

## COMMUNICATIONS.

To the Editor of the British American.

"Can such things be  
And overcome us like a summer cloud,  
Without our special wonder."

SHAKESPEARE.

Sra.—Did you ever see a little urchin or an idiot with a loaded pistol in his hand? If you have, you might remark that no person wishes to meddle with him: fearful of an injury from the willfulness or ignorance of the otherwise insignificant beings. Just so it is with the House of Assembly, armed with the Speaker's writ, and the sergeant at arms to execute it; no one dares to say both to single g—s of the whole flock. Now, however, they are deprived of the power they seem inclined to yield so frequently, and to such ridiculous purposes, we may say what we think of them without being dragged before a tribunal which should be the most august in the land; but in the hands of the present house is truly farcical. Not Sir, that I am averse to their having this power, if they would but use it discreetly; but it is too much of a good thing, when a man is brought to the bar for saying as a certain law officer did, famous for the purity and delicacy of his invective, that Jack Rat's patriotism and disinterestedness were all——!!! Having no professional bronze and some little regard for decency, I forbear to fill up the blank, leaving your readers to do so as they please. We will, Mr. Editor, have in a future letter, some discussion on the extent of the privileges of Colonial Parliaments. In the meantime I wish some information respecting the story in circulation, of the Civil List Bill being altered after passing the Lower House, and after having been read in Council.

It is said that the Council seeing that it was so framed, that they could not in its (then) present state, pass it—informed the Speaker of the circumstance, who took the bill away and returned it altered as suggested: the whole transaction having been so quietly performed, that the opposers of the bill in the lower house knew nothing of the matter until they were informed of it by a member of the council.—Can this be true? and yet there must be something in it, for I heard a legal gen. say, and that in no very mild language, "That if it were true, that the Speaker of the house had knowingly suffered an engrossed bill to be altered, (without the consent of the house,) after it had passed the house. He deserves to be degraded, and to lose his seat, and that he would have immediately moved for his expulsion. Now an expression of this kind coming from such a quarter, and being publicly made, requires some investigation. I should hope for the Speaker's sake that we are misinformed for I cannot think that the head of a Legislative body would be guilty of an act bordering so nearly on the crime of forgery, and involving in its consequences, moral if not perhaps, legal perjury.

It is impossible that the Speaker of the Commons house of Parliament, [as he styled himself on Saturday.] could so far forget his dignity as to condescend to receive that clandestinely, which if offered openly, would be his duty to reject. I make for the present no comments on this strange tale, trusting that some of your numerous readers will give the public an unvarnished edition of this story in a future number.

I am, Yours, &c. &c.

CRITO.

## CLUB ROOM, April 3.

This morning the Club met,—the President was received with every demonstration of joy by the Members, whom he addressed previous to taking the chair, as follows:—

GENTLEMEN.—Flattered as I am by the enthusiastic manner in which my return to you has been received, I cannot but regret the untoward events that have prevented our earlier meeting,—and I am sure there is not a member of this august body who would not blush to own, that his sense of duty was so blunted as not to feel equal disappointment. (Hear, hear!) Gentlemen, at a period when business of vital importance to this body and the public, is neglected, and the time frittered away by those we pay so well, in idle discussions on privileges that concern them not: and in seeking little posts that disgrace them: when instead of redeeming their pledges and lightening the burdens on their employers, they spend their time in any thing but their duty,—often in reading, [not their bibles, as a worthy author recommends,] but such works as Shakespear, Lord Chesterfield, &c. &c. from which some of them quote largely: I say it must, and I hope is, a matter of regret to all of you, that the late storms prevented my return to town, to the discharge of the high trust you have reposed in me; and that the neglect of 'Tommy Tinker' in not repairing the stovepipe as ordered, should have caused us so much inconvenience.—[Cries of discharge him.] Gentlemen, I should feel happy to attend to your suggestions, but like the major's lunatics, he is tinker for the present year, and claims to be an officer, as well as our royal printer. Gentlemen, I would recommend you to appoint a reporter, as some of our proceedings have got into the public papers, in their true shape, and though this is very unpleasant, and is also a breach of privilege, (in proof of which various precedents can be found;) and though we are an Inquisitorial body, and keep closed doors, yet I would recommend that no notice be publicly taken of such scandalous blackguard productions.

Plutus and the Captain both rose together. The latter gave way when the former said,—that as to the appointment of an officer who could report speeches for them, it might be very proper for aught he knew, and though it would make 'little odds to him,' as he expected soon to be raised to the other house; yet for his part he thought that an additional 5*l.* each should first be given to members who lived at a distance, and had to break the roads; as he and his gallant colleague the Major often had, and then he feared there would not be sufficient funds to pay such an officer.

The Major said, that he fully agreed with his lion. colleague, that he had, he

hoped, as anxious a wish for the benefit of the country as any one; and though it had been said that he could not take pay any more than his friend Plutus, as both had pledged themselves *not to do so*; and his friend had gone so far as to say he would apply his share to erect a building for the use of the club; yet, he hoped they would always consult their dignity, and not be bound by such old-fashioned doctrines as consistency and independence. He therefore thought that country members should have this additional 5*l.* each, for his part his constant attendance had so injured his wardrobe, that he had to appear there in a cloak, and a borrowed pair of snow-boots, at which some members had sneered.

Mr. Bumble Bée cleared his thorax with a sonorous a-hem! and said that he presumed the gallant Major referred to him in speaking of consistency and independence. True it was, he had said he would not take pay, but it should be recollected that he was then a candidate; and Mr. President, 'I do not think that it is a mortal sin to break election promises.' He would ask his colleague, would he take pay? To this his colleague replied, I will tell the learned gentleman I will vote against it, as I am an 'idler when the club is not sitting,' but voted, 'I will put it in my pocket Sir.' This last expression was accompanied with an emphatic and graceful slap on the pocket of his nether garment, which returned a sound that to our unpractised ears, was such as might have been expected, had they been made on Mr. Pepper's plan.

The Captain said that the club were well aware that he could not express his opinions as he wished, without memorandums; and unfortunately he had lost his speech on this subject with various other documents, amongst which was a plan of emigration to Van Diemens Land, a plan to render the bodies of proprietors available when we have appropriated their lands by a contract with surgeons' hall, and a calculation of expences in town, by which he could prove that a member might 'take his ease at his inn and live clear, and like a gentleman,' for the sum 10*l.* 15*s.* 1*d.*; but as he had not the document he would not take up their time any longer.

Mr. Ap Shenkin said, that as the Captain looked hard at him, he supposed it meant that he should also get notes: but he could tell that gen. that though he often paused and spluttered a little, it originated from two causes, the latter was national and the former arose from endeavoring to recollect the text from Shakespear, and long legged words of Philosophy, with which the Doctor so often enlightened them. He could tell them that he always wished to support the dignity and consistency of this club, that he always endeavored to lead other members of this body into the measures that he liked;