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RIBBONISM IN NEWFOUNDLAND—ATROCIOUS VILLAINY.

(From the Public Ledger, of May 22.)

We briefly adverted in our last to the brutal assault and mutilation of the person of Mr. HERMAN LOTT (overseer in the Public Ledger office,) in the high road between Harbour Grace and Carbonear, at noon day, on Friday, the 15th instant; and we now proceed to develop the history of the villainous transaction from its first inception to its bloody consummation; preferring to lay before our readers the several depositions taken before the police magistrates, as more satisfactorily illustrating the whole business.

It will be remembered that in February last we gave some brief account of the seizure of Mr. LOTT in a by-street, at night, and of his forcible conveyance to some unknown house, where he was, under circumstances of great intimidation, interrogated upon various matters connected with his employer's affairs. Depositions were taken before the magistrates relative to this mysterious business, but it was deemed prudent, and necessary to the ends of justice, to withhold the particulars of it from the public, until it should have undergone the most minute investigation; but the time is now arrived when it becomes a duty to expose the whole matter.

The following are the facts and circumstances deposed by Mr. LOTT:—

"The following statement of a circumstance that occurred on the night of the Twentieth of February, 1840, which, however incredible and mysterious it may appear, is nevertheless a true and faithful account of the whole affair:—

"On Thursday night, between the hours of Ten and Eleven o'clock, I left the Public Ledger printing office for the purpose of taking a short walk, there being very little business then in hand.—On my return home about Eleven o'clock, as I was turning the corner at the head of Queen Street, adjoining the dwelling-house of Mr. Daniel Hennessey, a voice hailed me, and called "LOTT!" Hearing myself named in such a familiar manner, and thinking it was some of the young men of Mr. Winton's establishment, I immediately responded "Yes," and waited to see who it was that had thus called me. Presently a man approached me from the side of the road opposite Mr. D. Hennessey's, and on coming up to me spoke to me in the following manner—"Come back with me as far as the Orphan Asylum School, for young Winton is up there very tipsy, and will not come home!" I just gave a look down, thinking I should see some one belonging to the house. Not knowing the person who told me this tale, I hesitated for a moment or two, when he assured me that unless I went up and brought him home some "hurt" might happen him.—I returned with him, and we had not proceeded many steps when we were joined by another, who said "Are you going up again?" to which the other answered "Yes."—Proceeding up the Theatre hill, and passing the house lately occupied by Mr. Boyd, along the lane behind the house now occupied by Mr. Thomas Williams, and on coming to the cross roads, immediately behind the house lately occupied by Mr. Beyers, I was suddenly pinioned by one of the men tying my arms at the elbows, behind my back, at the same time the other person took my handkerchief out of my jacket pocket and tightly bandaged my eyes. While this was enacting, I endeavoured to disengage myself, and asked them "Why are you serving me in this manner—I am sure I did nothing to you."—"Hold your tongue and be quiet—follow us and no harm shall happen to you.—But if you don't be quiet it will be worse for you—so now come along." Saying which he turned me round twice, after which the two men led me along at rather a quick pace, in what direction I am unable to tell. As nearly as I can recollect, I was walking in this manner for about a quarter of an hour, and towards the end through deep snow;—not a word was spoken either by the men or myself during our progress, until we came to some steps, when I was told to "lift," and on so doing went up two or three steps; a knock was made at the door by one of my conductors, and it appeared as if it opened with the force of the knock, for we did not wait a minute after ascending the steps. I was then taken into a room, the door of which was already open, for I heard it shut after I was in. Being in the room I was left as I fancied with only one person for a few minutes, (still blindfolded) when he was relieved by another, who shortly afterward removed the handkerchief from my eyes, but still kept my arms bound. When the handkerchief was removed, I discovered I was in a small room, closely hung with some kind of white sheeting or calico—even the ceiling was likewise covered. At a small table near a fireplace on the bare hearth (on which there was wood burning) were seated two individuals, completely disguised in black, having gowns similar to those worn by ministers; their heads and faces were also covered with a kind of close black skull cap, merely leaving apertures for the eyes and mouth,—on the table before them were pens, ink, and paper. Presently one of them began to question me nearly as follows, the other preparing to note down what passed, while the man who removed the handker-

chief from my eyes still remained behind me, also disguised in face, but not in clothing. The first question put was,—

"What is your name, sir?—Herman Lott.
"What persuasion are you?—A Protestant.
"Was not your father a Catholic and turned Protestant?—No. I should like to know what reason—

"You are to ask no questions.
"What occupation do you hold in Mr. Winton's office, a compositor, or pressman, or what?—A compositor.
"Are you not the overseer of Mr. Winton's office?—Yes.
"How long have you been so?—Since last Spring.

"Then you must be in Mr. Winton's confidence?—That I cannot take upon myself to say whether I am or not—I might be.

"Well, you are perfectly acquainted with everything that transpires in the printing office, of course?—Yes, but a printing-office is a place of secrecy, and I am bound to keep secret all that happens there.

"You must answer every question that is put to you here in a satisfactory manner, and that without equivocation.—Were there not 350 copies of the "Public Ledger" privately struck off, and sent to England, containing the libel on Judge Bourne?—No.

"That libel was in type, was it not?—You know, I dare say, that a copy of the "Ledger" was taken from the office in an improper manner, it having been pulled before the corrections were made by Mr. Winton in the first proof sheet.

"Is that really the case?—Yes.
"And what became of the copy of the Ledger?—I do not know; perhaps you know better than me.

"No impertinence here, sir.
"What gentlemen are in the habit of visiting Mr. Winton's house on the nights previous to the day of publication?—I know not. On those nights my business is in the printing-office, and not in the parlour.—It is impossible for me to know what gentlemen may be in the dwelling house on those nights.

"Speak truly, and be not afraid. Are not Mr. Hogsett, Mr. Boyd, Dr. Kielly, Mr. Brown, and Father Ivers, when he was here, in the constant habit of visiting Mr. Winton?—I would not know Father Ivers were I to see him; neither do I know what Mr. Brown you mean.

"Father Brown?—I do not know him.
"Well, as regards the others?—I have told you I do not know him.
"You do know, and therefore answer without equivocation.—I cannot answer, unless by denying all knowledge of the matter.

"Did not Mr. Winton secretly shelter Dr. Kielly in his house at the time that the officers of the House of Assembly were in search of him?—I did not see Dr. Kielly, and I cannot say whether he was in the house or not.

"Were you in the house at the time Mr. Beck, the sergeant-at-arms, called?—No.
"Are you not aware that Dr. Kielly left Mr. Winton's house that night about 12 or 1 o'clock, accompanied by some of Mr. Winton's establishment, and went to his cottage at River head. It was on a Saturday night—recollect yourself?—No. I do not know anything of the kind.

"Is there not a secret way from Mr. Winton's house into Mr. Hogsett's?—No. At the time that some carpenters were employed about the premises a board was knocked down, which opened a communication between the two yards, through which Mr. Hogsett's domestics would sometimes come for water.

"And there is no secret doorway?—No.
"What is the circulation of the Public Ledger?—Something under []
"That won't do; you must answer truly all questions put to you here.

"What complement is pressed off—you must be able to answer that.—[]

"Do you recollect what was the number of the petitions of the Merchants and Traders secretly printed at your office and sent to England?—I do not know what became of them after they left the office, neither do I recollect what number was struck off. I am not aware that it was done secretly.

"Did not you yourself press them off—recollect and answer fairly?—After a little hesitation, I answered "Yes."

"You say you struck them off, and yet you say you do not know what was the number printed—that is strange?—No I do not recollect.

"Does Mr. Winton keep fire-arms in his house?—I believe he has some.

"Are they not kept loaded?—I do not know.
"Does Mr. Winton, do you know, carry fire-arms, pistols, for instance, about his person?—I am not in the habit of searching my master's pockets, therefore I cannot say whether he does or not.

"You have been told before that you are to give no impertinent answers. Should it be requisite or necessary you will be kept here until it pleases us to let you free—search may be made for you—it will be fruitless.—Upon hearing this, I immediately told him that this was a busy night

with us—that long before this I was required in the Printing-office, that I would incur the displeasure of my master, and what would I be able to say in my defence? that I was still an apprentice, that I considered the manner in which I had been betrayed and brought before them was improper. That questions had been put to me which, although I had answered them, still I thought that I ought not to have done so without knowing for what purpose this examination was intended—that I knew nothing of a political nature other than what appeared in the paper. I was stopped from proceeding further, by the person who had been interrogating me all through, and who appeared to pay little attention to what I said. He again commenced—

"Who communicates with the Editor of the Public Ledger?—I do not exactly understand you.

"Are communications for the Paper sent to the Printing-office, in the handwriting of the person who sends them, or in Mr. Winton's writing?—I cannot say whether they are in the handwriting of the person who sends them or not, but they are not in the handwriting of Mr. Winton.

"Are you ever able to recognise the handwriting as being that of any person you know?—No.

"Do you know where you are?—No.

"Have you any idea?—No; I wish I had.
"Why?—Because then I should know by whose authority I am questioned, and for what reason.

"Then you will not know.

"A pause ensued here for about ten minutes, and although sometimes agitated when I thought of the situation in which I was placed, I took every opportunity to observe what I could, for the purpose of identification; but everything was disguised with the exception of the door, which was on my right hand; it was a common made door, not painted, with a japanned lock, and a brass ring handle, and above the lock was a sliding wooden bolt. This was all that I was able to make out, and I should know the door again inside.

"I was again addressed by being told that I would be conducted out—that I was not to divulge one word of what had transpired—not to fear my master, he could not hurt me—he (my master) had asserted that the Irish emigrants were "refugee ribbonmen," and Irishmen who had "left their country for their country's good," but that he and others like him, would perhaps find out that there was a RIBBON SOCIETY in this country equally as terrible as ever it was in Ireland, and that he (Mr. Winton) would soon find his house too hot for him.—I was also asked if Mr. Winton was not in the habit of receiving communications from the Governor—if I knew Governor Prescott's writing? To which I answered in the negative. The person who had thus examined me then waved his hand, at the same time he stood up and said to me in an emphatic tone, nearly the following words:—"Remember that you dare not divulge one word of what has transpired here this night; what has been done cannot injure you:—keep silence—or perhaps an unseen and unknown hand will be in your way.—We are done with you.

"The person who had been standing behind me then bound my eyes as before—a bell was rung (which bell I had not seen during the night, although it seemed as if it was in the room,) the door was opened and I was led out, going over two or three steps as when I had entered, conducted by two men—the second joining after I had gone over the steps.—On our return, I was led through deep snow and some water, and after about fifteen minutes walking we suddenly stopped. The rope or cord which bound my arms was suddenly cut or untied, but I was still held by one who violently turned me round twice so violently that the last time staggered me, and I fell up against a fence. I immediately arose and tore the handkerchief from my eyes, which was tied so very tight, even to hurt me, I could not do very quickly. I heard retreating footsteps, but in what direction I could not say. I found myself in the Lane between Mr. D. Hennessey's and Constable McLellan's, and then made the best of my way home.

"The foregoing is a true and faithful account of what happened to me on Thursday night and Friday morning, the thirteenth and fourteenth February, between the hours of 11 and 2 o'clock, and to which I am fully prepared to make affidavit.

"HERMAN P. C. LOTT."

(Sworn before me at St. John's, Newfoundland, the fifteenth day of February, 1840.)

(Signed) P. W. CARTER, J. P.

Central District, }
St. John's to wit. }

Herman P. C. Lott further maketh oath and saith, that he hath just now been in company with Mr. Finlay, the high constable, to inspect a certain house situate on the circular road near this town, upon suspicion that the same is the house which deponent was carried to by force on the night of Thursday the 13th inst., as stated in his former deposition; and this deponent saith that he does believe that the same is the house to which he was so taken by force, but that the persons inside refused admission to him and the said high constable, so that depo-

nent could not satisfy his mind as to the identity of the said house, and therefore prays the protection of the law.

HERMAN P. C. LOTT.

Sworn before us this }
17th February 1840. }
P. W. CARTER, J. P.
CHARLES SIMMS, J. P.

Central District, }
St. John's to wit, }
The Deposition of Henry Winton, of St. John's, Proprietor and Editor of the Public Ledger newspaper, who states that on Thursday night the 13th instant, February, an apprentice of deponent, Herman Lott, being absent at a very late hour, contrary to his usual habits, deponent became somewhat alarmed, and apprehended that some disastrous circumstance had occurred. Deponent therefore, about half-past two in the morning, sent two of his other apprentices in quest of said Herman Lott; that shortly after they had gone out deponent heard a violent ringing of the hall bell, and on descending to open the door he found the said Herman Lott at the door; that upon entering the house he had an extremely pale and frightened appearance—and upon being questioned where he had been at so late an hour, he replied, that he could not tell where he had been. Deponent at first thought he had been drinking, and charged him with having done so, which he denied. Deponent observed to him that he was in a very excited state, and again questioned him as to where he had been. Mr. Lott then in a hurried manner stated that he had been pinioned and blindfolded, and taken to some house where certain questions had been put to him by persons disguised with masks and otherwise. That deponent became perfectly satisfied that he had been mistaken as to the cause of the young man's excitement, and that he gave him two glasses of wine, which appeared to restore him. And deponent having seen the deposition which has been sworn to in this matter, declares that it perfectly agrees with the statement made by the young man when first questioned respecting it. That after Mr. Lott had retired to bed, deponent observed that his hat had been left on a table in the kitchen, his handkerchief being in it; that he had the curiosity to take said handkerchief out of the hat, when he observed that instead of its being in a rumpled state, as a pocket handkerchief worn in the pocket usually is, it was folded cornerwise, as if it had been used as a bandage, the corners having the appearance of having been tightly tied. That Mr. Lott is a sober, steady, well-conducted young man, and in every way, so far as deponent has reason to think, entitled to implicit credit.

HENRY WINTON.

Sworn before me this }
21st February, 1840. }
P. W. CARTER, J. P.

In consequence of the deposition of Mr. LOTT as to his belief, arising from various circumstances, that the house of one DELANEY, situated about half a mile out of town, was that to which he had been blindfolded and led, the house was examined, but there was no satisfactory evidence that the suspicions were correct. But DELANEY is one of the doorkeepers of the House of Assembly, and forthwith the Assembly, affecting to be indignant that the dwelling-house of one of its servants should be searched, even by the officers of the Peace under a warrant, appointed a Committee of Inquiry, of which Mr. JOHN VALENTINE NUGENT was chairman; and at the same time several of the members of the Assembly, in their places in the House, used the strongest terms of vituperation and abuse respecting the young man, whose story they pretended to disbelieve. MORRIS declared that he did not believe one word of it, and with some such rhodomontade as he is accustomed to utter, called it a "Blind-buck-o-Davy" concern; and NUGENT, in one of his harangues, called him a drunken young scoundrel, observing that thus had he ended his midnight revellings; and so the case of Mr. LOTT was prejudged by the very men who had been appointed to examine into its truth.

The "Committee of Inquiry," however, sat for several weeks, and ultimately rose without "Report." They had cited before them several witnesses, whose testimony only corroborated the truth of the deposition taken before the Police magistrates—and they also cited the magistrates themselves, and proceeded in such an extraordinary manner as necessarily to induce the belief that the "inquiry" was intended for no other purpose than to defeat the ends of Justice, by crushing all inquiry on the part of the magistrates. In proof that the object of the committee was to intimidate the magistrates, and frustrate the ends of Justice, NUGENT, the chairman in committee of supply of the House of Assembly, succeeded in reducing the salaries of the magistrates £100 each! It is true that their salaries were afterwards placed on the former scale—upon the ground that the Assembly would stand convicted on the face of its own proceedings with an interference with the course of Justice, and that it would prejudice it with Her Majesty's Government; but the iniquitous principle once adopted and permitted, that a malignant and bigotted faction shall not only threaten and try to intimidate judicial and other public officers, but actually punish them, for the mere performance of their duty, and away flies the boasted protection of British laws, and with it, the safety not only of our property but of our lives. We should then, in Newfoundland, exist but upon the sufferance of an intolerant Priests' faction, and their nominee members in the House of Assembly; and all that they dared not do openly and avowedly, could be done by hired miscreants, as profligate as, and, if possible, more ignorant than themselves. The diabolical scenes of Saddle Hill, where, as we have observed on a former occasion, almost every description of crime has been perpetrated, might be enacted all over the country with the greatest imaginary impunity—without the smallest chance of remedy or redress!