

# The Weekly Register

OF POLITICS, FACTS, AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

"BE JUST AND FEAR NOT."

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## THE POLITICAL REGISTER.

"It is of great importance in a state—not only to guard Society against the oppression of its rulers, but to guard one part of Society against the injustice of the other part. Justice is the end of Government.—It is the end of civil Society."—HAMILTON.

## THE OPPOSITION.

"The Executive power in our government is not the only, perhaps not even the principal object of my solicitude. The tyranny of the legislature is really the danger most to be feared."—JEFFERSON.

If the above sentiment was entertained by the most powerful advocate of extreme popular rights that America has produced, moderate persons in this colony may well begin to reflect whether the proceedings of our legislative majority are more characteristic of a wise and temperate Opposition, such as is conducive to a healthful state of public affairs, or of a legislative tyranny such as that so strongly, and so justly, dreaded by Jefferson.

When, night after night, during the first session of the present Legislative Council, we were doomed to witness an exhibition of stupid opposition to the Executive Government—an opposition as objectless, as causeless, as it was intemperate; we, in common with every man who had had an opportunity of witnessing the workings of representative government in the other hemisphere, although pained at the evident perversion to unworthy purposes of the powers vested in our representatives, yet consoled ourselves with the reflection that this exuberant zeal on their part was to be regarded less as indicative of any inherent tendency to faction, than as the result of a too tardy cession of our political rights by the Imperial Parliament. It was urged, and not without reason, that they had yet to serve an apprenticeship to the science of politics, before they could be expected to assume the calm but determined aspect of practical legislators. We listened to the excuse, and were content to hope for better things.

Another session came and passed away; and, glancing over its records what do we find written there? What of practical good has accrued to the colony from ninety-five nights' debate? We leave those to answer, whose misdirected talents have gone far to frustrate the beneficent intentions of the British Parliament, have paralysed the efforts of the well-disposed amongst themselves, and have held forth to the world that strangest of all strange spectacles, a nominally responsible

ruler, pressing upon an unwilling people, the boon of Municipal Government, and a people craving, or seeming to crave, after liberty, yet rejecting the surest means to secure it, at the bidding of a tyrant majority. We leave those to answer who are still so ingenious as to discover patriotism in the headlong rashness of a Wentworth—the flippant cavilling of a Windeyer—the eccentric rhodomontade of a Lang—or the unblushing tergiversation of a Lowe.

Well, yet another session has arrived. We have seen the political campaign of 1845 commenced by Sir George Gipps, in a spirit of manly candour, and of reconciliation; and we have seen these sentiments responded to by the Council with apparent sincerity. Already had we begun to hope, nay to believe, that the apologists of 1843 were right when they said "Our Council requires nothing but experience." Alas! scarcely had one short month elapsed ere this dream was dispelled, and our worst fears realised. Again have we been doomed to behold the same virulence which disfigured the opposition of former sessions. Again have we had inflicted on our ears those crude, verbose speeches so impotent for good yet so pregnant with mischief—again have we seen, in another form, the same rashness, which in 1844 would have stopped the supplies, and brought the entire machinery of Government to a stand—again and again have we heard that constant imputation of venality, as undeserved by the accused as it is disgraceful to the accusers. And then in the ordinary proceedings of our councillors, where there is no room for quarrelling with the Executive, how much trifling—what wastefulness of those precious moments—those opportunities for achieving some permanent good for the colony, which may never occur again. Take an instance. Mr. Windeyer gives notice that on a certain day he will move that the House resolve itself into committee on the state of the colony. The day arrives—but Mr. Windeyer is (what he generally is *not*) absent. Well, Mr. Wentworth in the absence of his friend makes the above motion. Why? On what grounds? He knows not. He confesses that he has no motive for so doing. Indeed he thinks it not unlikely that his friend had no motive either—but it is just possible (to use his own words) "that he had some *crotchet* in his head"—and therefore the time of the House must be frittered away.

Admitting that the application of £1,500 received from Distilleries towards the suppression of illicit distillation, without a vote of the Council, was irregular; granting the interpretation of the Act of Parliament by which this appropriation was supposed to be authorised to be a wrong interpretation (and here, for once, we happen to agree with the Opposition); still the whole error is resolved into a misunderstanding of an obscure sentence in the Act, and contains no stretch of prerogative which could call for a muster of "village Hampdens" to pass a vote of censure on the Government.

Not one farthing was lost to the public purse, on the contrary thousands of pounds have been saved by the appropriation. No amount has been expended that the Governor had not been authorised even by the Council itself to expend; for it is admitted that his Excellency might have readily appropriated the £2000 voted for contingencies towards the object in question, without being called to account for it. In other words the money was taken out of one pocket and put into the other with interest tenfold; and yet such is the "tyranny of the legislature" that an act of this simple and harmless character must be visited with a formal censure, because, forsooth, it is not, in the estimation of members, according to the strict letter of a not very intelligible law.

The irregularity—if it be such—certainly required to be noticed; but as no actual harm, or rather as positive good, resulted, there the matter should have rested. To make it the subject of a formal motion was pure tyranny and nothing else. If such tyranny is to be deprecated where—as we admit in this case—there existed some degree of oversight, the thing is hideous when it denounces without rhyme or reason, as in the case of Mr. Cowper's motion for the production of papers which refer to the enforcement of proper subordination among Government officers. The Government insist, and we think with equal propriety and justice, that members of Council, holding Government appointments, shall not offer a systematic opposition to the measures of Government. If persons holding Government appointments offer themselves to constituencies they may be either elected or rejected. Confidence in the measures of Government may be a good reason for electing a Government officer, as a want of such confidence may be a reason

for rejecting him. Such of the English constituencies as approve of Sir Robert Peel's administration return his colleagues to parliament; others who disapprove of the ministry reject them, and so it ought to be here. But as persons holding offices in parliament are expected to give their support, generally, to the measures of Government, so there is nothing unreasonable in enforcing the same principle here, since those who do not approve of the measures of Government need not vote for candidates who hold offices under the Government.

With respect to the resignation of the Sheriff, which gave rise to Mr. Cowper's motion, if the statement which appeared in all the Port Phillip papers be true, namely, that Mr. Young told his constituents on the hustings that if the Governor enforced the squatting regulations he ought to be sent out of the colony, or something to that effect—if these or any similar expressions were used by Mr. Young, the Governor was bound to bring the matter before her Majesty's advisers in order to ascertain whether such disrespectful conduct should be tolerated in one holding office under him. What were the precise terms of that correspondence is a matter with which the public have no concern, it is sufficient to know that Mr. Young received a hint which led to his resignation. This, of itself, would deter any other officer, who disapproved of Government measures, from offering himself as a candidate, and convince all electors, who rank themselves in the Opposition, of the impropriety of voting for candidates who were pledged by their tenure of office to give their support generally to the measures of Government.

Another instance of the tyranny of this majority appears in their abuse of any member who may feel bound conscientiously to leave their ranks. Since Mr. Robinson has had the good sense to secede from the Opposition he has actually suffered persecution from his quondam friends. "The renegade member for Melbourne"—"a recruit of the Government"—and such like epithets have been showered on the honourable member, for no other cause but that he has at length opened his eyes to the justice of measures which interest and association had previously misrepresented to him; and that now seeing them in their true light he has the manliness to retrace his steps. Consistency is certainly a political virtue, when it is founded on reason; but consistency in error (like that of the Council in refusing to vote the salary of the Registrar General, because they had committed a similar injustice before), is more honoured in the breach than the observance; and we repeat, to abuse a member because he has the honesty to shake off the trammels of party and act for himself, is tyranny.

While we thus endeavour to check the beginnings of a tyranny of the most dangerous kind—dangerous because its acts are done in the name of freedom, and by authority of the people whom it deludes that it may oppress—we have some satisfaction in observing the continuance of that less undignified and less offensive tone with which the present session commenced; and we trust that this is only the first of many necessary improvements in the character of our representation.

It is a homely saying that when things are at the worst we may expect a change for the better. If this old adage holds good in state

matters, and if we are not deceived by this appearance of improvement, let us indulge the hope that our Legislative Council has (to borrow an expression of Sir George Gipps, in speaking of the revenue) "passed the point of its lowest depression," and that the day is not far distant when the talents, which we are free to acknowledge many of its members possess, will be directed into their legitimate channel—thereby aiding the development of the natural resources of the colony, and of the energies of the people.

#### REPRESENTATION OF PORT PHILLIP, MR. BOYD'S RESIGNATION.

If the inhabitants of Port Phillip wanted other arguments to prove the necessity of their favourite measure of separation from this district, the rapid succession of their representatives, and the inability of the district to send resident members into the Council, would go far to establish their position. At least a dozen elections have already taken place in that district, and out of the members returned, not more than four were residents of the district. Three of these four retired after the first session, and the fourth has not yet taken his seat. At the last election, the constituency were constrained to go a begging for members, and of one of those chosen in this manner, it is not yet certain that he will take his seat. While this point still remains in doubt, Mr. Benjamin Boyd resigns his seat, thereby creating a new vacancy!

Such being the actual state of things, it would be difficult to contend that the inhabitants of Port Phillip should be satisfied with their present connection, or that they should refrain from using every effort to obtain a legislature of their own. It cannot be concealed for one moment, that nearly all those who, residing in this district, have accepted seats for Port Phillip, have done so merely to suit their own purposes, and as we have seen, have resigned their seats just as their convenience dictated. None of these resignations is more remarkable than that of Mr. Boyd. When he wanted "fixity of tenure for him and his," he went into the house, and when he found this, or as much of it, at least, as he could reasonably hope for, he went out of it, leaving no trace of his existence there behind him. His electioneering address was a supplement to his squatting speech at the Royal Hotel. His valedictory address is an appendix to his speech on board the *General Hewitt*. We welcome back to the honorable gentleman those sentiments which should never have quitted him. "Benjamin is himself again."

As to the question who will be his successor, in the vacant seat, we may answer, any body in Sydney, who has a little time, or a little money, or a little impudence. Had we ourselves a moderate stock of either, we dare say that, after the above declaration on the subject of separation, we might walk over the course.

#### NORTHUMBERLAND BOROUGHES.

The candidates for the representation of these Boroughs are, Mr. Ogilvy, Mr. Patrick Grant, and Mr. C. H. Chambers. It is said also, that Mr. Teales will stand; and that a sharp contest will precede the result.

#### GREAT AND SMALL SQUATTERS.

WHILE his Excellency and his advisers in the Executive Council are engaged in maturing the future squatting code of this colony, such facts as those mentioned below are well worthy of consideration. They are taken from the speech of a Mr. Brown, a small squatter, delivered at a dinner at Illawarra a few days since:—

"There is one gentleman in Sydney who holds seven stations in the Maneroo district, for which he pays but £10 a year; on one alone he has 2000 sheep under one man. Now, for this one, I would gladly give the government £100 per year, and then consider I had made one of the best speculations I had ever made in my life. I wanted a station, and called upon a gentleman in that part of the country who holds—without occupying—an extensive tract of country, and asked him had he a station to sell? He asked me what stock I had; which having told him, he replied; Oh, a corner will do you; and modestly demanded for that corner £500 cash. He subsequently sold a different corner for £400. Thus you see while the small capitalist is hunting for a station, these big squatters are making their fortunes by selling corners for £400 and upwards; for the whole of which, some 50,000 or 100,000 acres, they are paying but £10 annually. No wonder then they should wish to hold undisturbed possession."

It has been suggested to us by an extensive squatter, who, however, had no share in the late oligarchical movement, that stations in respect of which the regulations shall not have been duly complied with, with reference to the purchase of a homestead or otherwise, should be advertised in the *Government Gazette*, and also posted up in some conspicuous place in the district where each, respectively, is situated.

By this means a ready compliance with the regulations would probably be insured in most cases; and where compliance might be refused, openings would be made for more eligible occupants. The advantage that this publicity would afford, not only to the revenue, but to those intending settlers who, under the present system, look in vain for a spot on which to fix themselves, must be obvious.

#### NEW PUBLICATIONS.

*Prospectus of a work to be entitled "Voluntary Information from the People of New South Wales respecting the social condition of the Middle and Working Classes in that Colony,"* by C. Chisholm: Sydney, 1845.

We mentioned some time ago that Mrs. Chisholm was engaged in collecting a body of authenticated facts, for publication in England, calculated to shew the advantages and disadvantages of a colonial life, with a view to draw the attention of capitalists as well as the guardians of the English poor to the former, and to procure a remedy for the latter. A Prospectus of the work, or rather an Introduction to it, is now before us, which proves the earnestness with which the philanthropic author has set about her self-imposed task, and gives ground to hope that the work itself will be useful to the colony, in the quarter for which it is intended.

One or two extracts will convey to the reader the best idea of the author's spirit and intentions.

"To supply the flockmasters with shepherds is a good work!

"To supply those shepherds with wives is a better!!

"To find employment for families that will enable them to rear a well-fed peasantry is a God-like undertaking. Australia can boast of her high-spirited sons—her virtuous daughters—her sunny sky—her rich pastures—her ships laden with her wool—her cattle wild and countless on her mountains—her sheep crowd her hills, and seek the shelter of her vallies; she can grow her own sugar—make her own wine—press her own oil—spin her own cotton—weave her own wool—grow her own corn—but, until Australia can prove that she can rear her own children—that God's blessings are not considered "ENCUMBRANCES," she will never be able to maintain her proud position, or be competent to defend the noble harbour which Providence has given her,—a harbour to be defended by her children, who at the call of old England, will issue forth, and by their gallant and meritorious deeds do honor to the race from whence they sprung.

"It would be the height of presumption and folly in me to obtrude my views upon the public, on a subject of such paramount importance as the one in question, were it not for the practical experience which I have gained during the last six years. Without any fear of contradiction, I may be permitted to say, that few persons, if any in the Colony, are more intimately acquainted with the actual condition of the working classes, than I am; silence therefore would be culpability; the servant in Sydney—the shepherd in the Bush, and the small settler, are known to me; I have visited their homes—witnessed their trials and wants—seen their struggles and exertions, and I have now the inexpressible delight to lay before the public *proofs of their importance as a body*, and of their merits as individuals. If as a class they have their faults, their virtues are greater than their failings. To improve the moral condition of these people is my object; to break up the Bachelors' Stations, my design—happy homes my reward. To give the shepherd a good wife, is to make a gloomy miserable hut a cheerful and contented home; to introduce married families into the interior, is to make Squatters' Stations fit abodes for Christian men. Painful circumstances connected with my experience have strongly impressed upon my mind the duty of exertion, and the advantage which will accrue to the Colony by furnishing authenticated details, which will aid and support the efforts of those friends in England to the British poor, who advocate a National System of Colonization, and whose disinterested position will qualify them to judge *impartially* of the best interests of the employer and the employed."

But Mrs. Chisholm's object is not confined to the introduction of small settlers, and to "breaking up the bachelors' stations." Her work is addressed also to "gentlemen of moderate income in England," who she truly says "cannot serve their children better, or advance their interests more effectually, than to emigrate with them to Australia, and place their sons in the path of independence." She is also desirous of attracting officers of the East India Company's service to a colony combining "salubrity of climate with the

prospect of making a suitable provision for their children."

We conclude our notice with the following observations, which are full of truth and good-sense.

"Wages are now on the rise, and whether a high or a low rate prevails, it is of great moral importance, that the rate payable for female labour should be proportionately on a lower scale than that paid to the men; high wages are apt to tempt single women to indulge in a style of dress that exposes them to much danger, and not unfrequently prevents their being happily provided for as wives. High wages also tempt many girls to keep single, while it encourages indolent and lazy men to depend more upon their wives' industry than upon their own exertions, thus partly reversing the design of nature. When to these evils are added the baneful and demoralizing tendency which this rate of wages has in inducing married couples to accept of separate service, conjoined with the feeling which predominate among the employers of labour, against their servants being encumbered with children; when all this is considered in a religious point of view, it is fearful to contemplate what an injurious and contaminating effect it must have upon the moral tone of society in general—how it must harden age, and corrupt youth I feel then that I have a right, as every one has who deeply weighs the matter, to appeal to every friend of Christian morality and humanity, and to beseech the well disposed to exert their influence, until these evils are corrected, and until the inequality of the sexes is removed. To increase this calamity England has offered these Colonies her "*Exiles*." Would that she would act the part of a wise and humane parent, and not make crime a passport to her Colonies. Would that she would afford her children a free passage to this Colony, while they are virtuous and good, before their better feelings are hardened and destroyed, and before they have passed through all the demoralizing stages of want, misery, and crime, until she is at last necessitated to support them as captives and victims to her injudicious policy; overwhelmed with a population that is daily becoming more burthensome to her, she enlarges her jails—augments her police force—has recourse to parochial rates, and private charities; but this is only suspending the calamity until it eventually accumulates to an overwhelming extent. There is but one effectual and certain remedy, to take a wise advantage of her outlets—her Colonies—and place her poor in a position where they can exercise the ability and energy which they may possess, for their own benefit and profit. If England would but strengthen her strongholds—distribute her subjects—people her colonies, on just and equitable principles, by establishing a fair system of leasing her lands, that would give the working settler and farmer an equal chance with others (they need no favour). If this just right and blessing are conceded to her Majesty's subjects in the Colonies, England would no longer groan under the sin and burthen of supporting "*one-tenth of her population*" in pauperism and idleness, and yet, what is the source of her poverty, ought to be the cause of her wealth, and add to her strength, prosperity, and renown."

*An Address to the Students of the Sydney College, on the occasion of their assembly after the Midsummer Vacation, by J. B. Laughton, B.A. : Sydney, 1845.*

As a general rule we disapprove of published orations of this description. They have no connexion with the real toil and business of the school-room; they are addressed, and the students know they are addressed, to other parties besides themselves, and have other objects in view than those ostensibly conveyed to the original auditors. They belong, in fact, to what may be called the quackery of education. While, however, we condemn the practice, for which Mr. Laughton cannot be held accountable, we must say that the pamphlet before us is well worthy of a perusal by both old and young, containing as it does much sound advice conveyed in a pleasing form, which if reduced to practice in the institution over which the author presides, must be highly beneficial to the community. We select the following paragraph as a specimen of the work:—

"There is a very common idea among young people, which is so erroneous, and therefore so prejudicial, that I cannot avoid noticing it. Thinking only of the restraints they actually feel, and knowing nothing of the cares of life, they are apt to sigh for the arrival of manhood, when they fondly expect to be free from restraint, or at least that, having chosen a profession, they will be able to 'get on' without submitting to the regularity, which they are pleased to call the slavery, of school. My dear young friends, believe me when I tell you, from my own experience, that such a notion is both foolish and sinful. It is totally impossible for a man to be in any sphere of life without having duties and responsibilities to discharge; and it is equally impossible to discharge those duties aright without submitting to the regularity of a system. *Shew me the man who lives without a plan, and I will shew you one that is both very idle and very wicked.* To look forward then to a time when you will be your own masters, and free from responsibility, is to encourage a vain and most pernicious sentiment, which will never be realized. You will never be your own masters in this world, unless, like Robinson Crusoe, you should be cast on an uninhabited island. There, indeed, your right there might be none to dispute; but wherever two men exist, they must mutually depend on each other. The reason of this is plain: man is a social creature: alone he is scarcely so capable of providing for himself as a wild beast of the field: it is his social condition that makes him strong, and enables him to maintain his dominion over the rest of the creation. Men, knowing this, congregate together, and thus mutually support and defend each other. You hear of absolute monarchs, such as the Shah of Persia, and the Emperor of China. The poorest cottager of England who should exchange his cottage for the throne of either of them would miserably lose by the bargain. The life and liberty of the cottager are protected by wise and just laws; the life of the absolute monarch, as he fancies himself, is at the mercy of the wretched slave who hands him his coffee or sherbet. Banish, therefore, from your minds for ever the notion that you will ever be your own masters. They who pretend to be so, are, in truth, their own

slaves. In society, every man must give up a portion of his liberty, in order to secure the remainder: he who seeks to be absolved from all control, will find in the end that he has lost his liberty altogether. Let me earnestly exhort you, then, early to discipline your minds to subjection: not the blind and abject submission which is exacted by an arbitrary despot, but that rational and wholesome subjection which, in a free country, every man must, in some shape or other, yield to his fellow-men. He who would command, must first learn to obey; and you, if you aspire to situations of authority and influence in after life, must learn while here to submit yourselves to that wholesome and necessary discipline under which you are placed."

### THEATRICAL REGISTER.

THE introduction on the Sydney stage of the chef d'œuvre of Romance's wild and sweet minstrel—the *Frieschutz* of Weber—is undoubtedly an era in our dramatic history. This "legend of Almaine" has had a "run" during the present week.

To have hoped for the production of this opera in a perfect state would have been absurd, seeing that on its first introduction on the London boards, it was grievously mangled at both theatres. Yet even here the curtailments were fewer than we expected. There was much good music omitted, but still enough was left to delight the admirers of Weber's characteristic genius, and to recal those witching strains which have delighted all Europe for the last twenty years.

In this curtailed arrangement we could not recognise distinctly either of the popular English versions of the libretto—there appeared to be an amalgamation of both, at least in the musical pieces. As to the performance there was much to commend, all difficulties taken into account; and where such efforts were made to give satisfaction, we are bound to deal gently with the few faults that were discoverable.

The fine overture was tastefully played, as indeed all the symphonies were.

The vocal pieces in the first act most worthy of remark were the recitative and air "Ah faint my heart," by Mr. J. Howson (Adolph), and Caspar's celebrated drinking song, by Mr. F. Howson. The languishing style of the former makes it suitable to the style of this singer, and the latter wanted nothing but a little more fire to make it all that was requisite. The same may be said of Mr. F. Howson's "Lo, lo, the hour" in the second act. Mrs. Stirling (Linda) was hardly successful in any of her solos, her voice being of too thin a quality to produce an effect; but in her duetto with Madame Carandini (Rose), and in the fine trio "Oh what horror" (Messrs. Carandini, Mr. J. Howson, and herself) she supported her part with success, and her acting on the whole was good. This last mentioned piece was perhaps the best part of the performance. In Madame Carandini's singing and acting, if there was still something to be desired, there was little to blame. Of the others, if we except the droll blustering of Deering, there was nothing to remark.

The incantation scene and the *diablerie* in general reflected much credit on the mechanical department.

In conclusion, surely after the full houses that this opera, even with its unavoidable imperfections, has brought, we shall not have to insist further on the propriety of totally discarding the rubbish of past *management*, and of selecting only good pieces for representation.

### Domestic Intelligence.

MR. J. M. DILLON.—Having observed in one or two contemporaries a series of attacks upon this gentleman, we think it our duty briefly to state, that we consider Mr. Dillon to be a regular, methodical, hard working public officer, and as nothing has been adduced which contradicts this statement, we consider the personalities of his opponents nothing worth.

PORT PHILLIP.—WRIT OF ELECTION.—The following notice appeared in Tuesday's *Government Gazette*:—"His Excellency the Governor directs it to be notified for general information, that Benjamin Boyd, Esq., having in due form resigned his seat in the Legislative Council for the electoral district of Port-Phillip, a writ has been issued for the election of a member to serve in the Legislative Council for the said District, during the continuance of the present Council, and that the following arrangement has been made for the said election:—Chief polling place, or place of nomination, Melbourne; other polling places, Geelong and Portland. Day of nomination, Friday, 19th September, 1845. Polling day, Friday, 26th September, 1845. Return of writ, Tuesday, 14th October, 1845."

APPOINTMENTS.—His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to appoint John Henderson, John Rose Holden, Donald Larnach, Acton Sillitoe, and Thomas Ware Smart, Esquires, all of the city of Sydney, to be magistrates of the territory and its dependencies, and also of the city of Sydney.

GROSS OUTRAGE.—About half-past eight o'clock on Thursday morning, a man dressed in a dark tweed coat, called on Mr. Macpherson, the clerk of the Legislative Council, and made some inquiries respecting a house on Brickfield-hill, the property of Mr. Wentworth, and for the letting of which Mr. Macpherson is agent. Mr. Macpherson accompanied the enquirer to the premises, and was in the act of showing the applicant over the house, when the fellow sprang on Mr. Macpherson, struck him a blow on the face, which not only cut his nose, but discoloured his eyes to such an extent that he is at present incapable of seeing; the fellow then thrust his hand into Mr. Macpherson's pocket, and took his pocket-book out, with which he ran off, making his escape by running into a passage from the Brickfield-hill to Pitt-street, known as Petticoat-lane. On Mr. Macpherson recovering his senses, he immediately gave an alarm, when a close search was made for the prisoner by a number of persons residing in the neighbourhood where the outrage took place, but without success. It appears, that on Wednesday evening, Mr. Macpherson not only paid away about £60, but also left his gold watch in a place of safety. The only things contained in the pocket book, were a few private letters, of no value to any one but Mr. Macpherson himself, or his family.

SCHOOL OF ARTS.—On Monday evening last, Mr. W. T. Cape, delivered the first of his Lectures "on ancient and modern Fable," in the Theatre of the above Institution; on which occasion his Excellency the Governor, and Lady Gipps, were present, accompanied by Mr. Secretary Parker, and Mr. Merewether, A.D.C. The subject is one of considerable interest, and was handled by Mr. Cape so as to elicit the approbation of his auditory, more particularly the junior portion of it, for whose advantage the lecture was more immediately intended. The lecture was confined chiefly to ancient Fable, divided into the four classes of *Scriptural*, *Historical*, *Allegorical*, and *Physical*. Mr. Cape gave some pleasing specimens in each of these subdivisions, enlarging most on the *Allegorical*. His well-chosen extracts from Bacon's *Expositions of the Allegories of the Greeks and Romans*, were received with deserved applause; such for instance, as the popular Fables of the Race of *Attalanta* and *Hippomenes*—the Horses of Diomed devouring human flesh—*Actæon* eaten by his own hounds—*Circe*, *Dædalus*, &c. &c. On the whole the lecture was light and amusing; its principal fault was a very unusual one—it was too short! In his next lecture Mr. Cape will address himself to the department of *Modern Fable*. We must not omit to mention that, Sir George and Lady Gipps, were looking well, and were cordially greeted by a respectable audience, both at their arrival and departure.

THE "ISABELLA."—It will be recollected that among the property lost by the wreck of the *Isabella*, hence to London, at Flinders' Island, in Bass' Straits, there was a considerable quantity of plate belonging to John Broadfoot, Esq., the charterer of the vessel, and who was himself a passenger. By the Launceston papers received by the *Scout*, we learn that a portion of the plate has been found in the possession of a person named Childs, at Launceston, who states that he purchased it from a man named Dobson, a sealer in the Straits, who said he procured it from a wreck. The plate found in the possession of Childs consists of a toast-rack, 2 gravy spoons, half dozen table spoons, half dozen toddy ladles, one soup ladle, one dozen desерт spoons, half dozen tea spoons, half dozen forks, one fish slice, all silver, weighing 89 ounces. District Constable Davis, of Launceston, through whose activity the matter was brought to light, had taken possession of the plate on the part of the police, and had proceeded against Childs, the person in whose possession the plate was found, and who had offered it for sale to several of the jewellers, by information under the Imperial Act, 7 and 8 Geo. IV., c. 29, sec. 20, which enacts that "if any person shall offer for sale any property unlawfully taken, or reasonably suspected so to have been, from any vessel in distress wrecked, or stranded, any person to whom it shall be offered, or any peace officer, may seize the same, which shall be handed over to the rightful owner (upon payment of a reasonable reward to the seizer) and the offender shall forfeit over and above the value of the property, any sum not exceeding twenty pounds." The property was still retained by the police, but the issue of the information against Childs is not given in the Launceston papers. — *Melbourne Courier*.