

## RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS

## JOSEPH HOWE AND HIS TIMES.

And Incidental References to Some of His Prominent Public Contemporaries.

By "Historicus," Fredericton, N. B.

NO. 22.

An Unpleasant Duty—A Great Mistake.

I now propose to draw these letters to a close in two more chapters, and in doing so must impose upon myself a most unpleasant duty in reference to Mr. Howe's latter days. Had Bonaparte fallen at Waterloo, he would have been spared the humiliations of St. Helena. Had his phew ended his days at Sedan, his Imperial greatness would not have been overshadowed by the remembrance of his blunder in provoking the Franco-Prussian war—losing a throne, as it were, on the hazard of a die. Had he refrained from joining his red shirt legions in order to retrieve the fortunes of a moribund French army after its many defeats by the Prussians, but retired to Capri, on hand over the Kingdom of Naples, which he had conquered for Victor Emmanuel, the name of Garibaldi would now stand much higher in the Italian archives. Had he rested his name solely upon his literary works, instead of going into the Imperial Parliament for which he was altogether unfitted because untrained to its practices, Haliburton's reputation would now be resting upon a sounder pedestal. On his return from England, whither he had gone at his country's call, to oppose the union of Nova Scotia with the other Provinces, had he then retired to private life, Howe's reputation today would have rested upon a noble and more enduring monument than what could be produced from stone or marble. The great mistake of his life began in 1866. Howe considered his country sold into bondage—transported body and soul into the arms of Canada—deprived of her political independence in more ways than one—and this was plotted by some of Nova Scotia's great political schemers—at a time too when the great Nova Scotian himself was engaged in the service of his Sovereign, and not in the House of Assembly, to resist the enemy at her gates. And all this was done, not by force of arms, but by the most iniquitous proceeding known to the world since the days of the enforced Irish union in 1800, which act furnishes a chapter in English history not at all creditable to the Government of that day.

[This is what Mr. Howe said upon the subject of "Confederation" in 1838: "Respecting the confederation (Lord Durham's Report) had suggested a general union, it should be admitted that benefits would occur;—the regulation of trade, a court of appeal for the Colonies, and other good results might be expected; but the subject should be approached with great delicacy. The House should be careful how it placed a recommendation on record which might be cited at a future day. Nova Scotia was one of the smallest of the Colonies, and might suffer in the arrangement. They might find that a confederation, instead of leaving the Province, with its present evils in connection with the Colonial office, would establish an office in the backwoods of Canada more difficult of access than that in London."]'

Confederation, with the Nova Scotians, meant the re-conquest of Canada, including the Maritime Provinces—this time by the French—for ever since the taking of Quebec by Wolfe in 1759, Canada has been living under French domination, and the struggle for the mastery has been continually going on between the English and French, especially in the Legislature of old united Canada, where the two peoples were so evenly balanced, that legislation would often be blocked for days and weeks together, neither side being willing to give way. The representatives from Lower Canada acted in concert as a unit—their laws, their language, their traditions, their religion, their generic influences, their *amor patriæ*—all combined to render the French a homogeneous compact, moved by a single impulse, and whenever any one of their privileges seemed to be threatened, they would stand together shoulder to shoulder. The English, on the other hand, had nothing in common like this to bind them (unless in self defence in the Legislature). They were divided among themselves—party, and party only has always been the great pervading idea, in minor as well as important matters. It is no wonder that the French power since the original conquest has been so overwhelming, even detrimental to the best interests of the whole people; and no wonder also that the Nova Scotians that to escape to some extent from this bondage the Maritime Provinces were invited, even forced by Canadian politicians to join them and become members of their family. [The Nova Scotians made no mistake with their prophecies. The French are predominant as ever—they hold the balance of power in the Dominion Parliament today, and both parties are under fealty to them. No Cabinet could stand ten hours, if an attempt were made to interfere with what the *habitants* consider to be their vested rights. Legislation is made to stand still on Saints' days, fast days, Corpus Christi—in fact, Church and State seem to go hand in hand in our Dominion Parliament in a way unknown to the respective legislative bodies in the Maritime Provinces—aye, in the Imperial Parliament itself.]

In New Brunswick we were treated fairly. The question of Confederation was submitted to the people at the polls

and—rejected, and the next year accepted. Whatever may be thought of this union today by the Maritime Provinces after twenty-five years experience, it matters not. Here the people accepted the union by means of a somersault—it was an open eye proceeding as far as New Brunswick was concerned. The union is consolidated upon constitutional grounds, and must stand until the time comes for the next important change!

Now, had the question in the same way been submitted to the people of Nova Scotia for their acceptance or rejection, there could have been no cause for complaint—



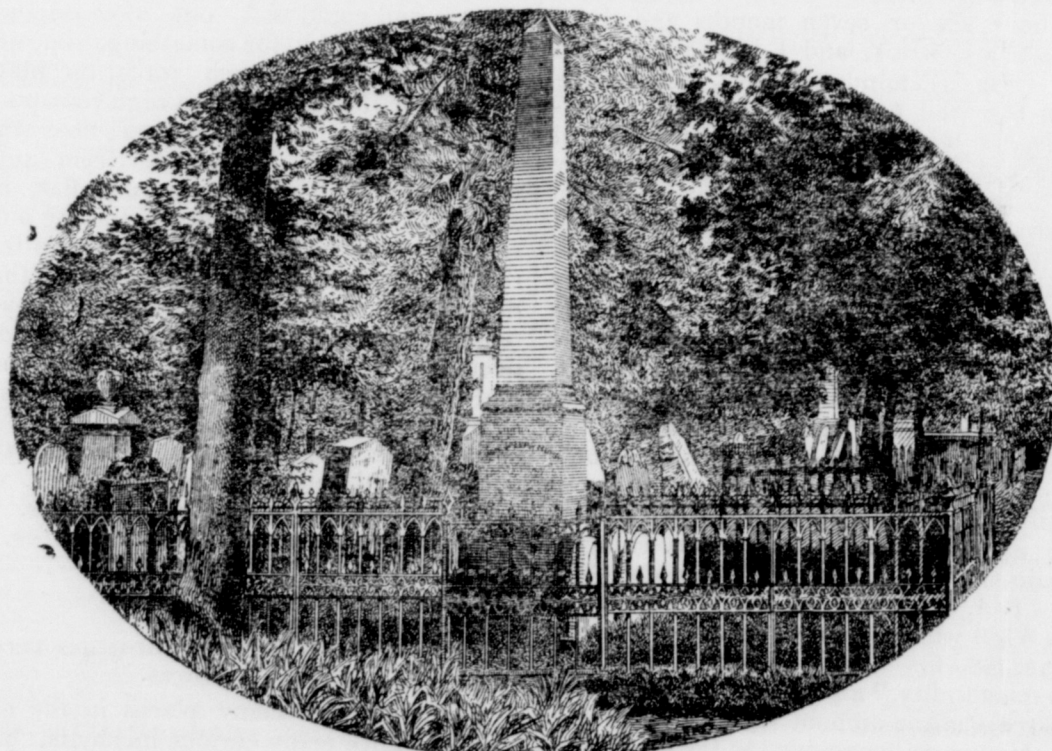
HON. JOSEPH HOWE.

nor need Mr. Howe have gone to England to plead at the Colonial Office for exemption from the compact.

What Mr. Howe Should Have Done.

Had Mr. Howe, then, on his return without succeeding in his mission called his friends about him, (Nova Scotia through-out was terribly exercised over the wrong imposed upon her) and thus addressed them, "Gentlemen I have given my country nearly the whole of my life to her service—I have done my utmost on going to England at your request to have the blow at her independence turned aside—but the English Government have pronounced their verdict that the union must be maintained. I can do no more; and I now retire from public life for ever, and so bid you all farewell."

"I know myself now; and I feel within me A peace above all earthly dignities, A still and quiet conscience."



HOWE'S MONUMENT.

Mr. Howe did not so act—hence in my humble opinion his great mistake. Had he retired there cannot be a doubt that his old political friends would have rallied about and provided for him, if needed, during the remainder of his days. His popularity never stood higher than at this time. Even his old political opponents had learned to appreciate his worth and the services he had rendered the country. Here he should have stood still, when to advance one step in the wrong direction was to forfeit a large proportion of the good feeling entertained for him. As to the Governorship, it would have fallen to his lot as an *onorarium* for his past services, and which no Government could have overlooked when the occasion presented itself. Abjuring all such considerations Mr. Howe's first step was to ask for "better terms"—so that he and the Hon. Mr. McLellan (afterwards Lieut. Governor) stated their case in writing, and were answered by the Dominion Government; and after some correspondence "better terms were conceded and accepted. Still the sharp iron had so pierced the souls of the people, that even those better terms could not condone the outrage perpetrated upon them by forcing them into the union.

"Tis done—but yesterday a king, And armed with kings to strive— But now—"

Mr. Howe's popularity had so far waned by this time, even among his old friends

and staunch political supporters, that many of them even failed to recognize him upon the public streets—aye, even some of those who had risen to high positions in the state through Mr. Howe himself—for had it not been for the reforms he had brought about and thus cleared the way for them, they never would have been heard of in public. Common gratitude alone, one would suppose, would have taught these gentry better manners. Mr. Howe might truly have said with Wolsey—

"Had I but served my God with half the zeal I served my country, He would not in mine age Have left me naked to mine enemies?"

The next step was to obtain a constituency and enter the House of Commons. Hants was the County which he chose for trial of strength. Here (1869) he was met in opposition by Mr. Goudge a highly popular gentleman living in Windsor. The election took place in the dead of winter, so that to get about among the numerous constituents in all parts, would be a serious undertaking for a much younger man. Mr. Howe was over 65 at this time. The snow storms and driftings on caudery roads, sleeping in cold beds at night, and speaking in public day after day in exposed places, were all a terrible trial to him; and when he came out of the struggle barely victorious his health was shattered—indeed the seeds of permanent disease, and final dissolution, may be traced to that election contest.

Mr. Howe in the House of Commons.

When Mr. Howe took his seat in the House of Commons for the first time, he was, as is customary, introduced to the Speaker, and his escort for that purpose were two of his old confederation opponents—a most remarkable and humiliating spectacle. It was said a person present—like leading a lamb to the slaughter. It was like the capture of the great lion of Nova Scotia by two persons apparently selected for that special purpose, to be laid upon the altar of the new Dominion as an oblation for what they considered to be the political sins of their countrymen in their resistance to confederation. Here was victory complete—but it was victory over the prostrate forms of a people who had been struck down by treachery of the basest sort. Mr. Howe was taken into the Government and appointed Secretary of State. These were the honors, it such they can be called, that awaited a heroic life, now drawing to its close—after thirty years a leader of some of the ablest men this country ever produced, now allowing himself to become the follower of a man belonging to a school whose politics had ever been at variance with his own, and whose sympathies were *en rapport* with those persons Howe battled against from 1836 to 1847. Alas, that such a man should have lived to bear witness to his own fallen greatness! He stood in that Assembly like a majestic oak in the midst of a forest, denuded of its foliage by the lightning's blast—or a Sampson after being shorn of his locks—an emasculated form and a prey to his enemies—or use another similitude, he was like one who had fallen from the Eiffel Tower, almost dead before reaching the ground.

Appointed Lieutenant Governor.

Mr. Howe, in 1873, was made Lieut. Governor of the Province he had so faithfully served; but his health was now so much shattered, that his honors were now so short lived, for he expired in a few weeks after his appointment. He died (strong constitution suddenly broken down) at the age of 69. His funeral was the most imposing ever seen in Halifax—the procession extended from Government House almost to the Cemetery, in which the Army and Navy were represented in full force—all the public departments, the Mayor and members of the Corporation—private gentlemen, numbering many hundreds, turned out to manifest their respects, and to drop a last farewell tear over the bier of Nova Scotia's great Patriot.

Mr. Howe's remains repose in the Camp Hill Cemetery, and his wife and children rest within the same iron enclosure.

himself, as other Nova Scotians have done. Mr. Howe would rob a friend rather than touch unhallowed coin belonging to the State. He would not compound with his conscience and take advantage of his position to turn money into his own pockets, however excusable the chances, but rely altogether upon his salary, for the pay which the law gave him. To connect such a man with what now-a-days is called "boodling"—in plain English, *stealing*, would have been an utter impossibility. "HOWE DIED poor!" Let this be placed as a memento over the entrance door to the vault which covers his remains. He might have left his family rich had he been unscrupulous, or like some other of the older politicians.

In private life or among friends Howe was a host indeed. He was full of life and full of anecdote. No man ever laughed louder or enjoyed the conventionalities of the dinner table with greater zest than he. For him money had no charms—it was come day go day; while in public, (on the floors of the House) he was all accuracy and regularity, in private, in his own house, he took no heed of system or domestic requirements—that is to say, he would invite a friend to dine with him—the same day—and yet cause no preparation to be made at home for the occasion. He was hearty in his friendship, trusty and steadfast. As a loyal man in its true sense, and to British Institutions, his Sovereign never had a better subject; but then, he was equally loyal to his country, to freedom and the rights of man, whether political, religious or social. There was no duplicity about him—nor did he show the usual art and cunning of the politician. It he made promises it was with the intention of keeping them. Even a political opponent found favour in his sight—or rather he would not step aside to throw a stumbling block in his way, but rather aid him. In short, the following old quotation I consider very suitable: "He was a Man, take him for all in all, we shall not look upon his like again."

The final article in next number of PROGRESS will be quite brief—suggestive of a Monument to Joseph Howe.

NO LONGER POPULAR.

Mark Twain Getting Dry While Bill Nye Is in Demand.

The gossip of literary circles is to the effect that Mark Twain's letters from abroad are unsuccessful, and it is quite likely they may soon be discontinued. Of this I know nothing, but I do know that every one who has read them concedes that Twain has added nothing to his reputation by writing them. Indeed there is a marked decline in Twain literature just now. His books are no longer as popular as they were. People seem to have tired of him, and from everywhere comes the same report. But to Twain personally, perhaps, that makes no difference. He is a very wealthy man and can afford to take the remainder of his life easily. He is paid a large sum for these letters, and all the money he has made out of literature he has invested in a way that gives him a fine income.

The one humorist whose work is constantly in demand is Bill Nye. His weekly letters have a larger sale today and are more widely copied than the work of any other literary man in America. His income alone from these letters is over \$10,000 a year. Nye is quite the reverse of Twain in many ways. He is agreeable, courteous and always anxious to help young men and women who are trying to get on in the profession of letters. Twain, on the other hand, is sour and surly, and particularly dislikes to see young men or women who have letters of introduction to him and who might hope to profit by his counsel and advice.

Just before Twain sailed for Europe from this city one of the best known magazine editors in town met him on Broadway. This editor was on his way to the Authors' club. He invited Twain to accompany him. Twain laughingly declined. When the editor reached the club he told a fellow member that he had seen Twain and invited him to the club house.

"Why didn't he come with you?" was the question put to the editor. "Well, you see," replied the editor slowly, "Twain is a sensible man. He has got such a big head that he knows he couldn't enter the club door, and I didn't offer to take down the front door of the building that he might enter."—*Mail and Express.*

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Yours truly,

ADDISON LECHE.

Conductor Windsor and Annapolis Railroad, N. S.

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Never take hold of a new thing until forced into it. A great many people would not have a telephone until loss of trade obliged them to. We believe that there are people who will suffer with colds, rheumatism, grippé, &c., rather than buy Rigby clothing because they are a new thing and they have jogged along without them so long. Don't jeopardize your health but provide yourself with Rigby Garments at once.

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This is to certify, that I the undersigned, assisted Mr. Lund to measure one acre of Potato 1 and, and assisted Mr. Bowser in checking and weighing the Potatoes taken from said acre, on which we used 5 barrels of your Special Potato Phosphate only, and find the crop four hundred and thirty-one bushels, 27½ lbs., (431, 27½). About three-quarters of the Potatoes were Beauty of Hebron, the remainder Black Wonder. The Hebrons grew at the rate of about 400 bushels to the acre, and Montanas full 600 bushels to the acre.

[Signed] C. PICKARD.

Affirmed before me this 13th day of Nov. 1891, at Sackville.

[Signed] CHARLES E. LUND, J.P.

This is to certify, that I have this day parted off one acre from Mr. Charles Pickard's potato field, and marked the bounds of the same for the purpose of a prize competition.

Dated at Sackville, 20th Sept., 1891. [Signed] C. E. LUND, D. L. Surveyor.

Provincial Chemical Fertilizer Co., 89 Water St., St. John, N. B.