

## \* A Distributed Proofreaders Canada eBook \*

This eBook is made available at no cost and with very few restrictions. These restrictions apply only if (1) you make a change in the eBook (other than alteration for different display devices), or (2) you are making commercial use of the eBook. If either of these conditions applies, please check with an FP administrator before proceeding.

This work is in the Canadian public domain, but may be under copyright in some countries. If you live outside Canada, check your country's copyright laws. **If the book is under copyright in your country, do not download or redistribute this file.**

*Title:* The Scribbler 1821-07-26 Volume 1, Issue 05

*Date of first publication:* 1821

*Author:* Samuel Hull Wilcocke (1766-1833)

*Date first posted:* Apr. 30, 2015

*Date last updated:* Apr. 30, 2015

Faded Page eBook #20150448

This eBook was produced by: Marcia Brooks & the online Distributed Proofreaders Canada team at <http://www.pgdpCanada.net>



# THE SCRIBBLER.

MONTREAL.

THURSDAY, *26th* JULY, 1821.

No. V.

"My worthy friend, Sir Roger, when we are talking of the malice of parties, very frequently tells us an accident that happened to him when he was a school-boy, which was at a time when the feuds ran high between the round-heads and the cavaliers. This worthy knight, being then but a stripling, had occasion to enquire which was the way to *St. Anne's* lane, upon which the person whom he spoke to, instead of answering his question, called him a young Popish cur, and asked him who had made *Anne* a saint. The boy, being in some confusion, enquired of the next he met, which was the way to *Anne's* lane; but was called a prick-ear'd cur for his pains, and instead of being shewn the way, was told that she had been a saint before he was born, and would be one after he was hanged. Upon this, says Sir Roger, I did not think fit to repeat the former question, but, going into every lane of the neighbourhood, asked what they called the name of that lane. By which ingenious artifice he found out

the place he enquired after, without giving offence to any party."—ADDISON—*Spectator*.

The festival of St. Ann, which falls on this day both in the Catholic, and the Protestant Episcopal calendar, produced last night its customary oblations at the shrines of beauty and affection amongst the French inhabitants, and frequent were the salutes that were fired on the eve of this patron "Sainte" (why have we not a term for a female saint?) of the Canadian voyageurs.<sup>[1]</sup> To those who are unacquainted with the manners of Old France and the provincial customs of Canada, it is necessary to explain that the gallantry of lovers, the duty of children, and the regards of relationship and friendship, are not displayed upon the anniversaries of the birth of mistresses, parents, kindred or friends, but upon their name-days, that is, upon the days on which the festivals of those saints are celebrated after whom they have received their baptismal appellations. Besides the nosegays, garlands, sweetmeats, and other offerings made as presents on those festive occasions, a custom has obtained of celebrating them by the firing of guns and pistols, which are discharged on the eve of the saint's day in front of the house where the party intended to be honoured resides. These salutes, as is frequently the case with other salutes given to mistresses by their lovers, take place when the shades of night have hushed into silence the busy hum of day, and, being more noisy than the gentle riplings of meeting lips, have no doubt occasionally startled some doting and dozing dowagers, or some of those more doting and more dozing old ladies, who, under various

masculine denominations, claim to sit upon benches, and preside at meetings. Hence the crime of *donner un bouquet* has become visitable, under the sapient regulations, emanating from the aforesaid old ladies, by fines, paltry indeed in name, but, by the enormous expenses of informers, witnesses, &c. often swelled to three, four, and five times the penalty. Fortunately the laws of this code, are not, like Draco's, written in blood, but in sand, for, by attempting to legislate for every trifling thing, even down to the marbles and hoops of the little boys, and the *chauffepieds* under the petticoats of the poor half frozen market women in winter, these great legislators have overshot their mark:—their edicts

"——stand like the forfeits in a barber's shop  
As much in mock as mark;"

And *bouquets* and *charivaries*, and other good customs of the olden time, maintain their ground, in spite of the saws of palsied age, and the vituperations of unbending formality. Old customs, if they have nothing even to recommend them besides their antiquity, ought not to be lightly abolished. The few harmless recreations which the populace have, ought not to be unnecessarily curtailed; and an indulgence in those expressions of domestic or sexual affection, and of satiric merriment, which habit has sanctioned, is no great privilege to be granted on the one hand, whilst, on the other, much importance is attached to their enjoyment, and much jealousy shewn at their attempted prohibition. I am ready to contend that these customs are not only harmless, but

even laudable and moral; and that there is ample authority in the laws of the land both to prevent and punish any abuse or evil that may be ascribable to them, without making them the object of municipal persecution. The custom of the *Charivari*, I shall probably take up on a future opportunity, when I have sufficiently dived into the arcana of the mystic symbols borne about on such occasions, and ransacked those ancient annals and treatises that are within my reach, to trace the origin and history, as well as the etymology, of the ceremony, which I believe will be found to have prevailed in the days of the patriarchs, and perhaps also, from the rabbinical traditions, to have existed before the deluge, for in one of the books of the Cabala the particulars are to be met with of the celebration of a marriage between a giant of those days, and one of the daughters of men, in which troops of revellers are introduced, with exalted horns, (shewing, by the bye, the antiquity of the horn as a concomitant of unequal marriages) ascending the mountain whither the giant had carried his mortal bride, shouting *Valicara! Valicara!* which the rabbinical commentator considers as a valedictory address to the virginity of the young lady; but which in my opinion, is nothing more or less than *Charivari* transposed, for every etymologist knows that *l* and *r*, being lingual letters, are as convertible as the labials *b* and *v*, or the gutturals *g* and *k*. But these recondite researches must be deferred for the present; and in the mean time as I have a great regard for *St. Ann*, and have, as Moore expresses it,

"A sweet little Saint of my own"

of that name, I dedicate the following lines to her, and all  
the *Ann's*, the *Anna's*, the *Nancy's*, the *Annette's* and  
*Nannette's*, in town and country.

Whether with formal pen I trace  
The name of lovely *Ann*,  
Or in her arch and playful face  
Read, I may call her *Nan*;

A soul inspiring name it is,  
Of love's delights the fan;  
The sun no truer mistress sees  
Than kind and smiling *Ann*.

On this auspicious day I'll take  
A morning walk with *Annie*,  
And at the festal board partake  
A dinner drest by *Nanny*.

The poet's and the sage's lore  
Like heaven descended manna,  
We then together will explore,  
T'instruct and pleasure, *Anna*.

De longue-vue de lunette  
On n'a besoin pour voir  
Les charmes de la belle *Nanette*,  
Qu'on aime matin et soir.

But of all names in poet's stories,  
Like Prior, none I can see,

Althea, Daphne, Delia, Chloris,  
So sweet, so dear as *Nancy*.

And when the evening shades descend,  
To please my amorous fancy,  
Nameless the name that can transcend  
The night's enchantress, *Nancy*.

The fascination of a name is very great, and when prepossession exists, the association of ideas leads to enthusiasm whenever even a similar sound strikes the ear. Hence the inspiring nature of the various war-cries that have been in use, both in ancient and in modern times.—To this may be traced even the origin of paroles and countersigns in military affairs; and of all party designations. Yet how widely different are sometimes the nicknames, if they may be so called, that have been in vogue for various sets of men, from the original meaning of the words. *Gueux* or vagabonds, was the name given to the partisans of the reformed religion who spread themselves around the frontiers of France, and especially in the Netherlands, in the time of Philip the III. of Spain; but when this denomination came to be applied to those noblemen and others who resisted the attacks of that despotic monarch upon the constitution and liberties of their country, it became an appellation of honour, and to belong to the party of the *Geusen*, was the pride and boast of the founders of the republic of Holland. There is an instance of one of the most singular misnomers of this kind in the Statute book. The act II. Geo. III. cap. 55, which is an act to incapacitate certain persons (named

therein) from voting at elections, and by which the electors of the borough of Shoreham in Sussex, were disfranchised, commences thus; "Whereas a wicked and corrupt society, calling itself *the Christian Society* hath for several years existed in the borough of New Shoreham," &c. and then stigmatises by name, the members of that society as conspirators, to return members to parliament from corrupt motives. An instance still more in point, and more familiar to us, is the denomination which is given to, and has been adopted by, a very numerous body of English Protestants, the *Methodists*. This name, which Southey tells us, in the life of John Wesley, was first given to a society formed at Oxford by Charles Wesley, (brother to John) "in reference to their methodical manner of life, and alluding to the ancient school of physicians known by that name," is absolutely branded in the Greek scriptures as significative of evil. The word is only twice used throughout the New Testament. Ephesians, iv. 14. *Eu panourgia pros ton methodeian tees planees*, and Ephesians, vi. 11. *pros tas methodias tou Diabolou*. In the first text, it is translated *lying in wait to deceive*; and in the second it is rendered, by the words, *wiles of the devil*. In both places it denotes that cunning craftiness wherewith evil men, or evil spirits, watch to take an advantage over the credulity or weakness of mankind. In Dr. Mills' edition of the Greek Testament, in the note subjoined to Ephesians, iv. 14. it is mentioned, that in some versions it is rendered *remedium*, the interpreter having found that word in an old Greek and Latin glossary. In Leigh's *Critica Sacra* it is explained, "*vox formata est*

*ex dictione methodos, quæ significat 'compendium' recte et breviter tradendi artis; et quia ingeniosi sunt methodici, ideo translata est methodeia ad captiones astutas et artes fallendi.*" "The word is formed from *Methodos*, which signifies a compendium for exercising any art properly and quickly, wherefore ingenious persons being methodical, it is therefore applied to the arts and wiles of deception." He likewise observes, that the word is used for *insidias quæ a tergo alicui incauto struuntur; a methodein quod significat etiam, "a tergo insidias parare, ut multi solent latrones viatoribus.*" Traps that are laid behind the back of the incautious, from *methodein* which also signifies, *to set traps behind*, or lay ambuscades, as is the practice of many highway robbers," for which he quotes Zanchius. Salmasius likewise, upon this passage, informs us that the fathers, particularly St. Chrysostom, understand by this word, *decipere, fraudere, fallere*, "to deceive, to cheat, to circumvent." And Arethas upon the passage of Ephesians, vi. 11. observes that "*Diabolus optimus est methodicus ad fallendum,*" "for the arts of deception the devil is the best Methodist." From all which it appears that this sect is distinguished by a most unlucky and inappropriate appellation.

The influence of a mighty name upon earth is well known. Poets and historians give innumerable instances of the electric effect of a name upon armies, and upon multitudes. In fictitious narrative, the enthusiastic valour raised on one side, and the horror and panic on the other, is forcibly illustrated in the romance of Amadis de Gaul.

Wherever the hero appears in person, the tremendous cry of GAULE! GAULE! once heard and re-echoed, the torrent pours along, and the narrative carries us with breathless haste to the victorious termination of the contest. Of the same nature is that noble passage in Southey's *Madoc*, when the hero, escaped from his captivity, re-appears on the field of battle. His name rings from rank to rank:

—————"Lincoya  
heard  
As he had raised his arm to strike a foe,  
And stay'd the stroke, and thrust him off, and  
cried,  
Go, tell the tidings to thy countrymen;  
MADOC is in the war"—————

Reliance upon the immortality of a name is no where more sublimely exemplified than in the mausoleum of *Acbar*, the celebrated Emperor of Hindostan, at *Agra*. The mausoleum is immense and magnificent, the centre is a vast hall, in the middle of which is a plain sarcophagus of white marble, and, whilst in no other part of the extensive edifice is any inscription or even date to be seen, upon a tablet of that sarcophagus simply and sublimely is engraven the name of ACBAR.

Simplicity and sublimity of another description is the characteristic of the inscription at Vienna upon the tomb of Eleonor, the third wife of the Emperor Leopold;

ELEONORE,  
*pauvre pécheresse;*

*Morte 19 Janvier, 1719.*

Yet this affectation of humility is but another species of pride. But what are all monuments? what the pyramids of Egypt, to which the couplet of Drayton, where he alludes to the stupendous pile of Stonehenge in Wiltshire, may with even more propriety be applied?

"Ill did those mighty men to trust thee with  
their story,  
Thou hast forgot their names that rear'd thee  
for their glory."

In looking over No. 3, I find, that, trusting too much to memory, and writing *currente calamo*, I attributed to John Heywood some lines that belong to Shadwell, who in his "Royal Shepherdess," has this passage:

"*End.* My lord, you take too great a liberty.  
*Near.* I'm sure you do to give such mighty  
names  
To killing men; (*men who kill.*) Why, celebrate  
the plague,  
What general ever did destroy like that?  
Or study glorious titles for old age,  
That kills all those whom nothing else can kill."

The last line very happily illustrates Pope's distich

"When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to  
throw,  
The line too labours and the words move

slow."

It is impossible to read the last line of the above quotation from the Royal Shepherdess, without feeling the tedious difficulty of killing those "whom nothing else can kill;" there is not one soft, one liquid, syllable, the whole is hard, and nervous, and requires the distinct and laboured exertion of all the organs of utterance.

L. L. M.

## FOOTNOTES:

[1] LEWIS LUKE MACCULLOH, Esquire, possesses, no doubt, in virtue of his highland descent, the gift of second sight, or perhaps, being both an author and a poet, claims, as the ancients did, to be ranked amongst the soothsayers; which accounts for his anticipation of the events of *St. Anne's* eve; for every one knows, that an essay published and circulated by breakfast-time on Thursday morning, must have been written and printed on Wednesday evening, before any bouquets could be offered.

*[Note of the Publisher.]*

Transcriber's Note: Obvious printer errors, including punctuation, have been corrected. All other inconsistencies have been left as they were in the original.

[The end of *The Scribbler* 1821-07-26 Volume 1, Issue 05 edited by Samuel Hull Wilcocke]