

# THE GLEANER:

AND NORTHUMBERLAND, KENT, GLOUCESTER AND RESTIGOUCHE  
COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL.

OLD SERIES]

*Nec aranearum sane textus id eo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.*

[COMPRISED 13 VOLUMES

New Series, Vol. XI.

Miramichi, Tuesday Afternoon, December 2, 1851.

No 6.

## Colonial News.

### New Brunswick.

#### PUBLIC DINNER

TO MESSRS. SIMONDS, RITCHIE, AND TILLEY,  
AT ST. JOHN.

Last week we briefly alluded to this affair, and promised some extracts from the speeches. After a perusal, we concluded to give them as they are reported in the Freeman. The Liberals in this quarter will be glad to hear such a good account of the dinner, as they were led to suppose that the cause was abandoned, and that Free Trade and Protection were now the only measures calculated to excite any interest among the Freeholders of St. John. They must keep up their spirits—there is a good time coming.

The Freeman, in speaking of the dinner, says:—

It was, we believe, the first time that public opinion expressed itself by such a mode in this country, and certainly the expression was as decided and full an approval of their conduct as the guests themselves could desire, and a far stronger and more decided demonstration than those who would fain exult in the dishonorable and eventually ruinous triumph they have just obtained, could at all desire or anticipate.

Mr SIMONDS, whose rising had called forth rounds of applause, after thanking the assemblage for the honours they had paid him, spoke to the following effect—I will now state briefly the reasons that influenced me in the course I have adopted. Before the late general elections the people and with few exceptions the Press of the whole Province pronounced against the Government and called for its overturn, and the six members for the City and County of Saint John were elected pledged to oppose the Government and to carry out certain principles. During the session the whole six did oppose the Government; but I confess that from an early period the conduct of two of those gentlemen on several occasions and their invariable opposition to every proposal of retrenchment, caused me to entertain strong misgivings of their sincerity (hear, hear) and their perseverance. Nor was I mistaken in my opinion, for shortly after the House rose it became but too manifest that they had abandoned their party and violated their pledges. They joined the Government and then one of those gentlemen—perhaps at such a meeting it is hardly right to tell names, but you all know the men—Mr. Wilmot accepted office and it became necessary for him to return to the constituency and ask them to re-elect him. After the decided expression of the opinion of the constituency some few months before, and their determination to bring about a new order of things, I did not believe it possible that Mr. Wilmot could be re-elected. I thought that as soon as it was known that he had broken faith and violated his pledges, that the constituency—almost to a man—would reject him; that no canvass, no efforts were necessary to insure his defeat, for that not ten men in the country would be got to vote for him. To my astonishment and regret I found that the constituency were so unmindful of the stand they had previously taken; so regardless of truth, consistency, and principle, as to return him by a large majority, and thereby affirm the principle that their representatives are not to adhere to their pledges—are not to consult the interests of the people, are not to sacrifice everything to principle, but are to be set up in the market like a piece of damaged goods, to be sold for whatever they may bring; only with this difference that the damaged goods are sold by an auctioneer, while the representatives sell themselves. (Loud cries of hear, hear.)

When such a principle as this was affirmed, when the constituency had declared such to be their opinions, it became, in my opinion, disreputable to represent them. I felt that until this decision was reserved, until the constituency showed a determination to choose their representatives for other and more honorable purposes than to become creatures of bargain and sale, that it was not, could not be reputable to represent them, and not wishing to retain a position that I thought disreputable, I resigned my seat. Having thus stated my reasons for acting as I have done, I would no longer trespass on your indulgence. But there are one or two points on which I think the Press are mistaken. While the present mode of election continues, it is impossible to expect a thorough reform; the electors are subjected to too many influences, and the money of the

candidates or the influence of the Government has too much power. I may perhaps mention, in order to illustrate this, that my election cost me over five hundred pounds. The necessity of spending such an amount of money unquestionably deters many better and abler men from seeking the representation, and keeps out of the house the very men who perhaps ought to be in it. (Loud cries of the 'ballot box') The remedy for this state of things would be Vote by Ballot and the registration of Voters. The Press, or at least an influential portion of it, persist in calling me a conservative—for what reason I cannot imagine. If I know anything of the meaning of the word, I am far indeed from being a conservative, and I should be sorry to think of preserving the present order of things, for I believe a worse could not possibly exist. I was always opposed to the old Family Compact, and endeavored to put an end to their system and order of things. The men of this compact were, no doubt, very high-minded, honorable men, and often men of much ability; but they asserted that not only should they hold all places and offices of honor and emolument themselves, but that these must descend as heir-looms in their families. I opposed this order of things, and am equally opposed to the present, wishing to see the principle of reform, retrenchment and the impartial distribution of patronage carried out; and I cannot, therefore, conceive why I am called a conservative. If I understand the meaning of the word, I never was a conservative. I will not trespass further on your attention, as I believe a long speech would be out of place on such an occasion. I assure you I feel most thankful for the manner in which you have declared your approval of my conduct on this occasion.

Mr RITCHIE next rose to speak, and was greeted with a burst of the most enthusiastic applause—the whole company rising as one man, and cheer succeeding cheer for several minutes. When silence was restored, he said—Mr Chairman, and Gentlemen, I know not in what language to express my gratitude for this reception—so cordial, so enthusiastic—I cannot find words to express my sense of the honor you have paid me. Had I any doubts as to the course I have adopted; were there any lingering apprehensions that I had not taken a proper view of late occurrences, and had not acted as became an honest and an honorable man, this reception would have removed them all, and they would be succeeded by feelings of pride and gratification. But I had no feelings of the sort—I felt that if I were to expect to be able in future to look an honest man in the face without a blush mantling to my cheek, that I must act as I have done. If I were content to skulk in bye-ways and back streets, to hang down my head when I met those whose confidence I had abused, to feel ashamed of every honest man, and to hold my seat and to gratify my inordinate ambition or my insatiable cupidity at such a price, than I might have acted otherwise. But I could not consent to retain any position, if by doing so I felt myself humiliated—if by doing so I felt that I could not look every honest man in the face; and feeling thus, I resigned the position I held as one of your representatives—a position most honorable, if honorably acquired, and honorably attained, but which, as matters then stood, could confer on me no honor. It is to me a source of no little satisfaction to find that without any concert or previous arrangement my venerable colleague the ex-Speaker, and my colleague, Mr Tilley, looking at the question in the same light, acted exactly in the same manner. Without consulting these gentlemen or speaking to them on the subject, I determined on the course I felt bound to pursue, and I did not know of Mr Simonds's intention to resign till he brought me his papers to sign, when I told him it was out of my power to do so, being no longer a member of the house. Nor did I know of Mr Tilley's intention to resign until some days afterwards, when we accidentally met in the street, and he told me he had resigned. It was gratifying to me to find the opinions of my colleagues agreeing with my own; and the manner in which you to night have marked your approval of our conduct, must be as gratifying to my late colleagues as it is to myself. But the coming together on this occasion, and for this purpose, of this large and influential assemblage I now see before me—of men the bone and sinew of the country, who represent every class and every interest of the country, who contain within themselves so large a proportion of the intelligence and influence of the country, and on whose efforts and future action so much depends—has a significance far deeper, far greater, far more important, than merely to mark approval of our conduct or pay us a compliment. It proves though we have been lately defeated, we are not by any means conquered, but that we possess so much of the real strength and influence, and intelligence of the country,

that despite all sinister influences, if we only do our duty, the cause of reform must eventually triumph over all obstacles. (Loud cheers.)

This, I believe has been the first demonstration of the kind in this Province, and will, I doubt not, be the first step towards a new order of things, the first move towards combined and united action. If we only unite—if the men who are assembled here to night set work determinedly and with vigor, to diffuse sound political knowledge, to teach the constituency just and correct principles, to make every man know and feel his duty as an elector, it is impossible that the present state of things can long exist, or that dishonesty and corruption can again triumph. But to complete a sound and effective organisation there must be a platform—certain and defined principles for the assertion and maintenance of which all could agree,—and the basis of that platform—the only basis on which it could possibly exist with advantage or hope of success—must be political honesty and political consistency. It is bad enough that the representatives of the people should be corrupted by the Government; that the cupidity of one should be satisfied with a fat office and large salary, and the immeasurable vanity of the other with an empty title. (Loud cheers, and cries of Gray, Gray)—But if the Representatives are to be allowed to corrupt the people in turn, then will the condition of the country be a deplorable one, then will all grounds for hope of improvement cease to exist. The present state of things has been brought about by those adherents to old principles who still remained in power and still exercised an influence antagonistic to all advancement, who had resisted the change from the old system as long as possible, who had called Responsible Government Responsible Humbug, but who, when the new system was forced on them, had not the manliness and honesty to retire from the Government, and allow the principles of Responsible Government to be worked out by those to whom its introduction was due. They clung to power and retained office when the Government was to be conducted according to principles they had obstinately opposed, and it was owing altogether to this fact, and to the constant opposition of these men to every effort at advancement that the present political position is entirely owing. It is for you to avert such a calamity, by making this demonstration the foundation of an organisation that will bring about a better state of things. My colleague has justly remarked that long speeches do not suit such an occasion as this, and I will follow his example and not extend my remarks any further than to repeat that I can not express my gratitude for the honor you have paid me. I feel proud when I look around and see the men of business, of energy, intelligence and character, who are assembled round these boards, and I am gratified to find the chair filled by my venerable and respected friend, whose character as a merchant stands unimpeachable and unimpeached, whose support I have invariably received, and who, I am happy to say, has always identified himself with the liberal cause. 'This night is the proudest of my life, and the feelings now excited within me I trust I shall never forget. When I see familiar faces all around, and mark the spirit of conviviality, cheerfulness and enjoyment that prevails, I cannot refrain from regarding this as almost a social rather than a political meeting, and if all political dinners are such as this, I can only say I would wish to see many more of them, though I trust we will never have one on a similar occasion.

Mr TILLEY being loudly called, next rose and was received with similar demonstrations of esteem and regard. He said—Mr Chairman and Gentlemen, I feel highly gratified at this flattering reception, and return you my most sincere thanks for the manner in which my health was responded to. The sacrifice I have made is but a trifling one; but even were it as great as that made by my late colleague, the ex-Speaker, who for over thirty years filled a place in the Councils of the country; of my other colleague, Mr Ritchie, who has represented the County for some six years, stood so deservedly high in your regard, and became the recognised leader of the Opposition—the honor you have conferred on me would have been ample remuneration for that service. It has been said that I acted hastily, and without consideration, in signing the document, which was signed by four of the Representatives of this city and county, after the other two had joined the Government, and which document has been published all over the Province, and that we were trapped into it by my colleague, Mr Ritchie; but I signed that document after mature deliberation, and without being in any wise influenced by another, though it was drafted by Mr Ritchie. I took this course, because it was fully in accordance with the principles which, on being chosen one of your represen-

tatives, I had laid down for my guidance in that position. These principles were, that I would not accept any office from the Government while I was the servant of the people. 'Tis true that I was never tried, that no offer was made me, and that this resolution was never tested; but if it was I believe I would not be bought. The second was, that in the disposition of the public funds I should always act as if I were disposing of my own; that when asked to put my hand into the public treasury I should regard it as a call on my own purse; and I believed that while I acted on this principle I could not go far astray. The third was, that in dealing with the demands of others, I would always endeavor to act towards petitioners as I would wish to be dealt by under the same circumstances; and the fourth was, that if my opinions ever changed, and I thought differently from what I then did, and could not fulfil the pledges I had given, that I would come back to my constituents, state that I had changed, and how far I had changed, and tender them my resignation if they chose to accept of it; and that if the people changed, and though public opinion no longer coincided with mine, and I could not carry out the views of my constituents, that I should lay down my trust.

It has been said at the hustings and elsewhere that in putting forward that document and declaring our intention to resign, we wished to dictate to the constituency; but I can not look on it in that light, and believing that the constituency would be right in calling on me to resign my seat if I changed my political opinions, so I thought that I had a right, as one of the representatives, to declare my intention of no longer retaining that seat if I found their opinions changed. I believed that no enlightened constituency would withhold from their representative the same right they themselves would claim. It is easy to prove that it is the constituency not my colleagues or myself who have changed. Sixteen months ago the constituency and particularly the party with whom I was identified, and on whose support I chiefly depended, used every effort to support the candidates professing certain principles and to defeat Mr Partlow, then a candidate, and so to overthrow the Government, and they succeeded; and now the same men re-elect Mr Wilmot after he has joined that very same Government. To show that it was the two members who joined the Government that changed their principles, and not my colleagues or myself who changed our views, I will mention a certain fact, and if the Hon. Mr Gray were present I would ask him for a trifling favor to enable me to elucidate the matter a little more fully, but as he is not we must dispense with that. Immediately after the election, Mr Gray collected the cards and speeches of the newly-elected representatives, having carefully pasted them into a small book, for the express purpose of bringing to book any who might attempt to rat.

Yet he himself was one of the very first to abandon his party, and join the government he had previously condemned. (Loud cries of hear, hear, mingled with groans for Gray.) I wish that scrap book was here, that you might be able to examine, and from it obtain convincing proofs of his having changed or abandoned his principles.

I said—I have heard it more than once—that Mr Ritchie is no statesman—that he is not the man to lead a party or effect much good. Since I have tendered my resignation I have heard it said that my other colleague and I were both entrapped by Mr Ritchie. It may require little tact to trap one so inexperienced as myself, but if he were able to trap a politician so old and experienced as Mr Simonds, then he must be the very man to lead a Government at the present day, for it would require no little ability to trap such a man. But it was not we who were trapped, it was the men who joined the Government—the one bought over by office and a good salary, the other by the empty shadow of a title—the prefix Hon. It was the constituency of this county who were trapped. Sixteen months ago they had condemned the Government, now they pledged themselves to support it. The Government had set a trap for them and baited it with the most acceptable bait—Wilmot, and they had swallowed the Attorney General, and with him the whole Government. Another bait set for them was a bag, to which the supporters of the Government pointed. It was labelled 'seven millions'—and originally it was marked—'bearing interest at three and a half per cent.—the principal payable in instalments, secured by permanent imposts until the whole is paid.' But this had been daubed over, and now there was set on it in the handwriting of a well known leading politician, 'John Bull is an easy creditor.' (Cheers and Laughter) Above it was an inscription, 'The Government are not pledged to any Railway,' which was always changed to 'The Government are