

CHARLOTTETOWN, JUNE 16, 1856.

THE PROPOSED PUBLIC MEETING RESPECTING ESCHEAT AND OTHER MATTERS.

We have observed recently in some of the Charlottetown papers a notice for a public meeting, to be held on the first Tuesday in July somewhere—for it does not state precisely where—about the 18 mile house on the St. Peter's Road, with the view of censuring the Government and the majority of the House of Assembly, for rejecting the Elective Legislative Council Bill, and turning a cold shoulder on the Escheat Petitions. There are about 70 signatures to the notice of meeting—whether genuine or not, we cannot say, but it is a matter of no consequence which—and we are quite sure that there are not three individuals amongst the batch whose names purport to be annexed to the advertisement, who are capable of forming anything approaching to a correct opinion concerning the very important questions which they profess an anxiety to discuss. Indeed, we do not perceive the name of any one individual who occupies, or ever did occupy, a prominent position in regard to the public affairs of the Colony, or one who is known and appreciated for possessing superior intelligence on any subject. Plain, honest country farmers, they may be, who no doubt understand something about the use of the plough and the barn-yard, but before they enter on the consideration of questions of state policy, we should like to see some proof of their intellectual status or of their political influence. There is too much reason to fear that they are, one and all, the hopeless, unthinking and irreclaimable dupes of that arch-deceiver—William Cooper—cajoled to play over the ridiculous farce which they performed at the head of the East River last summer, with nothing for their pay and pains but the contempt and derision of their fellow Colonists.

We say that Mr. William Cooper is an arch-deceiver. Let us prove it by reference to a few well-known facts. Mr. Cooper has now, for a great many years, kept up the cry of escheat—which he knows as well as we do, and as well as any man in the Colony, is a vain, visionary and delusive cry—he knows that even if it were not so—that if it were a question that could be settled, the tenantry, for whom he professes unbounded sympathy, would not be much advantaged by the settlement—that the fee simple of their farms would not revert to them without their giving to the Crown or the Government a price equal to that which is charged for the public lands,—but Mr. Cooper requires neither argument nor fact to convince him that the "land question," as escheat is called—is settled, as much as it can be settled, for all practical purposes—that on very many occasions, during the reigns of four successive Sovereigns, the royal veto has been firmly and emphatically put upon this question,—that the royal authority has, in fine, declared, that the question of escheat is no longer triable—that the conditions of the original grants have been dispensed with, and the titles rendered irrevocable; and that agitation on the question can only result in mischief to those engaged in it—tend to retard the prosperity of the Colony, endanger its peace, and lessen the value of all property. Mr. Cooper is now trying, with all his fast-fading strength and influence, not only to prevent thrifty and industrious tenants from becoming freeholders, by making honest purchases of the fee simple of their farms,—but to incite the indolent and the litigious, by refusing to pay rent, to resist the claims of the landlords, which they, the tenants, have repeatedly recognised, and to follow up their refusal, by going to law with their landlords. The latter is only a part, and the very worst part, of Mr. Cooper's earlier policy. "Pay no rent," was his cry many years ago; and while many followed his mischievous advice—he, a tenant himself, never acted upon it—while the many suffered grievous losses, deprivation of all their little property, with ruin, despair and the jail, at the end of their career, this mischievous adviser kept himself aloof from the meshes of the law, and in tolerably good favor with his landlord. "Pay no rent," is still his cry, "but resist the claim of your landlord in a court of justice," and so sure as any man may be weak enough to act upon the vicious counsel, so sure will he follow to his own ruin the hundreds who have been similarly led astray.

Nothing frets Mr. Cooper so much as the thought of any of his fellow-colonists becoming freeholders, as he is now himself to some extent. He makes the most violent efforts, for a man of his years, to discourage the people on the Worrell estate from purchasing their occupations. The people on that estate are, however, for the most part, happily indifferent to his entreaties and admonitions. They are satisfied that the Government has a good title to the land, and they are quite content with the terms of sale—certainly land was never offered in this Colony at a lower price than that at which the Government is now selling it. Mr. Cooper's puerile nonsense regarding the fifth section of the Land Purchase Act—under the operation of which the Worrell property was purchased—can leave no impression upon any minds but those which have been sadly led astray by his nonsense, and perhaps on the minds of a few others, who are not only willing to be deceived, but to become deceivers themselves. If the fifth section of the Act alluded to—now so frequently the burthen of his swan-like song—contemplated an investigation into the conditions of the original grants, it would say so in express terms; but the original grants are never mentioned throughout the whole of that or any other section of the Act; and if such an escheat provision had been smuggled into the law, it is beyond all doubt that the Act would have been disallowed; or if, through misconception, allowed to go into operation, it must, of necessity, have become a nullity and a farce, for no proprietor would entertain proposals to sell his land to the Government, if the latter manifested the slightest intention to revive the old story respecting the forfeiture of the original grants.

We have no sympathy or particularly good feeling towards the proprietors as a body—we owe them no compliments or obligations, in a moral, social or political point of view. We have no doubt the class includes some good, estimable private gentlemen, and not a few bad, harsh, extortionate task-masters. But it is only as a class we have to deal with them. They are an "institution" of the country, and its very worst one. That landlordism has inflicted, and does inflict, manifold evils on the whole community, we do not hesitate to affirm—that it checks the industry and enterprise of our people, and consequently retards their progressive improvement and prosperity—our facts

too apparent to be disputed; but the evils of landlordism, as a peculiar institution, are not to be, and cannot be, got rid of in a hurry—certainly not by violent, unlawful and unconstitutional means. If Escheat were practicable, we should not hesitate to pronounce in favour of it, and do our utmost to accomplish it. But as it is not practicable—as it is morally and physically impossible—we conceive it to be worse than useless to keep up the agitation of that question. There is only one way of getting rid of the evils of landlordism, and that is, the gradual extinction of proprietors' claims by purchase. The existing Government has given an unmistakable proof of its disposition in that direction; but if Mr. Cooper and other false guides are permitted to distract the public mind, and to embarrass the Government, landlordism will inevitably become a greater curse than it ever yet has been, because the disposition for the sale and transfer of township lands will not only be set aside, but a resistance to proprietary claims on the part of the tenantry will beget animosity, persecution and oppression, from the proprietors towards the tenantry. We exhort, therefore, the rent-paying people of the Island not to listen to the false and specious arguments of Mr. Cooper or his satellites. Throughout a long political life he has accomplished nothing but ruin for those who have blindly followed him; and he has now for his partners in the game of political fraud and chicanery, the most unscrupulous of the Tory party, who have hitherto been, not only the most inveterate enemies of the tenantry in their conflicts with the proprietors, but the most unrelenting foes to every measure of reform—to every liberal institution, and to civil and religious liberty. Their object is, to overturn a liberal Government, and they fondly hope that that object may be best subserved by using as a cat's-paw what they most cordially hate—COOPER AND ESCHSAT.

It will never be forgotten that in the memorials of the land proprietors, copies of which were published a short time ago, the tenantry of this Island were declared to be perjurers and robbers—that when put into the jury box, they were quite regardless of the sanctity of an oath, if a proprietor was to be injured by its infraction. Who, in the opinion of the tenantry, ought to be the first man in the Assembly to denounce this infamous libel, when it came to the notice of that body? Should not the man who pretends to the most zeal in the cause of the tenant, and who is the oldest member in the House, have risen in defence of the outraged character of his fellow colonists? Should not William Cooper have been man enough to hurl back in the teeth of the slanderer the atrocious calumny upon his own constituents and others? But no, William Cooper was not the man for that occasion—his conduct in the House tended to justify the slander—to show that he believed it—that he considered it well merited by the tenantry—for he not only did not offer any expression of opinion of his own, condemnatory of the slanderous charges against the tenantry of this Island, but when resolutions were proposed condemning those charges, Mr. Cooper slipped out of the House, so that his name should not appear recorded against his friends the proprietors. And on a subsequent day, when an address to the Queen, framed in accordance with those resolutions, representing to Her Majesty, in calm and dignified terms, the evils which the whole community suffer, from the undue influence exercised by the landlords in frustrating legislative enactments, and praying that Her Majesty would interfere on behalf of her subjects in this Island, to protect them from the rapacity of the land-ocracy—when this address was before the House, the man who should be the first to support was the readiest to oppose it,—yes, Mr. Cooper spoke and voted against the address, with some half dozen of the Tory party—Messrs. McIntosh and Laird deserting him in the division, although they went with him on everything else where an opposition could be shown to the Government.

Mr. Cooper may print as much nonsense as he please—or, rather, as printers will be silly enough to print for him—and ring the changes on those favorite phrases of his, "usurpers and robbers," "robbers and usurpers;" but whilst he speaks and votes in the Assembly to protect the interests and the reputation of those very same "usurpers and robbers," his trash and rhodomontade in the newspapers must be considered only a fit deposit for the rubbish heap. Let the tenantry ask him why he voted against the address to the Queen, and shirked the vote on the resolutions? The address we shall print in our next issue, and the tenantry will see whether it is one that ought to be rejected by William Cooper.

THE BENEFICENT FERRYMAN IN THE MESHES OF THE LAW.

SOME writers in the *Islander* recently denied, in vehement language, the right of the Executive Government to frame regulations for the management of the Minchin's Point Wharf. Mr. Bourke evidently thought that no such right could be exercised, for he caused his non-paying three-penny passengers to be landed at the wharf, and refused to pay the shilling tax and the two shillings and six-pence wharfage, levied by direction of the Government. For this money he was sued before the Mayor's Court on two occasions last week, and judgment on both given against him. Mr. Bourke, we understand, has appealed one of the cases to the higher Court, but he will find that in doing so, he has embarked in a very expensive business, for it is impossible to interpret the law in any other way than the Mayor's Court has done, and the money he must pay, no matter whether it comes out of the pockets of his secret subscribers or out of his own.

We understand that very many of those persons who take advantage of Mr. Bourke's folly and obstinacy to save themselves a trip over the ferry, are the very persons who were loudest in their complaints against Mr. Bourke for his neglect of the ferry last summer, and petitioned the Government at that time against him. We only wonder that the Boat does not sink in carrying such a load of meanness and ingratitude.

A SQUIB FROM A CANADIAN POP-GUN.

WE notice in the last *Islander* a communication signed "A Loyalist," alleged to have been printed in, and taken from a paper called the "Catholic Citizen," published at Toronto, of the existence of which paper we have never heard, nor, after repeated enquiries, can we find out that any Catholic in this place has ever heard of it either. The only influential Catholic journal published in Canada is the "True Witness." But it is no matter whether the "Citizen" is a "myth" or not; if it does exist, it is evident it must be a very obscure and badly conducted publication, otherwise it would not give space to the unmeaning and silly abuse of "A Loyalist." This writer attacks our esteemed Lieut. Governor, and caricatures and vilifies several members of the House of Assembly, whom

project of forcing slavery into Kansas; of their regard for the Constitution and the Country; of their extension; of its being a merely local institution with which the General Government may not and shall not meddle; of the right of every Slave State to be protected in the enjoyment of this and every other merely local institution they may establish, not incompatible with the Constitution; and of our unalterable determination to stand by that great charter of our Liberties and the liberty of speech which it guarantees, and never to yield to Southern fanatics or Northern demagogues, one foot of territory north of 36 30 to the blighting curse of Slavery.

It is the right of freemen boldly to express these sentiments here, as well as elsewhere: I tell them in all sincerity that the time has arrived when they must do so, courteously but fearlessly, on all proper occasions and in all proper places, or we shall all, and speedily too, become as completely the slaves of the Slave-power as are their plantation chattels; or what is far more degrading, we shall become the same pliant, cringing and sycophantic instruments of the Slave-ocracy, as are the Northern doughfaces, who are made by the present Administration to discourse just such music as their Southern masters may be pleased to dictate for the time being.

It must not be forgotten that I am writing against the Institution of Slavery and its demoralizing and debasing tendencies; and not against the many honest, honorable, intelligent and high-minded gentlemen and pure Christians, who, being the aristocracy of the institution, are the inheritors of all the good it dispenses and the recipients of its profits, while its baneful influences are the legitimate inheritance of the masses among whom it exists, producing everywhere the same fruits of violence, bloodshed and a disregard of law and order, and the peaceful habits and practices of civilization. Aside from the favored few in the slave State, nineteen-twentieths of their population carry arms, bowie-knives, pistols and sword canes? And against whom are they thus armed? Against a common enemy or against their slaves. By no means; but against each other. And this solitary fact and the consequences which naturally flow from it is conclusive as regards the demoralizing tendencies of an Institution, which the present Administration, acting under the dictation of the Slave power and aided by unscrupulous politicians of the North, are endeavoring to force upon the free people and free soil of Kansas. To this end the entire influence and patronage of the Government—its civil, military and moral power—are all directed; and alongside of these, prominent and threatening, stands the *Bullying* of the Slave-ocracy, boasting pointing to the bowie-knife, the pistol and the bludgeon, and impudently taunting the entire North with cowardice?

I cannot blame them for their love of power and their desire to extend it; I do not quarrel with their ruder civilization, the natural offspring of their peculiar Institution; and I do not wonder at their believing that the doughfaces of the North, who so meekly do their behests, are but a type of our whole people, and that we can be bullied, whipped and "kicked" into any course of policy which they may please to dictate to us. But I do wonder that intelligent men among them presume to talk of their devotion to the Constitution, when with a unanimity unexampled in the history of the North, their united representation in Congress justify by their votes an open disregard of that plainest and all-important provision of the Constitution, which was intended to secure to the members of both Houses of Congress entire immunity for words spoken in debate.

Will the north—the free and educated, and civilized, and peace loving North—tamely submit to the impudence and the bullying of the slave-power? This is the question which I desire to put directly to every law-abiding and Union-loving freeman of the North. I would be the first to punish those who wish to withhold from our Southern brethren one jot or tittle of the protection to which the Institution of slavery is constitutionally entitled in the localities where it exists; but I would have the entire North awaken to the attempt of the slave-power, to extend the Institution into Free Territory, and the means resorted to, to accomplish that nefarious purpose. I would have them feel that the time for action has arrived; and that not only must that action be prompt and efficient, if we would protect ourselves from the encroachments of Slavery, but that if we tamely submit to the blustering and bullying resorted to here, in the Capitol of the Nation, we shall very soon be taught that Liberty of Speech is a boon which we hold subject to the caprices of the Slave power, and to indulge in it equally with themselves, may at any time be visited by the discretionary application of the pistol and the bludgeon.

Of the purposes of the Slave power and its Northern allies in the coming Presidential Election, there is no longer any doubt. It is openly proclaimed by the Democratic Press from Maine to Texas; and only this day, the Government organ published in this city, boldly declares, that "whatever other questions may enter into the coming contest, THE SLAVERY ISSUE, as included in the Kansas measure, must and will take precedence. In comparison with it, all other questions are of minor importance." And in allusion to Mr. Buchanan's past Federalism and the suspicion only, that it may cause him to prefer his country and the rights of freedom to mere party, it adds—"they want no man whose records is not thoroughly Democratic." These declarations are significant; and richly will the people of the free North have merited the outrages and contumely which are daily heaped upon them by men immeasurably their inferiors in all that constitutes manhood and civilization, if they hesitate to vindicate their right to freedom of speech, or falter in their determination to drive back into the fens and marshes where it properly belongs, the institution which Washington and Jefferson and Madison alike condemned, but of which Pierce and Douglas and the Doughfaces of the North, acting under the lash of the Slave power, have become the willing propagandists.

In my comments upon the recent outrage in the Senate, I have intentionally kept out of view both Mr. Sumner and Mr. Brooks,—looking at it solely as an insult to the country, a trampling upon the Constitution, and an outrage upon the sanctity of the Senate Chamber, which merited death on the spot from any patriot present who was in a position to inflict the punishment. Neither the character of the party assailed, nor that of his assailant, which was heretofore without spot or blemish, nor the nature of the provocation, have any weight with me in writing this letter. The Constitution has been trampled upon, a Senator has been assailed in the Senate Chamber for words spoken in debate, the country has been disgraced, and the representatives of the slave-power in the House of Representatives have, with two honorable exceptions, justified the outrage—and for these wrongs I invoke the spirit of freedom at the North, to demand redress. It is due to Mr. Sumner, however, to say, as a fact familiar to all who are accustomed to read the debates in the Senate, that in each and every of the last five sessions of Congress, Messrs. Seward, Hale and Sumner have received at the hands of Senators from the slave States, and the pliant tools of the North, ten times—nay, a hundred times—the abuse, which, in his incomparable speech, he so scathingly hurled back upon his assailants.

All this has heretofore been submitted to in silence; and in my judgment, too long submitted to—and now when forbearance ceases to be a virtue, and the Member for Massachusetts, in vindication of his manhood and in the exercise of his privilege, retorts upon his assailants a title only of the abuse they have so long and so unsparingly heaped upon him and his friends, he is told that his "audacity" is absolutely incomprehensible, and his purpose unaccountable! Alike astonished that the man of peace, and the meek, modest and retiring scholar, should dare to repel any attack whatever, and cowed and crushed by its scathing severity. Mr. Douglas exclaims, under the smart of the wounds inflicted—"What does the Senator mean by this attack upon the majority of this body? What, I ask, does the Senator mean?—What does he want us to do? We already resolve to know him socially. Does he want us to kick him? I ask again—Does he want us to kick him?" Mr. Mason, of Virginia, follows in a similar vein; and Mr. Brooks, of South Carolina, a member of the House of Representatives, resorts to the bludgeon, and assails him in his seat in the Senate Chamber of the United States.

I am not prepared to defend the language used by Mr. Sumner, except that it was retaliatory. The wrong lies at the door of those who commenced the use of these personalities, and the miserable plea that because the person thus violating the decorum of parliamentary rules was willing to back his language by the duel, he was justified in his assaults; while his adversary, if not thus willing to follow up his retort, is bound to submit in silence. Such, I say, is the plea of the slave-power in the defence of their attacks, and in condemnation of Sumner's resorting to the same weapon of defence. They proclaim everywhere that their attacks upon the non-combatants of the North are justifiable, because those making them are willing to fight; and that unless the assailed Senator will adopt the law of the slave-power thus manufactured for him,

he must submit in silence or be beaten to death with bludgeons, even in the Senate Chamber of the Nation! Have we no remedy for this? Are there not among us—can there not be found in the great North, men of qualifications for both the Senate and the House of Representatives, who possess also the necessary moral daring and physical courage, to meet and put down this disgusting bullying, either with pistol or with bludgeon, as circumstances may require? If there be such, let them be sent here as your Representatives, until the South are taught, after their own fashion, that there not only is a North, but that it is unalterably determined to assert all its rights and maintain all its privileges, at the same time that it will in good faith, at all times and in all places, promptly discharge all its duties to the Union and hold sacred the rights of any section of country, (whether sectional, local, or national,) under that Constitution to which the allegiance of all is equally due.

The time for submission has passed, and that for action presses forcibly upon us. Our opponents have made and present to us, the one great issue, of extension of Slavery into Territory now Free; it is our duty to meet it; and that every freeman in the land may understand this great issue, and at the same time know precisely why a Senator of Massachusetts has been beaten in the Senate Chamber of the Union, and almost killed, by this arrogant and overbearing Slave power, let Mr. Sumner's great and eloquent speech be printed by hundreds of thousands and scattered broadcast through the entire North. Let it be read at our public meetings; let it be proclaimed from the house tops, and from the corners of our streets; and if needs be, let it be preached from our pulpits, and explained in our lecture rooms. Let the people be thus taught what this Slave-power is, and the character of the exposure which was deemed to have merited the bludgeon, and which the supporters of the Administration in the House of Representatives unanimously sustain and justify.

MR. SUMNER'S OWN STATEMENT.

WASHINGTON, May 26.—The House Committee of Investigation waited on Mr. Sumner to-day, and took his testimony with regard to the assault. He was also cross-examined. He was in bed during the examination, and has set up but little since the assault. He is still very weak, and the physicians counsel him not to attempt to go out of the house during this week.

The following is the statement of Mr. Sumner under oath, in regard to the assault upon him by Mr. Brooks:—"I attended the Senate as usual on Thursday, the 22d day of May. After some formal business, a message was received from the House of Representatives, announcing the death of a member of that body from Missouri. This was followed by a brief tribute to the deceased from Mr. Geyer of Missouri, when, according to usage and out of respect to the deceased, the Senate adjourned at once. Instead of leaving the Senate Chamber with the rest of the Senators on the adjournment, I continued in my seat, occupied with my pen, and while thus intent, in order to be in season for the mail, which was soon to close, I promptly and briefly excused myself for the reason that I was much engaged. When the last of those persons left me, I drew my arm chair close to my desk, and with my legs under the desk, continued writing. My attention at this time was so entirely drawn from all other subjects, that although there must have been many persons in the Senate, I saw nobody. While thus intent, with my head bent over my writing desk, I was addressed by a person who approached the front of my desk, so entirely unobserved that I was not aware of his presence until I heard my name pronounced. As I looked up, with pen in hand, I saw a tall man, whose countenance was not familiar, standing directly over me, and at the same moment caught these words:—"I have read your speech twice over carefully; it is a libel on South Carolina and Mr. Butler, who is a relative of mine." While these words were still passing from his lips, he commenced a succession of blows with a heavy cane on my bare head, by the first of which I was stunned so as to lose my sight. I saw no longer my assailant, nor any other person or object in the room. What I did afterwards was done almost unconsciously, acting under the instinct of self-defence. With head already bent down, I rose from my seat, wrenched up my desk, which was screwed to the floor, and then pressing forward, while my assailant continued his blows. I had no other consciousness until I found myself ten feet forward in front of my desk, lying on the floor of the Senate, with my bleeding head supported on the knee of a gentleman, whom I soon recognised by voice and manner as Mr. Morgan of New York. Other persons there were about me, offering me friendly assistance, but I did not recognise any of them. Others there were at a distance, looking on and offering no assistance, of whom I recognized only Mr. Douglas of Illinois, Mr. Toombs of Georgia, and I thought also my assailant, standing between them. I was helped from the floor and conducted into the lobby of the Senate, where I was placed upon a sofa. Of those who helped me here I have no recollection. As I entered the lobby I recognised no one else until I felt a friendly grasp of the hand, which seemed to come from Mr. Campbell of Ohio. I have a vague impression that Mr. Bright, President of the Senate, spoke to me while I was on the floor in the Senate or in the lobby. I make this statement in answer to the interrogatory of the committee, and offer it as presenting completely all my recollections of the assault and of the attending circumstances, whether immediately before or immediately after. I desire to add, that besides the words which I have given, as uttered by my assailant, I have an indistinct recollection of the words "old man," but these are so enveloped in the mist which ensued from the first blow that I am not sure whether they were uttered or not."

On the cross-examination of Mr. Sumner, he stated that he was entirely without arms of any kind, and he had no notice or warning of any kind, direct or indirect, of this assault. In answer to a cross-question, Mr. Sumner replied that what he had said of Mr. Butler was strictly responsive to Mr. Butler's speeches, and according to the usages of parliamentary debate.

It is now said the President has actually dismissed Mr. Crampton, notwithstanding the remonstrances of South Carolina and other weak Southern sisters. Observe that this small arm or bayonet of the Rubicon was not crossed till after the news came from England by the Baltic, that the British lion was in a very pacific mood and quite unexcited about the doings of Walker. Something must be done for Cincinnati, some war or rumor of war must be got up as an offset to the ugly realities and responsibilities of Kansas, and so he has gone and done it. The act, however it may tell on his nomination, will tell very little on his election, which is getting to be a very different question.

THE FLORIDA INDIANS.—A Key West letter of May 25, says:—"The Indians were continuing their massacres almost with impunity. A train guarded by six soldiers had been attacked and taken, and the guard killed. Two children of D. Bradley, living 28 miles north of Tampa, were killed by the Indians on the 14th.

A train carrying provisions to the State troops was attacked by the Indians on the 16th, twelve miles from Tampa, at Simmons Hammock, and two men named Roach and Stallings, and a boy, son of Stallings, killed. Two men and a negro escaped and gave the alarm. The volunteers were soon on their trail and drove the Indians into a hammock, which at last accounts they were about to attack.

GREAT WALKING FEAT.—At Newmarket, England, on the 1st inst., a pedestrian named Spooner, walked 20 miles in 2 hours and 58 minutes. This is rather fast travelling.

A Bill has been introduced into the Congress of the United States to prevent Civil War and restore peace in Kansas.