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The Liberal.

RICHMOND HILL, Thursday, Nov. 27, '84

REPLY TO "VOTER."

As we stated in a former number of the LIBERAL, it is not our intention to bandy any more words with the *York Herald*. We retire from the conflict with a satisfaction which is not unalloyed only because it is human.

But a quite distinct question has been raised by a correspondent of the *Herald*. In a letter, headed "Two Positions", certain grounds are taken with which we beg to join issue. Before, however, we touch on the main subject, we have a few remarks to make. The writer of the letter referred to comes out under an assumed name. He signs himself "Voter." If we are correct in our information, and surmises, "Voter" never yet had the courage to speak out over his true signature. The trade of anonymous correspondent is by no means new to him. Now he who is habitually scribbling under the mask of a *nom de plume* is not a prepossessing person. It goes without saying that in time he will be sure to blunt any fineness of feeling which may have been originally his. Such an one is scarcely a man of fine instincts, if we may judge from his actions. Gradually he becomes filled with the malignity of the viper, but fortunately he has the heart of a hare. Let him but take into his head that offence has been given him, he does not right matters by an open and honest statement, or by even a genuine outburst of anger. No, he is of the kind that broods, and broods, and broods, until the whole man grows jaundiced with sick fancies; his eyes burn with a lurid, but suppressed, flame, from which comes no light, but rather darkness visible. He waits, and waits, and waits, until night with sable wings seems to give him an opportunity to strike. Then, in the dark he delivers his blow, and instantly, in fear and trembling, retreats to his burrow to watch the effects of his dastard stroke.

Charity compels us to hope that "Voter" is not this manner of man, but yet there has been much talk of "stone-walls," masked batteries, "party-walls," &c., &c., in which he joins, and, in good faith, he appears to know whereof he speaks. We make, however, no accusation; we only ask him to emerge from his den into the light of day, and we promise him, that the man at whom he is aiming his cowardly shafts, will not seek the cloak of a fictitious name to join in an encounter which will not long be dubious. "Voter" may think his identity unknown, but his thought is, perhaps, that of the ostrich which buries its head in the sand, and imagines, silly bird, that because she cannot see her pursuers, they cannot see her.

We return now to the letter. After quoting from a LIBERAL editorial, "Voter" remarks:

"Very true as far as it goes, but if it should so happen that a writer on the staff of the *Mail* should have connection with one of the Educational Institutions of the city, drawing a salary from the rate-payers of the city, and at the same time besmirching them with calumny and abuse, a different story would soon come to his ears. He would be very politely but forcibly informed that he must elect what master he intended to serve: he would very soon find that the Minister of Education, or his Deputy, had taken a very fatherly interest in his welfare; he would be informed that the two positions were incompatible the one with the other; it would not weigh a copper whether the rate-payers were large or small payers; whether Scott or anti-Scott Act men; it would be sufficient for all purposes, that the two situations could not be held. The well-known "Assistant" would not do there what he thinks he can do here with impunity; defying every atom of decency; partaking of the bread of the rate-payer, and at the same time, from behind a party wall, hurling at them language which both the managers of the *Mail* and *Globe* would refuse insertion in the columns of the respective papers they have control over."

It will be seen from the above, that "Voter" has taken it for granted that he has infallible information as to the writer of the LIBERAL articles, which have given him so great umbrage. The villain is an assistant in our High School. Well, let us assume, for the sake of argument, that "Voter" is right. What then? Will "Voter" be surprised to learn that one of the regular contributors to the editorial columns of the *Mail* was

head master of a Collegiate Institute and that his articles were a continuous stream of the most vindictive abuse of the Mowat Administration, and of the senior High School Inspector? Will "Voter" be surprised to learn that at this very moment a secretary of a Reform Association is a master in the Toronto Collegiate Institute? Nay, does not "Voter" know that the present Minister of Education was, at one and the same time, for many years Inspector of High Schools for the County of Middlesex, and likewise one of the same constituency's representatives in the Dominion Parliament? We tell "Voter," that if Hon. Mr. Ross, or his Deputy, presumed to interfere for the reasons he alleges in his letter, in the affairs of a master, he would be promptly told to mind his own business. His "fatherly interest" would be treated as a small-minded and ignorant impertinence; and as long as the master in question was duly qualified for his position, his interference would not for one moment be tolerated. Of course, Hon. Mr. Ross is a man too well informed ever to dream of thrusting himself into matters purely the concern of others, and he would be the first to resent any such clumsy and stupid attempt as "Voter" makes to drag him into a dispute foreign to his office.

And here let us ask "Voter" has he reflected that the "Assistant" at whom he rails is also a rate-payer, and has been one for well on to ten years? Has he reflected that the "Assistant" is under no compliment to any one, that he gives adequate return for all he gets, that he is no pauper, but one who has always acted on the motto that no man should eat what he has not earned? If to gain a livelihood in the village is to disfranchise one's self, how is it that "Voter" presumes to have a voice in its affairs? We have been laboring under the innocent delusion that our teachers receive their appointments on account of their fitness; that the permanence of the appointment depended solely upon the ability and zeal with which they discharged their duties. Have we now to learn that it is further indispensable for them to become deaf mutes to every interest which is not contained within the school walls? We have far too high a respect for our Board of Education, which "Voter" gratuitously insults by his contemptible menace to "Assistant," to hold them capable of such an intolerable bigotry. But we tell "Voter" that if any such crimping were tried on "Assistant," we are in a position to state that he would very speedily "elect which master he would serve." "Calumny and abuse" forsooth! 'Tis easily said, but why has not "Voter" pointed it out, nailed it on the spot, and administered to it a becoming rebuke? Calling names is ever easier than close argument, and accordingly "Voter" chooses the former. He has set up a scarecrow, which will not scare. A pumpkin, deprived of its heart, is, when gashed and punctured into the rude lineaments of a face, and illuminated with a tallow dip, a source of terror to childhood and ignorance, but to manhood it is nought, or, at most, a provoker of some pleasant conceit that is not unlike a person with whom doubtless "Voter" is acquainted.

Apropos of an editor's relations to the public, we subjoin part of an article which appeared in the *Toronto Globe* of 24th inst. We may add, that the *Mail*, in its reply on the 25th, substantiates every word of it, but indignantly denies that it has ever divulged the name of a correspondent, much less that it would stand any inquiries as to who writes its leaders. For the latter, the editor alone is responsible:—

"During the progress of the libel suit brought against it by Mr. SENZAL, the *Toronto Mail* divulged the names of the persons by whom was given the information on which the alleged libellous article was based. The Montreal press is protesting almost unanimously against this action, and its protests are well founded. "It is the duty of an editor to sift the information that is brought to him, and to reject that with the accuracy of which he is not satisfied. Having accepted information the editor is in honor bound to regard it as confidential, and the name of the informant should on no account be given up without permission. Even as a mere matter of business, the editor who sacrifices his informant makes a most serious mistake, one which in fact proves him unworthy of confidence. We shall next, we suppose, be treated to the spectacle of an editor submitting to be catechized in court as to who wrote some particular leading article."

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