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To my family

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## ABSTRACT

Thomas Chandler Haliburton was a Nova Scotian Tory who, despite pressure for reform and responsible government both at home and in England, wrote vehemently in favour of the retention and expansion of the connection between Nova Scotia and the British Empire.

As the vehicle for his sermons, Haliburton chose the satirical sketch, beginning with a series in Joseph Howe's Novascotian. It was here that Haliburton's most famous creation, Sam Slick the Clockmaker came to be born. The instantaneous popularity of Sam made him the Lemuel Gulliver of most of the volumes published thereafter. This loquacious pedlar of inferior clocks and double-edged satire dealt harshly with many subjects, including republicanism, religious schism, patronage, the law courts, and the general laziness and apathy of Nova Scotians.

For a time Haliburton was in vogue because his writing was unique in the colonies and because he was well known as an historian, a politician, and a magistrate. But the success that he had enjoyed with the early Sam Slick sketches was fleeting.

His skill and popularity did not grow with time and experience. It is probably kinder to his memory, therefore, that he should be thought of as a politician-historian-magistrate who wrote some humorous sketches, rather than as a writer of satirical humour.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

If Thomas Chandler Haliburton had begun and ended his career as a writer with the first series of The Clockmaker, time and the critics of Canadian literature would have been much kinder to his name. Indeed, the discussion of his writings is made more difficult because critics tend to deal with him simultaneously as a political theorist, an historian, a public personality, and a writer of humorous sketches.<sup>1</sup> This paper has a more limited scope. Haliburton's personality, life and views are relegated to a position of minor importance. What is more relevant here is the success with which he addressed the tools at hand to the subjects at hand.

In his fictional works Haliburton deliberately set out to write satire. In the words of Sam Slick, in reference to the first series of The Clockmaker,

it wipes up the blue-noses considerable hard, and don't let off the Yankees so very easy neither.<sup>2</sup>

Later, using the Squire, the seldom-named Thomas Poker, as his mouth-piece, Haliburton defends the satiric method. In the introduction to The Attache, Poker says,

I could undervalue this species of writing if I thought proper, affect a contempt for idiomatic humour, or hint at the employment being inconsistent with the

grave discharge of important official duties.<sup>3</sup>

Thus Haliburton showed his feeling that satire was right and proper for his message. In this instance he was alluding, in passing, to his method of presentation. He felt it necessary to inform his readers that when he could no longer maintain the calibre of work achieved in the Novascotian sketches he would cease to write. However, any prayers that he might have offered to Momus at that time must have gone unanswered, because from this point on he broke his vows. Again, later in The Attaché, at a point where he was about to satirize the English, he made his method clear:

We've hit Blue-nose and Brother Jonathan both pretty considerable tarnation hard, and John has split his sides larfter<sup>4</sup>...Let's tickle him now, by feeling his own short ribs, and see how he will like it.<sup>5</sup>

If this is not a declaration of the decision to write satirically, it is nothing; and there are many other places where Haliburton states this motive of his fictional works. A last proof of his determination to be satirical is included here:

in all your books there is a great deal of fun; but in all your fun, there is a meanin'. Your jokes hit, and hit pretty hard, too, sometimes. They make a man think as well as laugh.<sup>6</sup>

This is, perhaps, the most explicit of the many notices



of intent.

What, then, was Haliburton's purpose? What made him feel the need to "hit pretty hard" at his fellow man; and more, why did he choose satire as his method?

Haliburton was a Nova Scotian born and bred. More important, whether or not he was a colonial (and so both inferior and foreign in the eyes of those "at home" in Britain), in all instances where his nationality was in question, he was British. What is still more important, he was a Tory.

Haliburton made a very clear reference to his political affiliation when he wrote:

I belonged to a party now nearly extinct in these colonies - the good old Tory party, the best, the truest, the most attached and loyal subjects Her Majesty ever had, or ever will have, in North America.

He wrote "belonged" because the rest of the anachronistic Tories had gone or were going the way of those things which are deemed obsolete. The spirit of change had passed them by. They would not or could not adapt, and were, therefore, doomed to being mere reactionaries. Haliburton was one of the remnants of the Imperialists, individuals who, both "at home" and in the colonies, hoped to create an Empire wherein each colony would become a part of Britain as was the Ireland of that day. What other

creed could he aspire to, the son of another Tory, the man who never thought of himself as being anything but British? How else could he hope to be invested with the rights and privileges that he so sorely longed for? His very resentment at the failure of the British Government to bestow patronage on the colonials is a testimonial to his hope for recognition. In the Empire such distinctions were commonplace. Haliburton offered documented proof of virtue and steadfast duty to the Crown virtually unrewarded. Writing about a mythical native of Nova Scotia who was similarly qualified, he says,

he is one of a numerous class of persons in these colonies, who, though warmly attached to British connection, feel that they are practically excluded from imperial employment and honours of the empire.<sup>8</sup>

Ironically, the complainant, Haliburton, ended his life in England not Nova Scotia, and as a representative of an English borough in Parliament. An added fillip is that Haliburton in the dedication to An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia, which was but one of his many non-fiction works on Canada in general and Nova Scotia in particular, placed just below his name and the title: "This is my own, my native land."<sup>9</sup>

Haliburton's twelve years as Justice in the Court of Common Pleas and fifteen more as a Judge of the Supreme

Court provided him with models, the composites of which became the characters of the sketches. Despite the fact that a few of the characters were thought to have been based on living originals, Haliburton felt as did Stephen Leacock when the latter was questioned as to the real identities of the characters found in Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town:

and Bagshaw and Judge Pepperleigh and the rest are, it is true, personal friends of mine. But I have known them in such a variety of forms, with such alterations of tall and short, dark and fair, that individually I should have much ado to know them.<sup>10</sup>

Likewise, Haliburton was pressed by those readers who feel the need to find a live model behind the facade of the inimitable Sam Slick. Americans were horrified to think that such a disgraceful example of Yankee low-life could be allowed to exemplify them. Indeed a great compliment was paid to Haliburton when different "proofs" of Sam's true identity were made public, as for example in the following account taken from the forward of a recent edition of The Clockmaker:

a despatch from Bangor, Maine, to the Montreal 'Star' states: Jackson Young, known throughout New England as the original of "Sam Slick, the Yankee Clockmaker", is dead here, aged 87 years...<sup>11</sup>

Throughout his writings, Haliburton remained faithful to the thesis that Nova Scotia could and would become a

valuable part of the Empire, were she allowed to do so. This was the basis of his satire. From this base he could proceed to his arguments about the dangers of the proximity of American republicanism; to the shirking of her colonial responsibilities by Britain; to the lack of direction on the part of the blue-noses; to his views on slavery, on women, and on religious sects. This is by no means an exhaustive list of the subjects of Haliburton's satirical sketches, but it includes the most important.

The format of this thesis will demonstrate how Haliburton varied his own method of presentation in an attempt to capture and enlarge the audience for his satirical sketches. Each work, the second and third series of The Clockmaker excepting, is given its own chapter because the differences in each of the books are sufficient to warrant this segregation. There are successes and failures which are unique in each work. Further, because of the fact that Haliburton at times left Sam Slick out of his books, an additional difference is provided. This essay first deals with those works which are unified by the presence of Sam Slick; then with the group the focus of which is the fact that Haliburton attempted to write his sketches without utilizing the clockmaker.

In most, and certainly in the best of his works, Haliburton employed Sam Slick, the brash spouter of aphor-

ism and epigram as Swift did Gulliver; at once the target and the mouthpiece of his wit. Indeed, one of the greatest strengths of Haliburton's early satires was his use of Sam as mouthpiece. Sam Slick, Yankee carpet-bagger, was created to criticize blue-nose and British alike. He was made an authority or seeming authority on all matters social, economic, and political. By giving Sam both faults and virtues, Haliburton was able to criticize Sam and the Yankees as well as advocate what Sam was advocating. An example of the former is the following:

as for Latin and Greek, we don't vally it a cent;  
 we teach it, and so we do paintin' and music, be-  
 cause the English do, and we like to go ahead on  
 'em, even in them 'are things.<sup>12</sup>

The irony becomes two-fold when Sam is shown up by his own words; when the reader becomes aware that Sam, in freely and lavishly praising some member or attribute of his "free and enlightened nation nation,"<sup>13</sup> is actually showing the superiority of some of the attributes of the citizens and government under the Imperial system.

In the characterization of Sam Slick alone Haliburton found his major means of writing satire: the invective with a twist, where the power of a curse makes the impact of the satire greater. A curse or epithet drawn out so as to become ludicrous or completely out of place in the mouth of the speaker becomes satirical.

Just having Sam Slick as an attaché of an American embassy is example enough of Haliburton's use of the ironic, perhaps rather blatantly ironic form of satire. Sam Slick as spokesman for the United States is a burlesque on the American citizen. Hence he embodies all three forms: invective, burlesque, and irony. If this attempt at defining Haliburton's satire is incomplete or incorrect, it is because no one definition would suffice. There is found parody, travesty, pasquinade, scorn, sarcasm, and indeed every tool of satire, if the works are sifted through. Haliburton indeed attempted to fill the armour and wield the weapons of the satirist as he went forth to the lists. He clothed himself in his different parts with various thicknesses of mail and armour (in no place could his own skin be uncovered) as Swift did with Lenuel Gulliver. If Swift spoke variously through Gulliver, the houyhnhnms, and others, so Haliburton spoke through Sam, the Squire, the minister (Joshua Hopewell), and others.

No one person, if sufficiently drawn to be believable, could hold with all the views of the satirist. If the characters are to be credible they must possess enough variation and nuance to make them individuals. Certainly, then, they cannot be suited to every characteristic opinion of another individual.

Haliburton attempted to isolate friend from foe

and give vent to his feelings. His subjective view thus gives the lie to his claims that his arguments are based solely on reason, truth, and unbiased opinion. The satirist's duty is to put before the less well-informed, the less wide-awake, the less watchful, those weaknesses and evils which need eliminating.

Haliburton was an Horatian satirist. That is, his satire is the sort written by an optimist, and is almost kindly, as opposed to the savagery of Juvenalian satire. Haliburton never reaches the depth of despair and pessimism which sets the tone for Swift and Juvenal. As Dryden shows in "A Discourse concerning the Original and Progress of Satire" the satire of Horace demonstrates a cheerful disposition, with a genuine wish to cure folly and evil by making those responsible for them see the error of their ways; while Juvenal uses satire to demonstrate the doom of man.<sup>14</sup>

As to the method of presenting his satirical lessons, Haliburton follows to a great extent the Swift of Gulliver's Travels. This method is something of a compromise. At one extreme stands the type wherein the author as satirist speaks either as a narrator or as a semi-detached participant in a work, by means of a person or personæ. Two examples of this style are Swift's "Modest Proposal"

and his "Abolishing Christianity". The other form which satire often takes is that wherein internal action is the sole source of the satire. Character revelation through the interaction of the characters of a dramatic piece, the protagonists of a narrative poem, or any form of the written or spoken word is the source of informal satire. The satirist makes his comments indirectly; there is no persona to act as intermediary. An example of this style of satire is Ben Jonson's Volpone. This satire has no external aid; the actions, speeches, and appearances of the performers are sufficient to give the lesson, if the naming of the parts may be excepted. Haliburton teaches as he amuses both from within and from without his sketches, but more often than not in the latter way. And Swift's method is similar to this. In Gulliver's Travels the various characters reveal Swift's views through their speech and actions; including Gulliver who, like Sam, sometimes spoke for Swift but who sometimes was the object of Swift's satire. To various characters in every satirical work, Haliburton gives the responsibility to show this, the writer's view. The message is presented implicitly in every volume by means of his amusing and didactic sketches.

Here then was Haliburton, provided with space in the Novascotian, equipped with a considerable sense of humour, pride, and prejudice. He was ready to make friend and foe



alike see what he would have them see. He was ready to use his power of rhetoric to persuade and sway all to his view. Proclaiming all the while for fact, truth, and reality, he pointed always to his ideals, to what he knew was best for the people. He would show them the way despite themselves.

This was the writer of the satirical sketches of the opening series of The Clockmaker. But what of him who wrote the later works?

At the beginning of The Attaché Haliburton maintained:

I made an accidental hit with the Clockmaker: when he ceases to speak, I shall cease to write. The little reputation I then acquired, I do not intend to jeopardize by trying too many experiments.<sup>15</sup>

Unfortunately, Haliburton's memory was short. The reputation that he valued was badly battered, if not shattered, by "trying too many experiments." It is not to be thought that the first series of The Clockmaker is a chance or accidental phenomenon; as will be shown in Chapter II, Haliburton evolved the vehicle which would bring his arguments to the greatest number of people with great care and considerable skill. Then, with the passing of the Clockmaker periodical sketches in The Novascotian, his skill failed to keep pace with his fervour. Like the

Englishman at Suez a century later, Haliburton could not be convinced that the time for him to abdicate had come. Although the end result for Haliburton was hardly as widely publicized as the Suez crisis, it was just as damaging to his reputation as a satirical humourist as Suez was to that of Britain.

The major problem of the fictional writing which follows the first sketches is one of balance. From the works themselves it is obvious that Haliburton had two devils which perched upon his shoulders and alternately whispered their own selfish messages in his ears. Unfortunately, they were not able, as they had been in the first series, simultaneously to transmit their messages to his brain. The consequence was that Haliburton lost the touch which had unified the humour and the lessons.

He had also, by this time, begun to lose rapport with his readers. A falling off in the demand for his books was enough to tell him that. He also felt the lack of sympathetic vibrations with his audience. The satirist must have an audience, however small, which acts as an in-group for his humour. Haliburton was beginning to feel somewhat akin to the soldier who staunchly maintained that it was the rest of the army who were out of step, and not he. Thus began the changes in format, the various attempts to win back the favour of those who had

delighted in early vintage Sam Slick and company. As must be realized by now, even had Haliburton known what his fate as a writer of fiction would be, it is extremely doubtful that he would have altered his course. He could not see his failure for what it was: a loss of artistic power; an end to that line which divided the satirical humourist from the preacher and shouter of scalding invective on one side and the comedian on the other.

One of the greatest disadvantages of those works which follow the first series of The Clockmaker is that they do follow it. Following it is similar to following Sam on a dusty or muddy day when he and "old Clay" do not want to be caught. However close to Clay in value the other horses in a race are, they are bound to end up mud-spattered or covered with dust. So it is with those works which come after the first series. They are not quite as good and are therefore not good enough.

Even if Haliburton had been able to maintain what skill and balance he had displayed in the first series, the later Clockmaker sketches would have palled. And Haliburton knew it; with each subsequent volume he attempted to change the format sufficiently to retain or increase his ever dwindling audience (the first series eventually reached eighteen editions, whereas The Season Ticket, his last fictional venture, was issued in only four). Unhappily,

these changes in format probably aided in hastening his decline in performance and popularity. The appetite of the public,

for more about these nasal-toned, ill-mannered, tobacco-chewing, expectorating, guzzling, whittling, and boasting traders<sup>16</sup>

was quickly satisfied; or perhaps the additional helpings were being found less edible - not because Sam was now satirizing his best audience, the English, but because the freshness and quality of the repast had declined.

## CHAPTER II

### THE CLOCKMAKER, "FIRST SERIES".

Thanks to V.L.O. Chittick, his most intensive and extensive biographer, there are available many contemporary articles about Haliburton's writing and career, naturally invaluable in an examination of the quality of his writing.<sup>1</sup> There are, for example, two contemporary critiques, widely divergent in opinion as to the quality of the first series of The Clockmaker, which show how at least a few members of the British and Nova Scotian reading public felt about this new colonial satirist. Ironically, for one would expect the urbane British reader to be objectively critical of a new writer - especially a colonial - it was Blackwood's who came out with unstinting praise of the first volume. The general idea is clear in these few excerpts:

We want such to throw a new life even into European literature...Let him leave Nova Scotia and come to England...what invaluable and exhaustless subjects would this clever scarifier of bombast, absurdity, meanness, and presumption find before him.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile on the home front, in the Acadian Recorder, Haliburton was confronted with the reaction:

I should be sorry to believe the author of the History of Nova Scotia capable of indulging (in) the stolen embraces of some Harlot Genius, and causing the birth of such a literary monster as the Clock Maker is, nor

until good evidence is educed will I believe, that a man whose style gave dignity to an interesting Historical theme could be guilty of such self degradation, such prostitution of talents, as to write the senseless and pitiful slang of which these letters are made up.<sup>3</sup>

A true evaluation of the first series lies somewhere between the lavish approbation of the former letter and the disapproval voiced by a critic who apparently did not place Momus on the same hierarchical plane with the muse of history. This group of sketches is marred by the same faults found in the later works but, fortunately, not to the same degree.

Haliburton chose Sam Slick as the expedient means of his attempt "under the garb of amusement, to call attention to our noble harbours"<sup>4</sup> and whatever else Haliburton felt needed his attention. As he said: "For this purpose I called in the aid of the Clockmaker."<sup>5</sup>

But Haliburton did not possess the subtle and razor-edged ironic power of a Swift. He could never have written "A Modest Proposal". The closest he came to it was in "The White Nigger",<sup>6</sup> where, in retaliation to a job by the Squire that only the whites could be numbered among the "free and enlightened citizens" of the United States, Sam showed a comparable situation much closer to home. That the poor of a township in Nova Scotia could be sold a year at a time, to the highest bidder - or rather to

him who would keep the poor for the lowest rate from the town - is damning. But even here Haliburton deviates only slightly from the true situation in Nova Scotia. Where Swift criticizes social conditions in Ireland by showing a horrible if fictional situation, using the grotesqueness of the situation for emphasis, Haliburton limits his satire by sticking to the facts.

But Haliburton succeeds in making Sam believable. Sam does indeed sound like a nineteenth century Yankee clockmaker - or vendor, rather - ought to sound. The homely Sam carries homely truths; he has a sense of humour and a sense of fun.

For a time he was the ideal vehicle for Haliburton's satire. He permitted the American to laugh at the British and the blue-noses and the Yankees - provided they were not Yankees themselves; the British could laugh at the blue-noses and the Americans; and the blue-noses could, if they were able to convince themselves that they were not of the type of Nova Scotian satirized, laugh at them all. Here was the necessary rapport between the artist and his audience. In the true manner of the satirist, Haliburton was alienating only those responsible for the ills which plagued Nova Scotia. Here were both Haliburton and Sam at their best; Haliburton was moving in and out of the facade of the loquacious Yankee, using character

revelation simultaneously with the italicized aphorisms and epigrams to make his points. If the latter methods were insulting to the attentive and intelligent, Haliburton was only following the time-tried parable method of making sure his point reached home. While this underlining of a point is not ideal in good satire, it is excusable as long as the sketch moves logically to the conclusion reached in the italics. This is something that Haliburton was careless about, later. At this point, however, the sketches seemed merely didactic; an observation which probably would not have received disapprobation from Haliburton, since to him the lesson, not the amusement, was paramount. This first series is but a microcosm of Haliburton's whole intention and performance, albeit a more skillfully executed portion than the whole. If those works which follow the original series of sketches in The Novascotian, the anonymous "Recollections of Nova Scotia"<sup>7</sup> are, ostensibly, cohesive units intended to be read in volumes, they are actually only additional sketches on the same general theme.

Before the series was half completed, the idea had reached the point of germination, that Haliburton through Sam would take his straight man, and his readers as well to all those places where Sam had debts to collect.<sup>8</sup> Sam had many tales to tell; and what better audience could he have than that dull but sincere man? Throughout the series



the Squire is shown explicitly to be the sounding board, the tool by which Haliburton could trigger Sam's blasts at blue-nose, British and unintentionally, at Sam's own "free and enlightened nation". The Squire was created as a dupe, as were Nova Scotian and American ministers (of the schismatic sects, of course, never the Church of England), Nova Scotian farmers and would-be traders, and Yankee sharpers; every one who crossed Sam's path and who held views contrary to Haliburton's - including Sam.

However, whenever Haliburton tried to hit the hardest, he was not at his satiric peak. He was plagued with the bane of the satirist's existence. To be truly effective, the writer must keep his aesthetic distance. This is certainly not to say the satirist must not feel strongly about what he writes; but that he requires the discipline to hold the piece at arm's length and evaluate it objectively, as a work of art. Whatever the writer's motive, it is upon this performance that his satiric reputation rests. Haliburton lost this distance. The very faults which he saw in others, he did not recognize in himself. As was the case elsewhere he, in The Clockmaker, declaimed against those literary failures which he had either committed himself, or would commit in his writing. In speaking of a pamphlet on religious differences, the Squire was heard to say:

The author has injured his own cause, for an in-temperate advocate is more dangerous than an open foe.<sup>9</sup>

The irony of the situation is augmented by the fact that the sketches immediately following this one, to the end of the series, are the most blatantly didactic of the whole volume. Included in this group of eight chapters is the hard-hitting "The White Nigger", wherein Haliburton is much more effective than elsewhere. Perhaps the relatively greater success is due to the universal sympathy with the suffering of the poor and down-trodden. Haliburton is here, not to deny him his due, still possessed of artistic balance. He shoves racial oppression right back down the throats of the supposedly ethically superior blue-noses. In this sketch all the actors come out badly; however, the lesson does not interfere with the flow of the action and the humour, and must therefore be considered a success. Other sketches in this series suffer from inopportune intrusion by Haliburton. He was at his platitudinous worst when he italicized:

why, put him to the plow, the most nateral (sic), the most happy, the most innocent, and the most healthy employment in the world.<sup>10</sup>

There is, at best, only a tenuous connection between this advice to the Nova Scotians and a conversation between Sam and the Squire which sometimes meanders and sometimes

gallops from the natural resources of Nova Scotia to a trip which Sam had taken in the U.S.; to American gambling houses; to a comparison between American and Nova Scotian industry; to an evening spent with Joshua Hopewell; to a commentary on pride; to a naval battle; to American pride; to liquor; to old age; to liquor; to the tilling of one's own soil; to humour; to religion; to the corrupting influence of factory towns; to agriculture as the only honest way of life in a republic; to farming, all in less than two pages.<sup>11</sup> Instead of making a smooth and logical move from point to point, the reader's mind is forced to act like a ping-pong ball, never knowing where it will finish. Here, Haliburton is unsure in thought and presentation. It is as if he finally, but not surely, fixed his mind upon the man in the great American dream, the independent brave and able cabin-building and wilderness-carving man of the soil as the ultimate hope for the future of Nova Scotia.

The inferiority of several of the later sketches in this series lies in the fact that the lessons were beginning to outweigh the art. The links which support his sketches, the short, pithy truths about the people and their ways, are failures if they are irrelevant or unimportant. This section contains both these types of failure. In the sketch "Gulling a Blue-Nose", after reiterating

the evils found in the professions of preaching, lawyering, and doctoring, Haliburton tells an enjoyable and effective story about Sam mentally and financially working over a blue-nose; then, unconvincingly, he turns the lesson to mean that an ordinary citizen has not the time, the energy, or the intellect to handle anything like politics. He should, instead,

open the country, foster agricultur'; encourage trade, incorporate companies, make bridges, facilitate conveyance, and, above all things, make a railroad from Windsor to Halifax.<sup>12</sup>

The sketch is tortured so that it can provide a lesson. Where the story clearly indicates condemnation for the pedlar and pity for the innocent dupe, Haliburton somehow justifies an inversion. Suddenly he is telling Legislative Assembly members to forget politics and to tend to visible improvements in their country, it being their own fault if they are taken in by sharpers.

By this time Haliburton and Joseph Howe had come to a political parting of the ways. Due to Haliburton's desire to increase the connection between Nova Scotia and Britain and Howe's strong advocacy of independence and responsible government for the colonies, there was bound to be a falling out between these two friends. But because Haliburton was teaching Nova Scotians to mend their slipshod ways, Howe had permitted the Tory slant to remain in

the sketches. Here are previews of the later volumes.<sup>13</sup> Haliburton was incapable, in these sketches of combining the lessons and the humour into cohesive wholes. The moral in these sketches is either non-existent or omnipresent.

Haliburton had great fun playing with words; for example, the mystery of the introductory sketch revolves about the fact that the Clockmaker continually speaks of his selling area as his "circuit". This confused the simple Squire who interpreted Sam's words as meaning that he represented the law in some capacity.<sup>14</sup> Haliburton utilized the confusion by extending the play to show how lawyers "could wind a man up again, after he has been fairly rundown", and how the Americans "go upon tick" by over-extending their credit;<sup>15</sup> and how blue-noses, like a horse trying to run backward, "have tumbled over a bank or two".<sup>16</sup> The last example and the most blatant occurred when Sam was explaining to the Squire about one of his financial ventures. He was to be paid a commission to go to Poland to buy up all the hair which would come into the market as the result of an order by the Russian Emperor that the Poles cut off their queues. Sam's instant reply was:

well, I vow, that's what the sea-folks call sailin' under bare Poles.<sup>17</sup>

As evidenced, Haliburton made many mistakes in this volume, but one of the most flagrant literary crimes of which Haliburton was accused was poor character drawing; and of this crime he was not guilty. The two examples cited are two major characters: Joshua Hopewell and Sam Slick, himself. J.P. Logan accuses Sam of not being "any one character",<sup>18</sup> and says that since the reader is unable to tack a one-dimensional personality on the character of Sam and say "That's just like Slick",<sup>19</sup> the drawing of Sam is discordant. Similarly, Logan attacks Hopewell, saying that the minister, because he lives in the United States and is untravelled, and yet is knowledgeable and an Englishman, is incredible.<sup>20</sup> Chittick, while generally much more perceptive and accurate than Logan, falls into the same error here. He spots a few deviations from what he considers to be Sam's norm and comments:

that Sam Slick, a Yankee, and the representative of a traditionally democratic class, should deliver Tory sentiments for his own, as he did, was a perversion that not even his gifts of emphatic expression could justify.<sup>21</sup>

And he feels similarly about: "minister, the Rev. Mr. Hopewell, who is more truly British than his nationality would lead one to suspect."<sup>22</sup>

The complaint against Sam was that he is always advising the blue-noses and the British what they have to do, in order to protect Nova Scotia from the ravenous Americans.

This would seem hardly credible in a Yankee pedlar, especially one who is proud of his country's ways. The truth of the matter is that the drawing is both consistent and commendable. It must be remembered that when Sam speaks in such a manner, he is nearly always speaking to a sympathetic listener; and if not to a sympathizer, then to one who could do little to damage Sam's and America's cause. In "Go Ahead", he sneers at Nova Scotians when he derides their and the Squire's inability to "cypher",<sup>23</sup> and simultaneously swells with pride at his own nation's strength and resourcefulness. There is nothing unbelievable about a man with the Clockmaker's boundless energy blasting the blue-nose for being "nasty, idle, loungin', good-for-nothing, do-little critters."<sup>24</sup> General disgust need not have a national identity. Several arguments are available, all of which refute the charges laid by Chittick and Logan. If it be said that Sam would never show the Nova Scotians how to alleviate their woes, what fear had he? The blue-noses had before this refused to listen to advice honestly given by their own kind. Why should they have listened to this cocky smart-alec Yankee pedlar? And, indeed, was not an opening comment of Sam, upon seeing his stories in publication:

I think I have been used scandalous, that's a fact. It warn't the part of a gentleman for to go and pump me arter that fashion and then go right off and blast it out in print.<sup>25</sup>

It was one thing to laugh with and at the Squire and his people in private, but using mass media was quite another story. It was all well and good to show the Squire the need of railways and bridges to keep Halifax alive and to unite the towns of Nova Scotia, but Sam was no fool:

no, Sir; if the English don't want their timber, we do want it all. We have used ourn up; we han't got a stick even to whittle.<sup>26</sup>

Sam wanted the country for his own "free and enlightened" citizens if the blue-noses would not do right by it:

This place is as fartile as Illonoy or Ohio, as healthy as any part of the Globe, and right alongside of the salt water; but the folks want three things - Industry, Enterprise, Economy.<sup>27</sup>

In one year we would have a railroad to Halifax, which, unlike the stone that killed two birds, would be the makin' of both places.<sup>28</sup>

And, being more charitable to Sam, if it is conceivable that a citizen of a democracy could see the advantages of a socialistic state for other people, why could not Sam do the same? If Sam is supplied with paradoxes, so is every human. He is human, with human complexities and frailties. He is accused of being too real.

Similarly, Joshua Hopewell is found to be too British. If justification for his views is needed, it is easily and explicitly found in *The Attache*:<sup>29</sup>



I am like yourself, a colonist by birth. At the revolution I took no part in the struggle; my profession and my habits both exempted me. Whether the separation was justifiable or not, either on civil or religious principles, it is not now necessary to discuss. It took place, however, and the colonies became a nation and after due consideration, I concluded to dwell among mine own people.

The "better dead than Red" motto might be applicable here, but surely no further proof is needed to show how the minister could honour king and England and still remain a citizen of the United States. It is a wonder how this straightforward avowel could have escaped Chittick and Logan; and if they did indeed read it, how they could have argued his supposedly artistically unbelievable anti-thetical attributes. Indeed, the dullest individual in the whole work is the Squire, a sounding-board for Sam and Hopewell, ever hearing and recording, but not learning. Perhaps he found Sam fascinating, but it is curious what Sam found stimulating about Mr. Poker. And yet this is a careful drawing, too. His critics and biographers might find many shortcomings in Haliburton as an artist, but here in the credibility of his major characters, they are wrong.

Haliburton is at his best in the opening sketches. In "The Trotting Horse", Sam has the poor Squire going in mental and physical circles. He out-races, out-talks, and out-thinks the Nova Scotian; he wounds his pride, but befriends him. This was what Haliburton was ever attempting;

to sting the people into action. The reader is treated to knee-slapping glee to see the Squire, Deacon Flint, and the others subjected to Sam's knowledge of "soft sawder and human natur'."<sup>30</sup> Haliburton brought much homely charm to bear, showing how Sam uses the Deacon's sexual prowess as a wedge to get his clock on the right side of the door, and the presence of Mrs. Flint to keep it there.<sup>31</sup>

Here, in his prime, Haliburton could and did do what he did best; he amused with humorous anecdotes tied together by the salty common sense of Sam Slick. He turned a good story or two, such as "Conversations at the River Phillip;" he derided the mercenary Daniel Webster by showing how an equally mercenary and even more clever old Quaker was able to dupe that famous lawyer and lexicographer.<sup>32</sup> Then after thus setting the stage, Haliburton went on to show how foolish the blue-nose was to look for greener pastures in the States; that a place where unfair dealings were a common fact of life was no place for the innocent Nova Scotian. He would be much better off to stay at home and tend the farm. This is obviously a moral tale, but the reader, being first treated to a laugh, is then ready for this lesson too.

It is apparent from the outset that Haliburton enjoyed playing with names as he did with puns. Little need be said, for if the names are a propos there should be no explanation required: "Slick", "Hopewell", "Poker",

"Pettifog", and "Nab". The need for such appellations becomes more apparent if it is taken into consideration that these early sketches were appearing weekly in the Novascotian. In these short sketches Haliburton had to make his impact in a limited space. Having a pedlar named Slick, and a judge named Pettifog outlined the characters for the reader, thus giving Haliburton a convenient head-start.

Even when Haliburton hit hard, at this stage, as he did in "Justice Pettifog" he was better at his craft.<sup>33</sup> The trial is a revealing and enjoyable jousting. But the sad condition of the court was not used as an excuse to write badly or carelessly. He revealed the subject to be satirized but not in such a way as to damage his case; he remembered here what he later forgot: to gain converts he had to have readers. And to have readers, he had to entertain.

If his variety at this time was not infinite, Haliburton was at least very entertaining; and with him at the helm, there was seldom any fear that the lesson would be lost in the fun. In "The Preacher That Wandered From His Text", he relates to the Squire the story of the Yankee preacher who gave up religion for politics because:

what is the use of reading of the Proverbs of Solomon to our free and enlightened citizens that are every mite and morsel as wise as he was.<sup>34</sup>

The slangy, twangy irony is hardly lost here. Nor is the "Yankee" way of speech, where correct vocabulary is often sacrificed to the emotional expression. It is difficult for purists to envisage a man who:

gig-gobbled like a great turkey cock, the half-nigger, half-alligator-like-looking villain as he is.<sup>35</sup>

As impressive as these sounds are, Haliburton was not without a gentler touch, at times. After showing how a sensible and clever Rhode Island woman dissuaded her husband from aspiring to the governorship of that state, he tells how she gave Sam a look which implied:

I let him think he is master in his own house, for when ladies wear the breeches their petticoats ought to be long enough to hide 'em.<sup>36</sup>

Even more so, after duping Madame Pugwash, a fair Nova Scotia dame, by flattery of herself and her offspring:

When I see a child," said the clockmaker, "I always feel safe with these women folk; for I have always found that the road to a woman's heart lies through her child..."<sup>37</sup>

With eyes twinkling, he bounced back:

Encourage the timid ones, be gentle and steady with the fractions, but lather the sulky ones like blazes.<sup>38</sup>

The quality of Haliburton's satire seems, also, to vary with the subject. As has been previously discussed, Haliburton stands condemned in the eyes of the critics for

using unreal composites in his characterizations. What happened, actually, is that Haliburton was less able to keep his aesthetic distance when he was concerning himself with the Assembly, religious sects, and slavery.

The mask of Sam Slick sometimes became ill-fitting when Haliburton wanted to talk about the "purity of election" and the "purity of members;"<sup>39</sup> when he wanted his people to "attend more to top-dressing and less to re-dressing".<sup>40</sup> Sam might say: "We've had politics with us till we're dog-sick of 'em,"<sup>41</sup> but Haliburton had hardly begun to fight. And since Haliburton was wielding the pen, Sam was forced to say more on the subject. Sam and many others took a beating in their treatment of Negroes, a subject dealt with harshly throughout this volume; but most harshly in the aforementioned "White Nigger" and "The American Eagle"<sup>42</sup>, where Haliburton attempted to make the sketch humorous as well as moralizing. But the anecdote did not amuse. The preacher overpowered the humourist, and the art as well as the objects of his satire was ill-used.

Another one of Haliburton's problems in this volume was a faulty memory. To support one argument he praised the Catholic faith. Then, because it suited another point he wished to make, he derided that same religion. When trying to persuade the blue-noses that political "schism

is a sin in the eye of God"<sup>43</sup> as much as religious schism, he used the Roman Catholic Church as an example:

Well, the Catholic is a united family, a happy family, and a strong family, all governed by one head...<sup>44</sup>

and

the Protestant family is like a bundle of refuse shingles, when withed up together.<sup>45</sup>

And this after lumping the Catholics together with every religious sect on the continent to discredit them; every one but his own, that is to say. In a bad example of punning to make a point, he poked fun at the Catholic practice of eating fish on Friday to hold that religion up to scorn:

like a man I once see'd, who fasted on fish on a Friday, and when he had none, whipped a leg o'mutton into the oven, and took it out fish. Says he "it's changed plaice, that's all; and plaice ain't a bad fish."<sup>46</sup>

And Haliburton's playing with words led him into other errors; one of which became a much more serious problem later, in The Letterbag. He was beginning to become overconfident or perhaps careless in his handling of language. His Frenchman in "Oysters Produce Melancholy Forebodings" is atrocious.<sup>47</sup> As is the case with Sam, the only way of evaluating a character's speech is by credi-

bility based as far as possible, on experience and knowledge of languages, dialects, and vernacular. Unlike Sam - most of the time - the Frenchman does not pass muster. Where Haliburton intended the sketch to show the English the need for closed inspection of North America before they could properly evaluate its worth, it recoils upon Haliburton himself. In reply to Sam's terrible French, the Frenchman counters with:

'Oh, very like,' says he, bowin' as polite as a black waiter at New Orleans, 'very like, only I never heerd it afore. Oh very good French dat - clear stuff, no dare say, sare.'48

In such a sketch upon the ignorance of others, the burlesque becomes tinged with unintentional irony, and the persuasiveness is lost.

Lest the impression be that the series is loaded with failures, and with little success, a thorough reading dispells such a notion. Even the sketches with the weaknesses previously mentioned are not without homely truths and rollicks which strike home even to-day. For example, during one of the few times the Squire ever was wide awake enough to throw a barb at Sam's native land, he claimed that he was struck with the emblem of the United States, the eagle grasping a ship's anchor:

That was a natural idea, taken from an ordinary occurrence; a bird purloining the anchor of a frigate -

an article so useful and necessary for the food of its young.<sup>49</sup>

Sam was somewhat taken aback, but reacted in his usual way; after somewhat justifying his own people, he turned the tables on the Squire, and retorted with a condemnation of his own, on the blue-noses:

An owl should be their emblem, and the motto, 'He sleeps all the days of his life.'<sup>50</sup>

Haliburton also put together some truly fantastic stories to illustrate - or publicize, at times - his moral. For example, the tale of the American professional diver who went so deep that he went through the centre of the earth and ended up in the South Seas.<sup>51</sup> What enhances such tall-stories is the matter-of-factness and often offhandedness with which they are told.

An equally instructive sketch, but in an entirely different vein, is "The Clockmaker Quilts a Blue-nose".<sup>52</sup> In it Sam satirizes the false modesty of a lady. It should be mentioned that Haliburton had the utmost respect and delight in ladies of every nation, creed, and shape; but they were not exempt from his satire if they could provide a focus for one of his lessons. In this case, Sam is telling the Squire of a collision between two ships. In one of Haliburton's favourite ways of showing the ignorance of Sam's protagonists, Mrs. Pugwash (from an earlier fiction



of Sam's "soft sawder") intrudes ill-informed, into the conversation. She overhears:

"two of her ribs were so broken as to require to be replaced with new ones"<sup>53</sup>

"on examining her below the waist, they found..."<sup>54</sup>

"they found her extremely unsound and worm-eaten."<sup>55</sup>

The good lady's horror is quickly replaced by curiosity, and a vow that:

I'd a died first before I'd submitted to it. I always heerd tell the English quality ladies were awful bold, but I never heerd the like o' that.<sup>56</sup>

In the same sketch, Sam treats the reader to a delightful story of how he protected his honour and property from the loud-mouthed and good-for-nothing blue-nose who hated him for his success. He who had the nerve to tangle with Sam Slick, as Sam told it:

pitched over me near about a rod or so, I guess, on his head, and ploughed up the ground with his nose, the matter of a foot or so.<sup>57</sup>

In addition to the ladies, and to energy, resourcefulness, and hard work in the people, the only thing that Haliburton and Sam could agree on was "old Clay".<sup>58</sup> In this sketch, the usual aphorisms and epigrams are replaced by a half-page of praise on the redoubtable horse, who is reputed to be "half-horse, half-alligator, with a cross of airthquake."<sup>59</sup> He is the means by which the Squire and

Sam got together, in the first sketch. He, Sam, Hopewell, and the Squire are the only enduring characters in all the Sam Slick volumes. While it would seem that much of the mention of "old Clay" is simply to demonstrate Haliburton's love and knowledge of horseflesh, he is also a good measuring rod to show how the Yankees went ahead and the blue-nose lagged behind.

The rest of the fictional work written by Haliburton will be shown to be nothing more than attempts to reiterate what he had said in the first series. Haliburton had in mind a limited number of foibles and follies which he wished to bring to the attention of Nova Scotian and British citizens. He had, as well, a limited number of ways in which to bring those shortcomings to the peoples' attention. But his readers had made Haliburton realize that he had an audience, and one which was receptive to his humour if not to his entire political philosophy. So Haliburton continued his battle with what he considered to be the worst side of human nature; unfortunately, the waves that this modern Canute struggled with proved just as intractable as had the earlier ones.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE SECOND AND THIRD SERIES OF THE CLOCKMAKER

In addition to the first series, the bulk of Haliburton's satirical humour revolved around Sam Slick.. Included in this group of books are: the second and third series of The Clockmaker, The Attaché; or, Sam Slick in England, Sam Slick's Wise Saws and Modern Instances; or, What He Said, Did, or Invented, and Nature and Human Nature.

But despite the fact that Sam was still the hero of the piece he had changed. The major weakness of the second and third series of The Clockmaker lies in the fact that Haliburton, exulting in the success of the first series, probably felt that stronger dosages of his satirical medicine were in order. The most immediate evidence of this in the tone and length of the sketches. The very facts of life about writing in Howe's periodical had required that The Clockmaker pieces should be concise and hard-hitting. Because of the shortage of space, Haliburton had had to say what he would with the fewest words possible. As an example of Haliburton's utilization of words when writing in The Novascotian, witness his use of various comic names, "Deacon Flint," "Constable Nab", and many more. If Haliburton had tended to long-winded and rambling prose even at that time, the opportunity for him to write

at length, in whole volumes, actually rendered his art a disservice. He was no longer limited to a small corner of Howe's paper; and the subsequent sketches, in the second and third series, ran to more than six pages each, whereas the first series averaged fewer than four pages per sketch.

A second factor is the release that was effected when the literary connection with Howe was broken. Although Haliburton and Howe had differed in their ideas about the alleviation of social, political, and economic problems in Nova Scotia, they had been able to come to a workable compromise with the first Clockmaker series. However, on his own, Haliburton was not forced to observe such curbs as he had had in Joseph Howe's newspaper. He was now able to give full rein to his feelings; to show those who are in error or at fault the road of right reason. He does not hesitate to call a spade a spade, or in this case, a democrat the greatest of tyrants;<sup>1</sup> and speaking of universal suufrage he says:

rogues and vagabonds will make laws to govern men  
of property and character.<sup>2</sup>

Whereas earlier, perhaps due to the restraining influence of Howe, he had concentrated on positive action, Haliburton now shows the people the devils which hinder them. The American is no longer merely the comically dyspeptic

ambassador in England.<sup>3</sup> America is now a refuse centre:

it does receive the outpourin's of the world;  
homicides and regicides, jail-birds and galley-  
birds, poorhouse chaps and workhouse chaps,  
rebels, infidels, and forgers - rogues of all  
sorts, sizes, and degrees.<sup>4</sup>

It is at this time that Haliburton forces Sam to say the things for which Chittick and Logan accuse him of artistic lapses. But while Sam is generally a consistent and believable character, he does have some flaws. Sam is now given too much sermonizing to do. For example, note the following:

be honest, be consistent, be temperate; be rather the advocate of internal improvement than political change; of rational reform, but not organic alterations.<sup>5</sup>

Haliburton has become so involved in this italicized moral that Sam has even lost his manner of speech. It is one thing to let his hero speak liberally, but to make him speak with the Squires's voice is quite another.

Haliburton's sketching hand also becomes extremely careless at times. After drawing an extensive and intensive picture of Nick Bradshaw, a typical blue-nose farmer, good natured and athletic, but completely unmindful and incapable of caring for himself and his own, Sam turns around and says:

but it's a strange thing that, Squire, but it's as sure as rates, the poor are everywhere more liberal, more obligin', and more hospitable, accordin' to their means, than the rich are.<sup>6</sup>

The reader can only be confused by such ambiguity; certainly this is a serious error for a satirist to have committed.

He was, in fact, getting too close to his work for it not to have suffered. He damns his enemies, making dangerous generalizations and twisting arguments illogically. About those who honestly or dishonestly embraced an anti-slavery platform he (Sam) has this to say:

walk into the niggers' says I, 'and they'll help you walk into the whites, and they'll make you walk into Parliament.'<sup>7</sup>

He condemns the emancipation of the Negro simply because it had proven a good political platform for a few unworthy candidates.

Then he extrapolates and finds fault with elections, per se:

but when you subtract electioneerin' party spirit, hypocrisy, ambition, ministerial flourishes, and all the other onder-tow causes that operated in this work - which at best was but clumsily contrived, and bunglin' by executes - it don't leave much to brag on, arter all, does it, now.<sup>8</sup>

This is his commentary on a fictional English election campaign. Haliburton was dangerous now, for his capriciousness as well as his wrong-headedness. If it had struck

Haliburton that the reformers were strong in the House of Lords, even that beloved and august institution would not have been spared. Although it is taken for granted that the pleas to forget suffrage, reform, and politics in general were directed to the masses and not to clear-headed, educated gentlemen, it is still ironic that Haliburton, only twenty years later, would join those whom he condemned here. Equally ironic is his opinion, in trying to persuade the people to leave government alone, that they would be cared for:

if you make that branch elective referring to the council you put government right into the gap; and all the difference of opinion, instead of bein' between the two branches as it is now - that is, in fact between the people themselves - would then occur in all cases between the people and the governor.<sup>9</sup>

All this came from the man who had advocated anything but an organic change in government. How could Haliburton expect the common man to have implicit faith in an organization that he himself so clearly condemns here? In one breath he tells them that the government is useless, yet he would rather it be left to the devices of those who are experienced and wise in the ways of government. What better argument could the reformers themselves have had for removing such a disfunctional mode of government? Such ammunition; and it was supplied by a Tory. And immediately following this, instead of saying that elective

councils were inconsistent with colonial freedom within the Empire, Haliburton makes the blunder of saying:

elective councils are inconsistent with colonial dependence.<sup>10</sup>

He was becoming more and more the "intemperate advocate" whom he had condemned in the earlier series.

As was mentioned earlier, Haliburton was now possessed of a free rein in number as well as choice of words. Although Archibald Mac Mechan may have thought "The Duke of Kent's Lodge" to be Haliburton's "finest essay in serious prose", it is in truth only a misplaced chapter from his An Historical Statistical Account of Nova Scotia. It contains the same charming, personal look at history, but it also contains the seeds of boredom. In large quantities, servings of such as the following, become quite impalatable:

the affectionate remembrance we retain of its lamented owner may have added to my regret, and increased the interest I felt in this lonely and peculiar ruin. In the Duke of Kent the Nova Scotians lost a kind patron and a generous friend...<sup>11</sup>

This sort of nostalgic description is typical of non-fictional Haliburton and out of place in his sketches.

Haliburton always draws attention to his most pronounced opinions by italicizing them. These volumes are, throughout, marked by a great increase in the number of these outstanding aphorisms and epigrams in each sketch.



The effect that they have on the reader in confirming and persuading is, at times, in an inverse ratio.

But these volumes are not complete failures. By no means. One of the best jabs to come from Haliburton's satirical pen is in "Italian Paintings".<sup>12</sup> In it, Haliburton uses Sam to strike a blow at Victorian prudishness. In an atmosphere where bare piano legs were considered lewd and suggestive, this lover of the arts and nature, too, had to be a judge. He was acting as an agent for the Governor of Connecticut who admonished him, saying:

One thing, however, do pray remember, don't bring any pictur's that will evoke a blush on female cheeks, or cause vartue to stand afore 'em with averted eyes or indignant looks.

If the irony is heavy, and the following burlesque broad, the point is still well-made and well-taken:

I bought two Madonnas, I think they call them-- beautiful little pictur's they were too; but the child's legs were so naked and ondecnt, that to please the Governor and his factory gals, I had an artist to paint trousers and a pair of lace boots on him, and they look quite genteel now.

Perhaps because he had no personal stake here, Haliburton is more effective than when dealing with colonial affairs; whatever the reason, it is here that his satirical humour succeeds. Another very amusing sketch is "Behind The Scenes",<sup>13</sup> where Sam relates some of the days of his wild youth; a wild satire on the foolishness and naivete of most young

men. Sam is taken behind the scenes by a more worldly friend and literally shown what could happen to the uninitiated.

He was also capable of extremely clever and humorous repartee. Unlike some wiser men, Haliburton seems not to have been given to editing, thus leaving his wheat mixed with chaff. And most readers are not inclined to read three or four bad or mediocre pages to find one good one. However, excepting one section on the relative merits of American and British nationality, "Facing A Woman" is one worth reading.<sup>14</sup> It is fast-moving, realistic, and funny. If the satire is light, it is still good.

At the other pole, however, there are those pieces which too often cause the good work to be ignored. What reader, however loyal and avid, would continue reading after gazing upon these lines of dialectical humour, supposedly spoken by a Dutch governor of Java:

'Mine hears' (which means my dummies, or fellers that hear, but don't speak) - 'mine hears,' fill your glasses'

'Ahem!' and he took out his nosheviper (which is the Dutch for a pocket-handkerchief), and tried to blow his nose;<sup>15</sup>

This sort of low, broad comedy, combined with the several instances already mentioned, and the many more to be found, especially in The Letterbag, tend to cast doubt on Haliburton's ability to evaluate his own and his readers' knowledge of

languages and accents. He was losing his grip on satiric reality. Where he should have been trying to persuade his audience, he was stating his own position and expecting it to be accepted. Haliburton seemed not to realize that he could not just condemn out-of-hand all Dissenters, Chartists, Reformers, and Democrats; his "proof" was flimsy. As in "Playing A Card",<sup>16</sup> he would resort to a cheap trick, spouting puns, as a substitute for proof. By placing himself in the position of a reformer, as Sam Slick, he perverted his own principles. He was obviously combining his own reflection on his time in the Nova Scotia Assembly with a sour look at what had or might have happened there. Because he used Sam, who was a master of expediency, Haliburton failed to show that Assemblies were inherently spawning grounds for dishonesty, patronage, and generally not the place for honest men. Although the travesty of the scene in the House of Assembly is excellent out of context, Haliburton's lessons, attached at both ends of it, are not. He had Sam say:

I would point you out legislatur's on this here continent where the speakin' is all kitchen talk, all strut, brag, and vulgar impidence.<sup>17</sup>

But that proves nothing. What he did deign to show was no more conclusive. Ironically, Haliburton found in Sam the very fault of which he is being accused here. Speaking of Sam's views of the English, the Squire said:

Having excited himself by his own story, he first imagined a case and then resented it, as if it had occurred. 18

With the later Clockmaker series, the pendulum of emphasis swung to the didactic. Confident in himself and his method of presentation, Haliburton had allowed himself the luxury of getting his thesis across with as little humour as necessary while his tracts were being read. That pendulum was due to take several peculiar moves before it came to rest.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ATTACHÉ

The Attaché appeared approximately three years after The Letterbag, Haliburton's first non-Sam Slick work of satirical humour. Rebounding from a work wherein none of his three main characters was mentioned, he re-vitalized them all. In fact, the Squire and the Reverend Mr. Hopewell now became much larger than life; at least larger than in the parts given them in the three series of The Clockmaker. The Attaché had been in the planning stage at the latest from a point near the end of the second series, where the idea was made explicit.<sup>1</sup> Worked in as a satire on supposed patronage granted to writers, the idea is quite clear:

Mr. Slick and I talk of goin' to England next year, and writin' a book about the British; if Clockmaker gets hold of 'em by the tail, if he don't make the feathers fly, it's a pity.<sup>2</sup>

Well, it was, and is, a pity. Haliburton was requiring an ever greater space to say less and less of value. Where even the later two Clockmaker series averaged something over six pages per chapter, the first volume of The Attaché is over eighteen pages per chapter. This series ran to only five editions<sup>3</sup>; and many readers conceivably picked up The Attaché because it was written by a Nova Scotian, or a colonial, or a Loyalist, depending on the side of the border or the Atlantic from which the book was viewed.

A good example of the blind faith in Haliburton's talent held by such sympathetic readers is the approbation given by Richard Nugent, then editor of The Novascotian, maintaining:

if England has its Dickens - and Ireland her Lever - Nova Scotia has her Haliburton whose literary fame is nothing dimmed by a comparison with his most popular contemporaries.<sup>4</sup>

This fervour of favour was dampened somewhat by a reading of the first few installments; whereafter the editorial commentary included the following opinion:

if indeed, we thought our readers would not be displeased with us for excluding the writings of a native author from our paper, we should scarcely feel inclined to encumber our columns with such an amount of trash.<sup>5</sup>

Such a scathing remark could hardly be interpreted to mean that there was anything worthwhile about the writer; other than his nationality, that is. The critics were becoming more objective. Liberals were not as likely as before to read a Tory writer, much less Tory propaganda. Clothed in good satire and good humour, the medicine had not been so bitter to swallow. The way things now stood, readers were justified in staying away in droves.

The Attaché shows major re-thinking, on the part of Haliburton, in his method of presentation. He now took the Clockmaker to England. His central idea was to show the British in particular, and all, in general, the ad-

vantage to both parties - Nova Scotia and British alike - of the retention and extension of their connection. He did not, at the same time, arrest his other barbs. Non-Anglicans, Democrats, slavers, and tourist-writers, among others, still abounded, and so did his satirical sketches on them. But Haliburton changed the forms of characterization. While the characters of the Squire and the minister had been established almost at the readers' first sight of them, here they underwent a major re-working. Haliburton was even more sure of his creative powers than before. He now felt empowered to remove Sam from actual, if not seeming authority, in the handling of important satiric targets. But Sam would not abdicate easily; he had not been the central figure of nearly every sketch in the three series of the Clockmaker for nothing. The Attaché itself was so named for the position which Sam had received for outstanding duties performed for his "free and enlightened" nation. However, the makeshift solution which appears in these volumes only serves to place greater smears and scratches on Haliburton's satirical escutcheon.

The greatest blow to the quality of the work lies in the fact that an unaligned Sam was the only possible means for Haliburton to avoid writing tracts instead of humorous sketches; but in The Attaché, Sam is given a distinct pro-British bias. Whereas Haliburton had previously geared the actions and words of others to the whim of

the Clockmaker, Sam is now in a subservient role. The first rousing blast that he is able to muster is against the English rain; and the fact that people do not rise early enough to suit him.<sup>6</sup> The pace and excitement of the entire volume is fairly consistent with the quality of the narrative of this chapter. Slick becomes thoroughly embroiled in chasing birds away, sharpening his razor, mending his clothes, and other enervating employments. The depth of bowing and scraping that Haliburton had reached forced him to apologise for even these deviations by Sam. In "Tying A Nightcap" the Squire is as humble as Uriah Heap, often praising the overall health-giving aspects of the English climate:

that Mr. Slick should find a rainy day in the country dull, is not to be wondered at; it is probable it would be so any where, to a man who had so few resources, within himself, as the Attaché.<sup>7</sup>

Seldom before had Haliburton apologised for the loquacious Yankee; and even more seldom had he done it so nastily. It seems that Sam was going to try the patience and good nature of his two travelling companions many more times; indeed, for as long as he remained an Attaché. Early in the first volume Hopewell makes it clear that he and the Squire will tone down the bellicose Sam. He asks of the Squire:



my object in mentioning the subject to you, is to request the favour of you, to persuade Sam not to be too sensitive on these topics; not to take offence, where it is not intended; and above all, rather to vindicate his nationality by his conduct, than to justify those aspersions, by his intemperate behaviour.<sup>8</sup>

In their new roles, both tried to do so. The minister soon becomes nauseatingly didactic. In small doses, his unaffected, sincere, and exemplary speech and behaviour make him an admirable addition to the list of characters. But without increasing or broadening his character, to force a minor figure to assume a major function was a grave error. He had not been extensively used, to this point, but the mold was definite; he was a simple, good-hearted preacher who preached. He was all these things, true, but he was also a crashing bore. For that matter, so was his comrade-in-arms, in their attempts to cushion the blows that Sam was bound to land on Haliburton's masters and hoped-for benefactors. That Sam in all the diversity of his sneaking conniving "soft sawdery" ways could pale so quickly boded ill for his one-dimensional friends.

As a testimonial for the minister, the Squire early establishes the position of Hopewell:

born and educated in the United States when they were British dependencies, and possessed of a thorough knowledge of the causes which led to the rebellion and the means used to hasten the crisis, he was at home on all colonial topics, while his great experience of both

monarchical and democratic governments, derived a most valuable authority on politics generally.<sup>9</sup>

Modesty forbade Haliburton from giving such a glowing tribute to the Squire, since his identification with the latter was obvious; but even without it, he and the minister were on their way. If Sam opened his mouth to berate the words or deeds of a Britisher - as had previously been his habit, and as he was increasingly wont to do of late - a hand was clapped over his mouth.

"Don't call him Johnny Russel" said Mr. Hopewell, "or a little chap, or such flippant names, I don't like to hear you talk that way."<sup>10</sup>

He had to let the British know that despite the lack of opportunity for colonials, he was unwavering in his loyalty.

The minister gushed at the Squire:

It is our fatherland. I recollect when I was a colonist, as you are, we were in the habit of applying to it, in common with Englishmen, that endearing appellation "Home," and I believe you still continue to do so in the provinces.<sup>11</sup>

Haliburton had worked himself into a tight corner in this work. With one breath he said that the British owed jobs, via patronage, to worthy members of the colonies.<sup>12</sup>

With the next he says of the British government:

their government is not only paternal and indulgent, but is wholly gratuitous. We neither pay these forces, nor feed them, nor clothe them.<sup>13</sup>

Following a protracted speech in praise of the British connection by Hopewell, Haliburton complains, through Sam, that there is no room for expansion - mental and monetary - in the colonies. Haliburton then, through the Squire, does an about face:

the interruption was very annoying, for no man I ever met so thoroughly understands the subject of colonial government as Mr. Hopewell.<sup>14</sup>

After Sam has flailed away at "bunkum" in the members of the House of Commons, among others, the Squire is right on hand to smooth any ruffled feathers:

the whole passage means after all, when transposed into that phraseology which an Englishman would use, very little more than this, that the House of Commons presented a noble field for a man of abilities as a public speaker.<sup>15</sup>

"Soft sawder" is now being put to use in a much less enjoyable or agreeable form.

A further example of Haliburton's own indecision about the right way to use his new tools is demonstrated in a conversation which returns Hopewell to the role of the well-meaning dupe. As he had been easy pickings for Sam in earlier works, so he is again. In "Looking Back", the minister is made fun of twice. Sam first twists the biblical story of Lot's wife - in his supposed reaction to it, rather - to where the poor minister thinks for a time that the Clock-

maker, his favourite son, is to be numbered among the damned.<sup>16</sup> Sam then relieves that situation, only to repeat it, this time by actually being sacrilegious.<sup>17</sup> The poor innocent is to be pitied, but what reasonable person would put stock in the opinions of such a gullible, easily-tricked minister? He would hardly seem to be anyone to consult in a quest for political reality.

The minister was not the proper choice as the spokesman for a once-successful satirical humourist. Neither was a protracted, sometimes diffident, sometimes belligerent look at England.

It should be stated that this book, to an even greater extent than any of its predecessors, is plagued with long geographically and historically oriented passages. This fact makes much of the bulk worth forgetting, in the light of the author's satiric intent, and in the light of the negligible intrinsic literary value of these segments.

At the close of the second volume of The Attaché, in "The Irish Preface", Haliburton states what he has already demonstrated:

that the sentiments uttered by Mr. Slick, are not designed either as an expression of those of the author, or of the Americans who visit this country.<sup>18</sup>

But occasionally he is able to convince Sam of the right road,

which he does in "Changing A Name", where Sam relents:

"well, I must say," replied he, "I do think that the larnin', piety, property, and respectability, is on the Tory side; and where all them things is united, right most commonly is found a-joggin' right along in company."<sup>19</sup>

Haliburton was seldom on the same side of the fence as Sam. At least, he could not let on that he was. This fact, as stated earlier, is what causes much of the confusion in The Attache. They could remain aligned in ideas over English climate, servants, and parties, even publically, but any greater collusion would have damaged the colonial cause. Consequently, poor Sam is stuck with blasts against hotel-keepers, arguments with chamber-maids, and the occasional thrust against his own kind. He can, however, still bring off a timely line; such as the one directed against young English gentry:

an oldest son or two, with the eend of the silver spoon he was born with, a peepin' out o' the corner of his mouth, and his face as vacant as a horn lantern without a candle in it.<sup>20</sup>

This is but a token which sadly reminds the reader how few and far between the bits of old, homely humour were now coming.

Haliburton momentarily regains his stride in a piece called "A Swoi-ree". Sam has a wonderful time recounting his disastrous evening at a country ball. His telling of the tale brings back the taste for his skillful, rapid

patter; his gift for concise and precise character delineation. Spilt drinks, bruised skins and other faux pas presented with some of the old lighter touch are welcome but lonely examples of what his humour could have been. One such, when trying to stand aside while a sweet young miss wished passage is:

with all my heart, Miss, if I could; but I can't move; if I could I would roll down on the carpet and you should walk over me. Take care of your feet, Miss, I am off of mine. Lord bless me! what's this? why as I am a livin' sinner, it's half her frock hitched on to my coat button. Now I know what that scream meant.<sup>21</sup>

By the end of The Attaché, there is little satirical humour left in Sam and in Haliburton. By making the text of his material inoffensive to those whom he wished to gain as friends, Haliburton had emasculated his best satirical weapon. Sam was made the fool and the foil of his colourless cohorts. By giving him trivia to work with, Haliburton had made his utility negligible. And Haliburton had not the ability or the inclination to bestow humour upon Sam's two companions. The make-up that Haliburton had given them, as direct reflections of his moralizing side, could not assimilate a sense of humour. At any rate, Haliburton did not want it so. He thought that he had retained sufficient humour to keep his tracts popular. He must have thought that the drawn-out, nostalgic wanderings over the English countryside would be lapped up by the colonial and English,

too. They might have been, had they been placed in a personal journal or diary, and had been read as such. In works of satirical humour they were mill-stones. In fact, the chaff had come to out-weigh the wheat by a large margin. The humour, where it was found, was growing duller through repetition. Haliburton had to devise a new plan to regain his flagging popularity. He had to do something, if he were to be able to reach the people. Whether or not he wished to spend time and space in cluttering his lessons with humour, he had to do something, or no future Nova Scotian would know that:

a Tory government is the proper government for a monarchy, a suitable one for any country, but it is the only one for England.<sup>22</sup>

Haliburton was indeed ready with another plan. He had a new formula to work Sam into; a different pattern, but questionably successful.

## CHAPTER V

### WISE SAWS, AND NATURE AND HUMAN NATURE

After a period of ten years, Haliburton brought Sam Slick back to life in Sam Slick's Wise Saws and Modern Instances, to bring to the Nova Scotian an awareness of their responsibilities. To make them recognize:

the vast resources and capabilities of their native land, to stimulate their energy and enterprise, to strengthen the bond of union between the colonies and the parent state...<sup>1</sup>

In the introduction, Haliburton admits, implicitly, the failure of relegating Sam to an inferior role. Haliburton knew that this had been a main reason for the shortcomings of The Attaché. And no mention is made here of the Squire and the minister, the two men who dominated the "wisdom" of that book. As Haliburton writes:

I have, therefore, written in a colloquial style, and called in the aid of a humourous itinerant American to propound, in his own peculiar way, the moral lessons I was desirous of enforcing.<sup>2</sup>

Sam was employed this time as a commissioner of the Fisheries by the President of the United States himself.<sup>3</sup> Haliburton's purpose here was to provide an opportunity to show the imminent danger of concluding a trade treaty with the United States. By employing Sam, Haliburton could satirize the Americans and the blue-noses too, as he showed how the "free



and enlightened" Yankees gulling the Nova Scotians out of their money and resources.<sup>4</sup>

Now that he had Sam back on North American soil, Haliburton stopped the soft-peddling that had become typical of the satire on the British in The Attaché. Sam regains some of his strength of character. And the pendulum swings back again.

But although Sam returned to his former self, the sketches themselves have different emphasis. Where the lessons, morals, and general didacticism had been prevalent before, odd bits of humour and yawningly long stories and character sketches now came to the fore. This change of emphasis, however, does little to alter Haliburton's sameness of delivery. As Chittick notes:

one is forced to admit, in fact, that there was much reason if little charity in the judgement of a critic of Haliburton's own time, that because the Clockmaker's eccentricities had been an agreeable novelty when first proffered, and not unwelcome "twice-laid cold" or even "deviled", was no excuse for thinking highly of them when served up "hashed".<sup>5</sup>

Except for minor differences, Wise Saws and Nature and Human Nature are of the same "hashed" quality; when compared to the first Clockmaker series, both are of Herculean length, the two works running to a total of more than fourteen hundred pages.

Haliburton had, to be fair, regained some of his sense

of what his audience would or would not accept. In fact, in Nature and Human Nature he made concessions, as if anticipating a critical reaction to his sketches. To forestall any complaints about the dulness of the repetition, for example, Sam drew from his tote-bag a story which ended with a question and answer:

'Sy', says I, ' why on airth did you repeat them arguments so often? It was everlastin' yarny.'

'When I can't drive a nail with one blow, I hammer away till I do git it in.'<sup>5</sup>

And to supposed complaints that the previous work, Wise Saws, was filled with unnecessary italicized truisms and moralizings. Haliburton (Sam) maintained:

no-no, put them italics in, as I have always done. They show there is truth at the bottom.<sup>7</sup>

And Sam had been guilty of speaking in a dialect unknown to him before or since:

when pleasure is the business of life it ceases to be pleasure, and when it's all labour and no play, work like an outstuffed saddle cuts into the very bone. Neither labour nor idleness has a road that leads to happiness, one has no room for the heart and the other corrupts it.<sup>8</sup>

As if to apologize for slips such as this, Haliburton had Sam complain:

but, my dear nippent, by that means you destroy my individuality. I cease to be the genuine itinerant

Yankee Clockmaker, and merge into a very bad imitation.<sup>9</sup>

But then Haliburton had Sam say that the Squire should not be surprised if ensuing works had the same mistakes:

for I can write as pure English, if I can't speak it, as anybody can.<sup>10</sup>

As Haliburton was implicitly demonstrating here, he would take no great pains to improve and polish his talent. Instead of editing and correcting his failings he had apologized both for those already committed and those to be made. He thereby condemned the future to the same errors. Such a weak-kneed defence is pitiful.

The content of these sketches was the same as those of the first series: wasters in the House of Commons, slavery, American smugglers, lazy colonials, and others. But now, the sketches were less and less cohesive. The stories had either no moral reason for existing or were complete tracts of religious, political, or economic philosophy. The stories did not lead logically to a conclusion that would teach after amusing. Seven times the length of the sketches of that first series, the character sketches were becoming full drawings, and Haliburton went flat when he had so much space for one idea. Where the skeleton had been provided before, and the reader's imagination had been allowed to fill in the gaps he had been fine. But here the humour went flat and the message became boring. Haliburton had not the power of

description and narration to carry it off.

From every one of his fictional works, it is obvious that Sam (Haliburton) had an eye for the ladies. In fact, the fair sex occupies a significant position in both works considered here. Haliburton seemed to consider himself qualified to draw their weaknesses and foibles - he never accused them of more - and consequently spent a great deal of words on them. This predilection of his for the revelation of woman's weaknesses did not, in the end, improve the quality of his satire. His protracted descriptions of lovely ladies, added to the tales of adventure and the supernatural diluted rather than increased its potency.

In his use of Sam Slick, Haliburton had defeated himself. After the first sketches, every variation had failed. The bulk of the later sketches became simply anticlimactic and Sam had become a bore. People had tired, not only of what Haliburton had had him say, but also of how he said it.

## CHAPTER VI

THE LETTERBAG

The Letterbag was the first of Haliburton's three attempts to write satirical humour without making use of Sam Slick. Written in epistolary form, also a unique attempt for Haliburton, The Letterbag contains a few glimpses at good Haliburton, and several long looks at the worst of him.

Haliburton did not realize how true the words were which he wrote in the dedication, to Lord John Russell:

dedications are mendacious effusions we all know, and honest men begin to be ashamed of them as reflecting but little honour on the author or the patron; but in a work of humour an avowed of the truth may well find a place, and be classed among the best jokes it contains.<sup>1</sup>

Or rather, he realized how "mendacious" his "effusions" were being, but he scarcely thought that this would be funnier than the book itself. Nonetheless, the avowed plea for patronage is extremely good, considering Haliburton's point of view and hopes for British aid to colonial worthies. The case which he made for their receiving of it was so well done, and the sincerity of the plea so appealing that this imaginary request by the author to his potential patron shows the best satire of the whole book. A short excerpt may demonstrate its quality:

I have selected your Lordship, then as my Mecaenas, - ? not on account of your quick perceptions of the ridiculous, or your powers of humour, but solely on account of the very extensive patronage at your disposal. Your Lordship is a colonial minister, and I am a colonial author; the connexion between us, therefore, in this relation, is so natural, that this work has not only a claim to your protection, but a right to your support.<sup>2</sup>

As enjoyable as the dedication is, however, Haliburton did not take long to bring the reader back to earth.

The preface becomes completely bogged down with puns. He twisted them to suit his satire, but they do not impress. And while they are always present in Haliburton's sketches, in this work the punning literally vomits forth. Dryden shared this seeming hard judgement of this type of low humour:

but it may be puns were then in fashion, as they were in the sermons of the last age, and in the court of King Charles the Second. I am sorry to say it, for the sake of Horace; but certain it is, he has no fine palate who can feed so heartily on garbage.<sup>3</sup>

If Horace is so whipped, surely Haliburton cannot go uncondemned for the same crime. The introduction does not contain the most flagrant example, however. That is reserved for a glib midshipman on H.M. Ship Lapwing, in a letter to a fellow officer:

we have lots of land lubbers on board, young agitators fond of "intestine commotions", who are constantly "spouting"...maidens whose bosoms "heave"...young clerks who "cast up accounts"<sup>4</sup>

and so on, ad nauseum. The puns, to be found throughout the work, are often cleverly worked out and neatly turned, but they do not produce good satirical humour.

The second major weakness of the book, the one which ruined any chance that Haliburton had of convincing readers of anything but his characters' ridiculousness, was his drawing of the letter-writers. The problem of the caricaturist is to make the caricature as close to reality as possible; then to make his victim deviate from that reality enough to make him a dupe. For some reason, Haliburton was unable to differentiate between good and bad caricature. Too often he did not make the people, their speech, and action ridiculous. They were ridiculous; because Haliburton failed in their drawing.

Unlike the hand which drew Sam Slick, the one which drew the coloured steward, the Jew, the butcher, and the others in The Letterbag was the hand of an unskilled amateur. Whether the reason for his failure is a lack of research or thought or care, Haliburton drew poorly here. Each personality, instead of being a realistic individual was, rather, an archetype of some group which Haliburton wished to satirize.

The Jew not only talks about the expense of the trip, the chance of doing business - dishonestly, of course - and the discriminated-against Jew, but he mouths:

but dat ish not de worsht needer, for I looshes  
te monish, by tinkng more of maself dan de cartsh...<sup>5</sup>

The Frenchman is a dilettante, who complains about the culinary ability of the Americans and the powerful but "clompy Niagara" in incredibly broken English. As he says:

I find de English tonge vary tuff, and I am  
hard to understand it.<sup>6</sup>

In the first place, the Frenchman and the Jew would hardly write such atrocious English, even if they spoke it this way. And in the second place, and much more important, if they actually had such terrible difficulty with the language, and were writing to friends of the same ethnic background they would never have written in English at all. These errors are major in the work of a man who prided himself on dialectical humour.

The book is indeed full of those archetypes already mentioned as well as: an American trader who even has Sam Slick's patented "the British can whip all the world, and we can whip the British", and who bragged enormously, a coquette of an actress, a lazy, sneaky Negro servant, and a hypocritical Puritan. They are all caricatures of caricatures. But the book also has some good humour. While deriding the life of a wastrel son of a colonial, Haliburton provides a somewhat lighter touch. This letter, a misdirected one from the blackguard to his father, sent



inadvertently, to his brother and its mate, the one intended for the brother and sent to the father, are hilarious, by implication. To the father he writes, by mistake, a letter which includes the following commentary on that worthy gentleman, when he thinks he has duped him:

I must say he has a little dash of the hypocrite about him, and I never can resist laughing when I look into that smooth, sly, canting visage of his.<sup>8</sup>

Then, to his brother he writes:

it gives me the greatest pain to hear from you that my brother Tom is inclined to dissipation and extravagance. I was always afraid that such would be the result of your too indulgent allowance, which it is never prudent to enlarge as you have done, for a young man of his gait temperament.<sup>9</sup>

Here, Haliburton has regained the power of some of his early writing. It is neither strained with lesson nor hampered by heavy-handed burlesque. The wayward son asks for financial assistance to help him through a period of quiet convalescence from an illness, the source of which a delicate mind shudders to consider.<sup>10</sup> And following this light-hearted raillery, comes what Chittick calls "easily the cleverest piece of sustained political satire Haliburton ever wrote."<sup>11</sup> And it is good, and without the crutch of an accent to bolster it. The sketch, a "Letter from a Loco-Foco of New York to a Sympathizer in Vermont",<sup>12</sup> is a parody of Durham's Report on Canada. In it, an American tourist is visiting Britain and is making comments about social and political conditions

there, even as Lord Durham had done in the colonies. In the manner of Durham who had not visited Nova Scotia and yet wrote about it, Haliburton's tourist, Timothy Noddyn writes as follows:

Scotland I have not seen, but my clerk took a ride into it of twelve hours, and he informs me, that more than half the houses are uninhabited, the natural consequence of misrule and misgovernment.<sup>13</sup>

And, as Durham had advocated responsible government for the colonies, so Noddyn, like the Chartists, wants to see the House of Lords elective. And in a reference to language and religion, Haliburton refuses even to let the reader draw the parallel himself:

One of the most startling discoveries I have made is, that the people of the Upper Island, or England, speak a different language, and hold different religion from those in the Lower Island, or Ireland. Until my visit, this important truth was never known, and it beared a strong resemblance to the fact recently ascertained by a great linguist, that the French of Canada are not Anglo-Saxons, and do not speak English...<sup>14</sup>

Haliburton's sarcasm here in the travesty of Durham's Report does not detract from its quality. It is well-organized, with an even tone, and, for Haliburton, remarkably restrained.

As all things must end, so did Haliburton's good sketches in The Letterbag. Hard on the heels of the "Loco-Foco" is a long and unfunny nostalgic look at travel by coach.

It is an essay on transportation in the days before steam and machinery took over and retired the then-obsolescent old reliables.<sup>15</sup> This story, together with the dozens of complaints - many of them convincing - of the passengers about the smoke, the sea-sickness, the loss of dignity, and the depreciation in the service offered, makes one wonder if Haliburton was a true advocate of the progress which he ostensibly supports here. The trials of the passengers are often so sympathetically drawn that a longing for the good old days seems as strong as the need for fast transportation between Britain and the colonies. And this is strange, considering Haliburton's desire to promote trade and movement via quick transportation.

Whatever his true feelings about steamships were, the telling about them was truly the means of one who admitted:

I find I grow somewhat rigmarolly as I advance in years, and am more addicted to narrative.<sup>16</sup>

The sketches are filled with puns, with overdrawn characters speaking unbelievable lines. And the over-riding tone of the work is similar to that of The Attaché, where Haliburton was ever solicitous of British reactions to his words. In the closing letter from the author, Haliburton gushes:

whichever party is in power in England, Tories or Whigs, the government is always distinguished by the same earnest desire to patronize as it is to protect the colonies.<sup>17</sup>

This is not a weakness based upon the removal of Sam Slick. Haliburton hated the Whigs, not Sam. But at the same time, Haliburton was being lenient because he saw no danger of Durham's follies being implemented. He could afford to be magnanimous, then. By the time Haliburton had retired Sam again, however, things had worsened considerably.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE OLD JUDGE

The Old Judge is Haliburton's second attempt to write satire without using Sam Slick. The method of presentation in this work is completely dissimilar to that of The Letter-bag. In the latter, Haliburton uses epistles from the travellers to friends or relatives to convey his satiric message, allowing character revelation through their words and actions to accomplish his purpose. In The Old Judge, however, although Sam is absent, the Sam Slick formula is not. The book has its humorous sketches, as have the three series of The Clockmaker; and it has its narrators, as they have. The work follows The Attaché in more than one way. In The Attaché Sam had lost his position as the main character; in The Old Judge he is replaced by a facsimile, or rather by several facsimiles.

To fill the role occupied by the Squire in The Clockmaker, Haliburton introduces a nameless English tourist. He, too, makes public all that he hears and sees while in the company of Judge Sandford:

Having, like Boswell, kept a copious journal of the conversations I had with the Judge, I shall in all instances let him speak for himself, as his power of description far exceeds mine.<sup>1</sup>

And in praise of the Judge, he has this to say:

Although far advanced in years, he is still as active in body and mind, as quick of perception, and as fond of humour, as when he was at the bar. He abounds in anecdote; is remarkably well informed for a lawyer, for their libraries necessarily contain more heavy learning than light reading; and he has great conversational powers. In religion he is a Churchman, and in politics a Conservative, as is almost every gentleman in these colonies.<sup>2</sup>

From this description of the Judge, it is apparent what Haliburton was attempting. He was combining the best attributes of the Squire, Hopewell, and Sam Slick. The unified being was none other than Haliburton himself.

There is also a Mr. Barclay, who is host to Judge Sanford during his stay in the colony. He is another source of sketches. In addition, Haliburton introduces several home-grown varieties of Sam Slick, the first being Mr. William Robins, wrecker, who lasts only a short time. In one rather clever sketch on the gullibility of the blue-noses and their susceptibility to rumour and gossip, he acts as Sam would have done in the same situation. Going to court over a matter to do with a friend, he uses a ruse worthy of Sam Slick to gain the upper hand. He whispers to the crowd, concerning his lawyer:

"precious clever fellow that! Sees it all - says we are right - sure to win it! I wouldn't be in those fellows the plaintiff's skins to-morrow for a trifle! He is a powerful man, that!"<sup>3</sup>

Counting on the gossip to spread and blow up this opinion of an "unbiased stranger", Robins completely undermines the

morale of the opposition. He is the same sneaky, conniving, but humourous-to-watch manipulator of people that Sam had been at his best. Like Sam, Robins knows the people's weaknesses, and like Sam he preys upon them. Robins' existence is short-lived, however, and he is supplanted by Stephen Richardson.

As Haliburton had forewarned, and probably because he knew the limitations of the Judge in sustaining the interest of the readers, he has Sandford introduce a new source of lessons and humour. This description is very familiar:

there is some drollery about him, inexhaustible good humour, and, amid all the nonsense he talks, more quickness of perception and shrewdness than you would at first give him credit for.<sup>4</sup>

But it is not Sam being analyzed, it is Stephen Richardson. Like Sam, he becomes a source of both amusement and annoyance to his more sober companions, in this case the Judge and Barclay; so that they laugh and cry as had the minister and the Squire before them. Richardson is a Nova Scotian, however, and he uses Sam's thoughts in an easier-to-understand if less unique way:

the best office for a farmer is being his own overseer, and the best fees those paid by his orchards and fields.<sup>5</sup>

This is Richardson's reply to a petty seeker of patronage.

Perhaps the success enjoyed by The Old Judge was due to the fact that Haliburton concentrated on thought content rather than dialect. He was not being forced by Sam's background to "Yankeefy" the talk; and perhaps as a result of that, he was able to produce in this book some good humourous and satirical drawings. Or perhaps it was partially due to the fact that in this work alone Haliburton eliminated the italicized aphorisms, thus eliminating the need to force a story to conform to a lesson.

The general good humour which pervades this volume is somewhat of a surprise, considering the political situation of that moment. Before the term of Lord Falkland as Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, the idea of responsible government which Haliburton opposed had seemed doomed to failure. But now, far from failing, it had become a fact; and Haliburton's hopes for Nova Scotia's forming an integral part of the British Empire were crushed. It would not, therefore, be unreasonable to assume that The Old Judge, being published when it was, contained some of Haliburton's sourest, most pessimistic looks at the Nova Scotians. But he had not given up his own battles. As always, he continued to teach and amuse those who read him.

Haliburton succeeds in The Old Judge where he fails most miserable in The Letterbag; that is, in his character-



drawing. Where the latter is replete with ill-conceived characters, the former is endowed with some of Haliburton's best portrayals. He is more correct here than anywhere else in thinking that:

the "dramatis personae" of this work are, therefore, ideal representatives of their several classes, having all the characteristics and peculiarities of their own set, but no actual existence.<sup>6</sup>

The wisest thing which Haliburton could have done was to concentrate on what he knew. In this work, he did so. It was "life in a colony" that he knew. The single greatest reason for Haliburton's success in this environment is that there is enough diversity in the settings and the characters of the sketches to endow them with life and realism. Despite Haliburton's forebodings for the fate of the country, the moralizing didacticism is kept to a minimum. The humour and talent that Haliburton must have possessed to create such works are, for a change, the omnipresent factor. None of the characters presented are radically new or different from those in his other works, but here there is a freshness whereas before there had been staleness.

In both The Letterbag and The Old Judge the humour stems largely from a caricature technique which is Dickensian in quality. The success of the caricature of the latter work is in marked contrast with the unsubtle technique of the former. Exaggerated characterization was always one of

Haliburton's chief satiric methods, but in The Old Judge the sense of the excessive has been developed into full burlesque. As a result, the characters sacrifice some of their humanity for the colour that they gain from their ridiculousness. Like Dickens, Haliburton concentrated on the unique or excessive aspects of his characters, rather than on the qualities which give them normality. For example, Lady Samson, the wife of the Governor, who is already caricatured by her name, is drawn with selective and devastating poignancy. Haliburton describes her as follows:

a short but an uncommonly stout person - unwieldy, perhaps, would be a more appropriate term, and very vulgar. Her dress was a curious and rather complicated mass of striking contrasts, which, notwithstanding her size, awakened the idea of an enormous salmon-fly.<sup>7</sup>

Her daughter, Miss Samson, is equally grotesque in her own way. She is as pale and ineffectual as her mother is flamboyant. Her pathetic coquetry is the subject of further burlesque:

(Miss Samson) lisped a little, either naturally or affectedly, and "danthed only with her own thett."<sup>8</sup>

As well as caricaturing the principal failings of his characters by condensing their personalities into single images, as in the case of Mrs. Samson, Haliburton makes use of another Dickensian technique. He epitomizes the nature of the caricature by a symbolic name, thus reinforcing

the acuteness of the parody:

Sir Hercules and Lady Samson, Miss Samson, Lord Edward Dummkopf and the Honourable Mr. Trotz (the two aides-de-camp), and Captain Howard (the military secretary). It was a large and formidable party from one house.<sup>9</sup>

And in the same sketch Haliburton founders in another way. He fails in the drawing of the Governor himself, but not through the excesses of The Letterbag. He simply writes it badly. The Governor:

was bald; the hand of time, or of the Philistine woman his wife, having removed his hair, which gave a more striking appearance to an enormous nose that disfigured a face which would otherwise have been called handsome.<sup>10</sup>

Even in tales told by the latest "Sam", Stephen Richardson, there is a clarity of detail which renders the sketch more effective. Concerning his fight with a maddened Judge Beler, Richardson describes the judge:

his face was all hairy and slimy; his eyes looked some wild animals', they had such a fiery, restless, wicked glance, which I expect was the ghost looking out of the dead sockets of the unburied skeleton.<sup>11</sup>

And in addition to his caricatures, Haliburton was presenting his public with good, short, and funny descriptions. These were reminiscent of their necessarily short counterparts in the early series. In describing a huge old hulk of a "Jamaiky" -swigging sea-captain, Haliburton reveals his physical appearance in the following purely comic way:

his waistcoat and his trousers were apparently not upon very intimate terms, for though they travelled together, the latter were made to feel their subjection, but, when they lagged too far behind, they were brought to their place by a jerk of impatience that threatened their very existence.<sup>12</sup>

In The Old Judge, also, there is a factor present in the writing which has been condemned in the earlier works. Where earlier Haliburton seems to have been wordy simply in order to show his knowledge, he is justified here for his detailed description. Unlike the earlier books this one is physically and geographically-oriented. And for good reason. The Old Judge abounds with minute detail about Acadia. In fact, it is sub-titled "Life in a Colony". It is quite clear that Haliburton wrote about "pickanicks" in Nova Scotia, and details of travel and storms in Nova Scotia - where one was apt to run into mad bears and other ferocious beasts. He assumed that the majority of his readers would be ignorant of the life being described. The earlier works, on the other hand, are not included in this justification because of the general topicality of their nature. While a foreign audience was obviously in mind as well as the local one, it was the domestic audience that he was trying to impress. In his last works, however, he seems fairly beyond the point of trying to correct the short-comings of blue-nose. He is far more detached and enjoying what he writes.

Haliburton's satiric sketches, too, are generally better than those in the immediately preceding books. He wrote a telling satire on the public school systems in Nova Scotia in "The Schoolmaster, or, The Hecke Thaler",<sup>13</sup> where he has the school master more concerned with superstition and supernatural ways of finding treasure than in educating the children left to his care. These are funny vignettes, but their tone is serious. They show a concern for correction balanced by a concern for his art.

But withal, Haliburton was working on the same topics: blue-nose inactivity, careless government by Britain, religious sects, universal suffrage, and republicans. And despite the fact that he was writing for an uninstructed audience, his stories suffered from excessive length. He refused to concede that his best satirical sketches had been his shortest ones.

Once the novelty had worn off, what made the nameless Englishman, Barclay, and Sandford any better than had been their predecessors? There were no avenues made available to them that the others had not had; and they were no better in creation. And there were many long, flowery narratives on the history of Acadia, sad musings over tomb-stones, and several protracted but often exciting tales of the supernatural and the frightening. But most of these are habitual failings in Haliburton's

satirical writings.

Final evaluation places The Old Judge in an exceptional position. It is the only book written after the first series of The Clockmaker which is at all comparable to that work in satirical excellence. But Haliburton was not satisfied with this latest format for his satire. He turned from this presentation to re-adopt Sam Slick and his friends in Wise Saws and Nature and Human Nature, for one more time. When he again turned his back on Sam, this time for the last time, Haliburton was not as fortunate as he had been with The Old Judge.

## CHAPTER VIII

THE SEASON TICKET

The major fault of The Season Ticket is that it contains nothing new. Just as it had been with the Sam Slick stories, Haliburton could not supply enough variation on the same old themes to keep them readable.

The Season Ticket introduces Haliburton's last cast of characters. Once again he uses Americans. There is "Lyman Boodle, a senator from Michigan" who is honest, sincere, and honourable enough to be a last-ditch Joshua Hopewell. He gives this advice to all good men:

mind your own business, and live in charity with your neighbours. Be sober, industrious, and peaceable. Respect yourselves and others will respect you; but eschew politics as you would the devil.<sup>1</sup>

And Mr. Ephraim Peabody whose homely advice includes the following:

'there is a time for all things in natur'. When sense is trumps, why I can lead off with an ace, if I like, for I am not the fool you take me to be; but when fun is the word, well then I'm ready to cut in and take a hand.<sup>2</sup>

At the risk of redundancy, Peabody shows the dialect, the words, and the feelings of Sam Slick and his inheritors. Haliburton does not discard his observer either; for along on his "season ticket", is Squire Shegog, watching and

recording all that transpires, even as the Squire and the unknown Englishman had done before him.

At the same time, the sketches return to the old format. Haliburton rambles through long narratives which are peppered with the too-often inappropriate aphorisms of the earlier books. The sketches had become yawning commonplaces. The new story-tellers only reiterate the same subjects: republicans, reformers, religious dissenters, slavers, Conservatives, Liberals, patronage; all people, places and things that had been struck before were tired victims of his equally tired whip-hand. As a satirical humourist, Haliburton had become a stagnant talent.

Those works which came after the first series of The Clockmaker are all too seldom worthy of the praise earlier bestowed upon their writer. Approbation had placed Haliburton far above those English and American writers who "produce nothing but jeremiads"; and had said "let the writer of Slick's aphorisms try his powers on a subject adequate to their capacity."<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, Haliburton had indeed reached his capacity with those early sketches. The relative worth of those pieces which came after that praise has been shown, with the exception of The Old Judge, to be insufficient to warrant calling them anything finer than redundancies. Read by themselves, these later works are fairly amusing and satirically humorous. But read as



the culmination of Haliburton's abundant writings, they afford little interest, so uniform is the imagination that inspired the earlier and later works. Changing the nationalities of the characters and perhaps the locale of the sketches was not enough to balance the lessening of Haliburton's genius which these books evidence.

Haliburton had found a combination of ideas and methods which had proven acceptable, once. He drove that formula into the ground. When he attempted to depart from it, as he did with The Letterbag, he failed. A similar fate befell The Season Ticket, when he tried a slightly modified form of the once-successful method.

## CHAPTER IX

### CONCLUSION

The reason for Haliburton's gradual literary deterioration is a matter for conjecture. He might have become more and more involved with his writing and, as a result, have suffered a lack of objectivity due to his close proximity. Perhaps he realized that his early and successful method of presenting his political, economic, and social views was too safe a literary milieu to be rejected; a successful author might hate to disrupt what reading public he has accrued. The most likely answer, however, is that because of a lack of sufficient talent Haliburton was simply incapable of keeping up a flow of original wit and stimulating ideas. Most authors' talents lie in single areas, as did Haliburton's; he cannot be blamed for writing always of the same people and the same land. His fault is one he could not amend; he simply didn't have the genius to do any better.

From a level of popularity which was partially justified by his satiric talents and partially attributable to the vogue of dialectical humour which he helped to establish, Haliburton's work began a general degeneration. Where a talent is expected to profit by experience and exposure to public reaction, Haliburton has instead lost. His was the choice, but the finished product shows only

that a writer who claimed throughout his career that he was a writer of satirical humour, and who did show promise in that field, had become all too often a dull second-rate writer of invective, incredible caricature, and long and badly-written narrative.

Haliburton reached a larger audience than had any British colonial before him. He made his message available, and because of the humour attached, his message was read. He gained world-wide popularity in his lifetime.

His reputation has indeed been fortunate, due to the fact that he has not been considered in the past, as simply a satirical humourist, but as "the father of American Humour"<sup>1</sup> and as the first British colonial to put his home country's name on the literary map. His fame lies in the influences that he is said to have had on humorous writing, politics, industry, railway and bridge construction, and transportation to Nova Scotia. And this fame has tended to enhance his reputation as a writer, simply because he was a personality of note. Past criticism of Haliburton's writing has been shown to be consistent with this idea. Consequently, Haliburton's satirical sketches have not been dealt with as harshly as his talent alone warranted. And if such a jumble of values makes these criticisms of little value, he has been done a kindness. For Haliburton, in the quality of his satirical humour, was far too often no Jonathan Swift.

FOOTNOTES

## CHAPTER I

1. V.L.O. Chittick, Thomas Chandler Haliburton. A Study in Provincial Toryism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1924), passim; John D. Logan, Thomas Chandler Haliburton (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, N.D.), passim.
2. T.C. Haliburton, Sam Slick The Clockmaker His Sayings and Doings (Toronto: The Musson Book Company, N.D.), p. viii.
3. T.C. Haliburton, The Attache; or, Sam Slick in England "First Series" (London: Richard Bentley, 1843), I, p.3.
4. Haliburton, throughout the fictional works, assigned the name "Brother Jonathan" to the Nova Scotian, in the same way as the British received "John Bull".
5. The Attaché, I, p.76.
6. Ibid., II, p.59.
7. T.C. Haliburton, The Old Judge; or, Life in a Colony (London: Henry Colburn, 1849) I, p.55.
8. Ibid., p.100.
9. T.C. Haliburton, An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia (Halifax: Joseph Howe, 1829) title page.
10. Stephen Leacock, "Introduction", Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1960), p.xvi.
11. T.C. Haliburton, The Clockmaker or The Sayings and Doings of Samuel Slick of Slickville (First Series) (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1958) p.ix.
12. T.C. Haliburton, Sam Slick The Clockmaker (Centenary Edition) (Toronto: The Musson Book Company, N.D.) pp.17-18.
13. Ibid., passim.
14. W.P. Ker (ed.) "A Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire", Essays of John Dryden (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926), pp.15-114, passim.

15. The Attache, I, pp.7-8.
16. Chittick, op.cit., p.205.

## CHAPTER II.

1. Chittick, passim.
2. Ibid., pp.206-7
3. Ibid., pp.207-11.
4. Ibid., p.179.
5. Ibid., p.179.
6. The Clockmaker, pp.100-104.
7. Chittick, Ibid., p.178.
8. The Clockmaker, p.66.
9. Ibid., pp.88-89.
10. Ibid., p.100.
11. Ibid., p.97.
12. Ibid., p.119.
13. Ibid., xvii-xxxiii.
14. Ibid., p.1.
15. Ibid., p.4.
16. Ibid., p.17.
17. Ibid., p.42.
18. Logan, op.cit., p.141.
19. Ibid., p.142.
20. Ibid., p.142.
21. Chittick, op.cit., p.181.
22. Ibid., p.181.
23. The Clockmaker, pp.16-19.

24. Ibid., p.43.
25. Ibid., p.vii.
26. Ibid., p.58.
27. Ibid., p.127.
28. Ibid., p.129.
29. The Attaché, I, p.65.
30. The Clockmaker, p.5.
31. Ibid., p.5.
32. Ibid., pp.9-11.
33. Ibid., p.5.
34. Ibid., p.19.
35. Ibid., p.20.
36. Ibid., p.74.
37. Ibid., p.29.
38. Ibid., p.29.
39. Ibid., p.45.
40. Ibid., p.44.
41. Ibid., p.44.
42. Ibid., p.39.
43. Ibid., p.112.
44. Ibid., p.113.
45. Ibid., p.113.
46. Ibid., p.61.
47. Ibid., p.30.
48. Ibid., p.33.
49. Ibid., p.35.

50. Ibid., p.35.
51. Ibid., p.21.
52. Ibid., p.65.
53. Ibid., p.65.
54. Ibid., p.65.
55. Ibid., p.65.
56. Ibid., p.65.
57. Ibid., pp.67-68.
58. Ibid., p.68.

#### CHAPTER III.

1. The Clockmaker, p.164.
2. Ibid., p.295.
3. Ibid., p.23.
4. Ibid., p.155.
5. Ibid., p.146.
6. Ibid., pp.150-151.
7. Ibid., p.174.
8. Ibid., p.175.
9. Ibid., p.163.
10. Ibid., p.164.
11. Ibid., p.287.
12. Ibid., p.196.
13. Ibid., p.296.
14. Ibid., p.411.
15. Ibid., p.345.

16. Ibid., p.288.
17. Ibid., p.294.
18. The Attaché, II, p.70.

## CHAPTER IV.

1. The Clockmaker, pp.280-281.
2. Ibid., p.281.
3. Chittick, op.cit., p.661.
4. Ibid., p.477.
5. Ibid., p.479.
6. The Attaché, I, p.15.
7. Ibid., p.50.
8. Ibid., p.75.
9. Ibid., p.10.
10. Ibid., p.145.
11. Ibid., p.102.
12. Ibid., II, pp.97-99.
13. Ibid., I, p.103.
14. Ibid., II, p.88.
15. Ibid., pp.153-154.
16. Ibid., pp.244-246.
17. Ibid., pp.253-254.
18. Ibid., p.286.
19. Ibid., I, p.149.
20. Ibid., II, p.110.
21. Ibid., p.187.
22. Ibid., p.279.



## CHAPTER V.

1. T.C. Haliburton, Sam Slick's Wise Saws and Modern Instances; or, What He Said, Did, or Invented (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1853), I, p.vi.
2. Ibid., p.vii.
3. Ibid., p.19.
4. Ibid., pp.320-321.
5. Chittick, op.cit., p.547.
6. Nature and Human Nature, I, p.18.
7. Ibid., p.19.
8. Wise Saws, I, p.204.
9. Nature and Human Nature, I, p.20.
10. Ibid., p.21.

## CHAPTER VI.

1. T.C. Haliburton, The Letterbag of the Great Westen; or Life in a Steamer (London: Richard Bentley, 1840), pp.v-vi.
2. Ibid., p.vi.
3. W.P. Ker, op.cit., p.95.
4. Haliburton, The Letterbag, p.45.
5. Ibid., p.234.
6. Ibid., p.172.
7. Ibid., p.197.
8. Ibid., p.259.
9. Ibid., p.255.
10. Ibid., p.257.
11. Ibid., p.298.

12. Ibid., p.272.
13. Ibid., p.269.
14. Ibid., p.263.
15. Ibid., pp.277-286.
16. Ibid., p.307.
17. Ibid., pp.315-316.

#### CHAPTER VII.

1. The Old Judge, I, pp.12-13.
2. Ibid., I, pp.9-10.
3. Ibid., p.22.
4. Ibid., p.293.
5. Ibid., p.295.
6. Ibid., pp.iii-iv.
7. Ibid., p.62.
8. Ibid., p.63.
9. Ibid., p.61.
10. Ibid., p.62.
11. Ibid., pp.317-318.
12. Ibid., p.24.
13. Ibid., p.230.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

1. The Season Ticket, p.60.
2. Ibid., p.61.
3. Chittick, op.cit., p.207.

4. Ibid., p.207.

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1. Logan, op.cit., p.101.

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