

# The Examiner.

"THIS IS TRUE LIBERTY, WHEN FREEBORN MEN—HAVING TO ADVISE THE PUBLIC, MAY SPEAK FREE."—EURIPIDES.

VOL. II.]

CHARLOTTETOWN, P. E. ISLAND, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1848.

[No. 5 9

TO DUNCAN MACLEAN, Esq., M. P. P.

No. IV.

SIR;

You have insinuated more than once that I am anxious to draw a veil over my former conduct as a journalist. I think I have proved this insinuation to be as groundless as it is mean—and that I am not only not afflicted with 'a short memory,' but that I cherish a faithful remembrance of figures and facts, which cannot be set aside by your false testimony and malevolence, and from which the public eye cannot be long diverted by your puny efforts to play the satirist. 'Tis a great pity nature did not put a better tongue in your head, for, could you utter with facility the seemingly smart phrases that embroider your correspondence, and which a country school-boy might mistake for wit, you would undoubtedly shine as a clown in a circus, or a spunger in a taproom.

Speaking of the publication of the *Constitutionalist*, you assert that I "approved of the design, by the publication of a letter, and subsequently offered my services to edit that paper." I can readily prove this to be another falsehood. I never wrote a line which could, by any ingenuity, be construed into an approval of the design of publishing the *Constitutionalist*, and never offered my services to edit that paper. In the Spring of 1846, Mr. Wm. Pope came to me, and suggested the expediency of re-starting the *Palladium*, adding, that some capital could be got to commence with. After some reflection, I assented to recommence its publication, providing a sufficient amount was placed at my disposal, on loan, to procure the necessary Printing Materials, and that the entire control of the paper would be left to myself: this latter condition did not appear to be very well relished. Immediately after my interview with Mr. Wm. Pope, I made a visit to a friend at the East Point, where I remained for nearly six weeks. In the interval, I amused myself by writing for the *Morning News* a series of light and sketchy letters over the signature of "Peter Palaver." One of these letters contained some strictures on Mr. Joseph Pope and his party in the Assembly; and on their being traced to my pen, the wily Speaker concluded, as he afterwards expressed it to a friend in Charlottetown, that "it would not be safe to entrust me"—holding the opinions which were dimly shadowed forth in my anonymous letters—"with the management of a paper." Just about the time I was on my way from the East Point to Charlottetown, I received a letter from Mr. Wm. Pope, informing me that the necessary arrangements had been made for the immediate issuing of a paper, and urging me to hasten down, and "give the good cause the benefit of my talents." On my arrival in Charlottetown, I learned that an old Press had been furnished up, owned by Mr. Bagnall, and worth about 20s., and a small supply of type borrowed or bought from the Queen's Printer. These were the instruments with which the Governor was to be driven out of the Colony. I also learned that Mr. Collard—who was at that time employed as a "literary man" in the *Gazette* office—had been retained to edit the paper. On learning these facts, I took no further interest in the "design" of starting a paper. The *Constitutionalist* went on. Mr. Collard tried by two or three unsuccessful attempts to prevail on me to contribute some articles to the paper. I declined having any thing to do with it. On the second or third week of its publication, I was met in the street by Mr. C., who accosted me thus: "Well, Mr. W., I think we will have you out in print at last; we have found a strange document, which will be published in the next *Con.*, and in which your old paper, the *Pal.* is attacked. You'll have to come forth and defend it." "I'm ready, at any time, to defend it," I replied. This strange document was an appeal to the Proprietors, urging them to give pecuniary assistance to the *Islander*, as the organ of their views, and showing how necessary it was to

support a paper that advocated proprietary claims, whilst the *Palladium* was in opposition, and threatened not only to destroy the *Islander*, but to render the estates of the proprietors valueless. In reply to this extraordinary production, I began to write a communication for the *Constitutionalist*. I sent 8 or 10 pages of the MSS. to Mr. Collard, and they were hastily put in type. On the following day seven or eight pages more were written, and sent to Mr. C. In these concluding pages, I expressed in strong terms my approval of Sir Henry Huntley's suspension of Mr. Pope, as Councillor, and alluded, in no complimentary style, to the spirit of the *Con.* In the evening of the same day, Mr. C. called at my house, and expressed his astonishment at what I had written in favor of Sir Henry and against Mr. Pope, and urged me to strike it out of the letter. I replied, that I would not consent to any omission, and requested the MSS. to be returned if not published entire. It was accordingly returned, accompanied by a note from Mr. C., in which he stated, as a reason for refusing to publish the letter, that the *Con.* was established for the purpose of effecting the removal of Sir Henry, and, of course, no expression of opinion in his favour could be entertained. At once, then, I requested the late Mr. Moody to give my letter a place in the *Morning News*, to which request he promptly acceded. Nothing so thoroughly convinced me of the insincerity of the professions with which the *Con.* was foisted on the public, as this refusal to entertain a communication in reply to an article which had appeared in that paper. The main object to be achieved by the re-production of the Proprietors' memorial on behalf of the *Islander*, was to elicit the support of the Tenantry in favor of the *Con.*; and because I would not tumble myself into the trap so artfully set for me, and give Mr. C. my assistance in carrying out this object, I was thenceforth to be pelted with the same filth which Collard and Pope had put in store for the Governor. Determined not tamely to submit to my traducers, and believing that I might guard the public against much imposition, which I felt satisfied would be practised, in order to gain a triumph at the then approaching elections favourable to the interests of the oligarchy, I availed myself of an offer made to me by Mr. Moody more than three months before the *Constitutionalist* was thought of, to undertake the editorship of his paper. This was in May, 1846. I had no personal acquaintance with Governor Huntley at the time; and whether the *Morning News* was or was not his especial organ, did not concern me in the least. I had nothing whatever to do with him in taking the management of the paper. Mr. Moody agreed to remunerate me for my services, and fulfilled his agreement; but no other "consideration" did I receive. If this was acting the part of a "hireling," I can point to the example of able, learned, and distinguished men in the old world and the new, who have for years conducted periodicals, in the property of which they have no share. In fact, in this respect, I was in no worse position than Mr. Collard: he was employed by Mr. Pope to edit the *Constitutionalist*: I was employed by Mr. Moody to manage the *Morning News*. It is not every printer who can edit his own paper: John Ings is a case in point;—and he who takes the management of a journal, over the property of which he has no control, places himself in a position no less honourable than the commission merchant who undertakes the disposal of your personal property—the steward or agent who oversees and regulates your estate; or, the tailor who fits upon your back a coat from the cloth you have placed in his care.

To shew what little confidence the country put in the outcry raised against me by the *Constitutionalist*, namely, that I had changed my politics, and to secure, if possible, one vote in the Legislature against the oligarchy, I entered the lists against Mr. Wightman—a friend to Compact ascendancy—for the representation

of the Second District of King's County. This District had been represented in the old Parliament by two steady and consistent liberals, and was notorious for its inflexible adherence to liberal principles. I had little or no acquaintance with the Electors, and no powerful supporters from Charlottetown to aid me in the contest. Before asking for a vote, I told the electors I approved of the conduct of Sir Henry Huntley since his suspension of Mr. Pope, and that if returned, I would support his policy in the Legislature. At that election, the late Mr. William Dingwell—the former member, and an unswerving liberal—aided me by his influence at Grand River—and at Morrell I was ably assisted by Mr. Macintosh and Mr. D. McDonald, equally notorious for the inviolability of their political faith. On the third day's polling my name stood at the head of the list, and the wealthy and influential Joseph Wightman flew from the field in disgust, and left the victory to Doctor Jardine and myself. At this time I was nearly three months engaged upon the *Morning News*, and more than another month had passed before I interchanged a word with Sir Henry Huntley. Throughout the whole of this period my only rule of conduct was my own conviction, strengthened by the deceit and misrepresentation resorted to by the *Constitutionalist*, in order to portray Mr. Pope as an injured man and an incorruptible patriot, and all who opposed and exposed his artifices, as renegades, hirelings, and needy adventurers.

Having thus replied to your "review" of my "career as a public journalist," I will now briefly notice your statement—utterly untrue as it is—made on the authority of a rumour which you ascribe to the Charlottetown school of scandal, namely, that I had "recanted my political principles for £60." In what a strange bundle of inconsistencies does this silly lie involve you! You assert that I have disgraced myself and my constituents by stating in the *Examiner* of the 15th May that you had sold yourself to the Compact—(my constituents are, forsooth, so mightily concerned about your public character)—that the House of Assembly ought to investigate the charge, and if proved, that you deserve expulsion—that in making the charge I committed "a mean and contemptible offence," "from which there is no retreat but with dishonour," and that only a "scoundrel" and "scamp" would publish such an accusation against an "opposition member." You have shown that all these opprobrious epithets might, in all fairness, be applied to yourself—that you are a "scoundrel" and "scamp," that you have "disgraced your constituents," and, in the event of your not being able to prove the rumour against me, that you deserve expulsion from the House of Assembly. I do not mean to make use of any such coarse language in reference to you. I can defend myself without descending to vulgarity, and I can assure you that if I believed you to be a "scamp" and "scoundrel," and guilty of an offence "from which there is no retreat but with dishonour," I would consider myself irredeemably disgraced by holding any communication with you. I am, indeed, charitable enough to believe that you laboured under very strong excitement in applying epithets to me which the veriest fishwoman in Billingsgate would delight to copy, and which, by your own shewing, would be equally applicable to yourself; but permit me to observe, that only a dastard and foul slanderer could invent the rumour to which you have referred, and that he who would repeat it in an unexcited frame of mind, without giving proofs of its authenticity, partakes of the odium which must attach to the name of a dastard and foul slanderer.

I must apologise—not to you—but to the readers of the *Examiner*—for occupying many columns of space that might be more usefully employed than in answering your silly charges against myself, and in exposing your shameful betrayal of your constituents. For my own part, so indifferent am I to all you can write against me, that I would as soon republish as not in my own