of applying the proceeds,) we were properly exempted from paying for those papers, which came to us as exchanges. Now, all Canadian papers, passing through the Post

Office, indiscriminately charged with one half-penny of postage, and papers from the United States with one penny American postage (and one penny Canadian; and we have also to pay one penny on every copy of the Herald which we send to the United States. Every one of our exchange American papers thus costs us three pence. This tax comes exceedingly heavy upon newspaper establishments, and as they are proverbially poor in Canada, it operates with grinding severity on those who have a large exchange list. The effect, indeed, has been to cut down the number of exchanges with the United States and the neighbouring provinces to the lowest possible amount, and the effect of this again, is to curtail the sources of information, and that communication of knowledge, which previously existed, and which it is obviously so much the interest of the Imperial and Colonial governments in every way to encourage between parts of the empire.

"The Montreal press feel the tax as forming no small item in their charges account, but we believe that they suffer less from the necessary consequent curtailment of their exchanges, than the great number of country and extra-provincial papers with which they used to keep up communication. The local country papers occupy a very important place as organs and directors of the public opinion in their respective neighbourhoods, but they are precisely the class of papers which receive the least money from their supporters, and therefore, are the least able to pay away so large amount of cash for postage, as they by the new system are compelled to do.

"The heads of the Department in England, cannot be expected to know the internal economy of printing offices in Canada, and we, therefore, agree with the *Cobourg Star* in its suggestions of getting up a representation to Government on the subject. We cannot but feel persuaded, that, if the matter were respectfully submitted and properly explained, a remission of this tax upon knowledge would be granted. This persuasion is certainly not weakened by the important fact, that the Canadian Post Office not only pays itself, but annually remits a very considerable surplus to the Imperial Treasury, which hitherto has applied it to Imperial purposes. It is true that the bill we allude to, provides that such surplus shall after the bill becomes law, be added to the Colonial revenue; nor is this more than following out British practice, but yet the fact shows, that the boon can be granted without difficulty, and we cannot see a better colonial purpose to which a small portion of such a surplus can be applied, than in again making open those channels of communication which the recent Treasury Warrant so rudely closed."

TAX ON COLONIAL BUILT SHIPS.—Is not the subject spoken of below, well worthy the attention of the merchants of Miramichi? The following paragraphs are copied from the *New Brunswicker*:

"We observe that the Shipowners Society in England, are endeavouring to get a tax on Colonial built ships which is as ungenerous as it is short-sighted. We hardly think that the Imperial Parliament will listen to such a proposition; but it is the duty of those interested in the advancement of Colonial commerce to get up a petition to the Home Government on the subject, before it be too late. We cannot be too zealous in the protection of our own interests, and we therefore strongly advise some movement to be made in the matter.—Let petitions be got up and circulated in every part of the province for signature, and let the other Colonies that are interested in the trade, do the same, and by thus throwing the whole of our weight and influence into the opposite scale, we shall be enabled to quash the self interested object of a body of men, whose motive is to benefit themselves at the expense of the industry and enterprise of the Empire at large.

"It will be seen by the following article, which we copy from the *Quebec Gazette* of the 28th ult. that the subject has already been taken up in that City, which we rejoice to see:—

"A meeting of the Board of Trade was held yesterday, at their Rooms in the Exchange, at which it was resolved to take steps to petition against the tax on colonial built ships as proposed by the Shipowners' Society in England. This Society is an influential body, but can hardly think that a measure so contrary to the interest of the Colonies and the trade of the Empire, will be adopted by the British Government and Parliament on the suggestion of a rival interest.

"Such a tax would fall chiefly in the first instance on the working classes in the towns in the colonies, who find almost their only employment during the winter in ship building; but it would react on the agriculturists and the whole trade and industry of the country, which would certainly be diminished by the amount of tax, and perhaps by the loss of the whole amount of the capital now employed in ship building. Would the expected high price of their ships, which is the object of the Shipowners, better enable English vessels to compete with foreign built vessels, in the trade of the world? Such are the narrowness of the views of class interests!"

RATHER QUIZZICAL.—The Editor of the *Maumee Express* reads his subscribers a most admirable lecture on the subject of Canadian sympathy. We take from it the following short extract:

"Friends and fellow citizens—keep cool and

don't make fools of yourselves in the Canada business. Stay at home—mind your own affairs—keep your money—don't tear your shirts nor hurrah before you are out of the woods. Form as many secret societies as you please, but don't get drunk—don't pledge yourselves—don't trust yourself on British ground. They handle guns very carelessly on the other side of the boundary. Them Brits always shut up their eyes before they shoot, and there is no knowing what they may do, if they should get shooting bullets.—It's perfect folly to get in the way of a gun in careless hands—so keep shady—don't go wandering off away from home, "about your business;" don't have as good right to be one place as another." If you want to look mysterious, look so at your wife; if you want to shake your head, shake it at your children. Do business on your own capital—pay a sufficient respect to the soundness of your skin—take a newspaper and pay for it, and you can learn all about these matters as well as if you were on the ground."

SUPREME COURT.—The Court of Oyer and Terminer, and General Gaol delivery, commenced its sitting on Tuesday last. His Honor JUDGE CARTER, Presides on the occasion. His Honor commenced his Address to the Grand Jury by congratulating them on the small amount of business likely to occupy their attention. He stated there was but one prisoner for trial, and that on a charge of a comparatively trifling nature. He believed it was almost unprecedented, that this should be the only case for the consideration of the Grand Juries within these Northern Counties, and hoped this might be taken as a proof of a general feeling of good order and content among the population. He was aware that such had not been the case within this county a short time since; when a spirit of discord and violence had threatened almost to overturn the foundations of society. It was well known, that under violent excitement, arising from differences of opinion on many subjects, much took place, which in cooler moments, would be regretted by those most zealous in bringing it about; and when such things were past, it was surely the wisest and best course for all parties to endeavour, by all means, to allay rather than to keep alive such feelings of animosity and rancour. All must feel the unhappy and degraded state in which a community is placed, when the Law is powerless and fails to afford adequate protection to the persons and properties of those who live under it; and how much would it be for the general and individual welfare and interest, to avoid, or remedy such a state of things. If there were an inclination for peace and good order, it would not be difficult of attainment. Let the *Constituted Authorities* be FIRM, and strictly IMPARTIAL in the discharge of their Duties, and let the *Higher Classes* afford a prominent Example of peaceful decorum and submission to the Laws, and such example would be followed by the LOWER ORDERS; or if not universally followed, disturbers of the Public peace would be quickly put down, both by general discouragement, and by the prompt interference of justice. The riots of the last year, must ever be a blot in the annals of the County; and it would be well to let them be a BEACON, by which such dangers may be avoided for the future.

He could not pretend to an intimate knowledge of the feelings and dispositions of the people; he could only judge by external appearances—these were sometimes deceptive, and it might be, that in spite of present favourable appearances, the feelings which existed formerly were still alive, and only waiting another opportunity to break forth with renewed violence. He trusted that was not the case. Every one who looked back into the past, and reflected calmly and seriously, on what had happened, would pray to be saved from such calamities, as he would from the fires which burnt their forests, and laid their dwellings in ashes. He thought the pursuits of *Commerce* and *Agriculture* offered to the industrious and prudent part of the population, a far more honorable and profitable field for their energies and ex-