

RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS

JOSEPH HOWE AND HIS TIMES.

And Incidental References to Some of His Prominent Public Contemporaries.

By "Historicus," Fredericton, N. B.
NO. 2.

The Illustrious Dead.

And then when death overtook those of more than ordinary mark, their dust was not allowed to mingle with common clay in the old burial ground, but must needs find place beneath the floors of old St. Paul, where, as in Westminster Abbey, (the Pantheon of England's illustrious dead), the bodies were interred. Some years ago the floors of St. Paul's, being much decayed, were renewed, when many mounds and sarcophagi were exposed to view. The last person interred here, I think, was Richard John Uniacke, Attorney General, in 1820. Today this is all changed. Even the old burial ground is a sealed book. There is one common cemetery for all alike, while equality among the living appears to be more evenly balanced and recognized. In the month of August last I attended divine service in old St. Paul's; everything looked to me as it did sixty years before, except the makeup of the congregation, which I thought had undergone a wonderful transformation. The doors of the old stately pews, which formerly shut out as it were, all intruders, were removed and the interiors considered free to all-comers. I no longer beheld the old grandees and their families, wrapped in their own importance and finery; but a staid, respectable looking body of people of all professions, trades and occupations, resembling other ordinary mortals of other persuasions, who at the present day feel that they are dependent upon one another for the riches they possess and are working for, and not upon the Crown as of yore among the privileged classes.

Government House.

People are of course the same in all ages, human nature is unchangeable. It is the circumstances and accidents by which they are surrounded at different epochs which account for the changed manifestations. The man of affluence and importance today, is another man tomorrow, when overtaken by adversity—he then becomes as changed in himself as if two distinct entities were assimilated in the one corporeal essence. The actors under the old system which reflected a lustre on Government House and old St. Paul's, were no longer the shining stars which dazzled all beholders, after the doors of those establishments were made to turn on new hinges. Now the occupants of those pews seem to feel as if they believed they were saying their prayers under more democratic surroundings, and that they were only so many units in the great aggregation, depending upon *coz populi* for their living, and not upon a meretricious system which prescribed all who were not in some way connected with the "governing classes." And yet according to this same human nature doctrine, so peculiar and perhaps selfish, it is questionable whether if the old system could be rehabilitated, might it not reproduce the same manifestations as of old, notwithstanding our advanced civilization and more apparent fraternal dispositions.

The Family Compact.

To retrace our steps. At the time to which reference was made in my first article, the Government of the country was under the absolute control of what was called "the family compact." The Governor was sent from England, or from "home," as our Halifax friends continue to call it—for some occult reason best known to themselves—clothed with plenary power, although he had an advisory board, consisting of twelve members, who exercised legislative as well as executive functions, in giving advice to His Excellency, whether he chose to accept and act upon it or not. Such a thing as a member of the Government holding a seat upon the floors of the House was unknown. They were all "Honourables," and would have no intercourse with the people's representatives, unless to cross them and refuse the Royal assent to any measure that did not harmonize with their prejudices. If one of them died, another was put in his place having the most influence. If the head of a department passed away, his office was quickly filled by one of his own kind and kin; and so on in every case. The continuity of tenure was indisputable. Those officials were only amenable to themselves and the Governor, and it the latter proved to be a simple or weak man, as some of them were, he was easily brought over to their own way of thinking. Thus all the offices in the country were in the hands of those twelve irresponsible men, whose individual salaries or appurtenances arising from their positions, were large enough to maintain their families in regal splendor, of course at the expense of "the people" who were as much under their sway as the people of Russia now are under their Czar. The subordinate Clerks in the various departments were dealt with in the same fashion—that is, all employees

were appointed by the irresponsible heads, whether good, bad or indifferent, and nobody outside the circle could utter a word of protest. Then the Press was shackled or held under the same restraining bondage—not but that there was freedom for the expression of independent thought, even to make war upon "the compact;" but the publishers knew too well that it was at the risk of losing prestige and patronage, or incurring the displeasure or withdrawal of countenance of those who were linked in some way with the parties assailed. Indeed the political atmosphere some sixty years ago was so impregnated

even in the field itself, as will be seen hereafter. But it must be observed here that Mr. Howe was not a writer who dipped his pen in gall, or in any way exhibited in his writings a rabid disposition. His attacks were always directed against existing and long standing abuses, and he would have preferred knocking these down with nobody standing behind them; but this could not be done, for every abuse then as now, had its self-interested defenders—no one hitherto having dared even to point them out, much less try to overthrow them.

(To be continued.)

A MODERN CINDERELLA.

"Oh, pshaw!" said Miss Beatrix Belden. "It's too provoking!" said Clarissa, her elder sister. "What could have sent the little thing up from the country at this time, of all others?" said Beatrix, twirling the rings around and around upon her fingers. "I think the whole race of country cousins ought to be annihilated!" said Clarissa. "They're very nice in July and August," said Miss Beatrix. "But, oh, dear, who wants 'em coming down to New York in this unexpected sort of way, with hair-trunks and paper-covered band boxes, just when we're getting ready for the masquerade ball?" "Hush-sh-sh!" said Clarissa, lifting a warning finger, "here she comes, now."

another," said Mrs. Belden. "She must be kept in the background until Emile Southwick has proposed for Clara." And when old Miss Morel called that afternoon and asked expressly for Faith Blossom, Mrs. Belden made some smiling excuse about her niece having a headache.

"Call her down," said Miss Morel. "I'll take her out for a drive in my carriage. Fresh air is all she needs. I'll go bail. I've taken a fancy to that bright-eyed little rosebud of yours."

And Beatrix Belden, who would have given the prettiest ring off her taper fingers to be seen in the Park with old Miss Morel, was obliged to perforce to go up to the little room where Faith Blossom was looking out over the dreary expanse of chimney-pots, with her round chin in her hands and a homesick sensation at her heart.

"I don't think I care to go," said Faith, sadly.

"Child, are you crazy?" demanded Miss Belden. "Mr. Southwick's aunt! And the richest old lady in the city. Get your things on at once, or she'll say we are keeping you shut up, like a captive princess."

So little Faith Blossom went—and she and old Miss Morel became excellent friends.

"Not going to the masquerade ball?" said Miss Morel. "But you shall go! You shall go, in spite of 'em all!"

"But I have nothing to wear," said Faith. "I'll see to that," said Miss Morel, with eyes that twinkled roguishly behind her black Chantilly veil, that was worth its weight in bank-notes.

"And Aunt Margaret says—" interrupted the old lady. "We'll make a modern Cinderella of you, my dear! Just you keep your own counsel, and we shall see what we shall see!"

Clarissa and Beatrix Belden appeared themselves gorgeously, upon the night of the masquerade ball.

"It's so lucky that Faith has gone to her room early, with a headache," said Clara. "It does seem hard to keep her at home when—"

"Nonsense!" said Beatrix. "What could we do, weighted with a little country fright like that?"

"I saw her blue-silk dress yesterday," said Miss Clarissa. "Such a dowdy old thing!"

"It's quite out of the question that she should go," said Mrs. Belden, who was squeezing her plump figure into a crimson-satin dress profusely trimmed with thread lace and bugles.

But the hack which had been engaged to convey the three ladies to the ball had hardly driven away from the door when the lamps of Miss Morel's close carriage came blazing around the corner like a pair of fiery eyes, and Keturah, the maid, all smiles, opened the door before the footman had time to ring.

"She's all ready, mem," said breathless Keturah. "I helped to dress her, mem, I did."

There was a brilliant assemblage gathered that night in Mrs. Maverick's superb suite of apartments, but the belle of the occasion was the beautiful young girl who came as *Summer Dawn* with old Miss Morel—*Summer Dawn*, with robes of pink and pearl sparkling with dew-drops of tiny solitaire diamonds, and lovely golden hair floating like a cloud over her shoulders.

"Such eyes!" said Mrs. Maverick. "Such a complexion!" said Mrs. St. Elwas.

"I wonder if I could get an introduction," said Clarissa, wistfully. "I'm afraid the crowd around her is too great," said Mr. Wynfield.

And when at last, by dint of infinite pushing and perseverance, a torn dress and a damaged point-lace fan, Miss Belden succeeded in reaching the blue-and-silver boudoir where Mrs. Maverick received her most select and favored guests, she was just a little too late. Miss Morel and the radiant *Summer Dawn* were gone.

Clarissa could have shed tears of vexation. She had missed an introduction to the reigning sensation (Mrs. Belden's eldest daughter, be it understood, was a born tuft-hunter; she had ruined her dress; she hadn't had a chance to speak to Mr. Southwick, who was there as Sir Walter Raleigh, in costume of black velvet, clasped with topaz and slashed with orange satin, and she hadn't stood up to dance in one solitary set.

"I hate masquerade balls," said she spitefully. "They're the stupidest things in the world."

Mr. Emile Southwick called the next evening, however, and Miss Belden brightened up a little.

"Give me the card, Katy," said she to the maid, "and I'll take down my crimps in a minute."

Keturah grinned like an African gorilla. "It ain't for you, Miss Clara," said she. "It's for Miss Blossom!"

Two weeks afterward Faith Blossom went home an engaged young lady, to prepare for her wedding.

"But remember, my dear, the bridal outfit itself—the dress and veil and orange-blossoms and all—are to be my present," beamed Miss Morel. "We didn't think, did we, Cinderella, that the prince would come so soon?"

For little Faith Blossom had won the heart of Emile Southwick.

"But where did he first see you, child?" eagerly demanded Beatrix Belden, who could scarcely believe the testimony of her own ears, until her eyes corroborated it by means of the superb diamond engagement ring.

"At Mrs. Maverick's masquerade ball," said Faith, smiling and coloring.

"At the masquerade ball? Were you there?"

"Miss Morel took me," said Faith. "I was dressed as a *Summer Dawn*, in pink and white, and Miss Morel lent me her diamonds."

Beatrix started. Clara dropped her work-box. "Faith," cried they, in an unconscious duet, "were you the *Summer Dawn*—the belle—the beauty—the observed of all observers?"

Faith Blossom's cheeks grew rosier than ever.

"I—I believe there was only one *Summer Dawn* there," said she.

"She is my little Cinderella," said old Miss Morel, who had come noiselessly in, and stood behind them. "And, God bless her, she has won the prince!"

"We can easily contrive one excuse or

