

SUPPLEMENT.

PARLIAMENTARY VS. PARTY GOVERNMENT.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY,
OCTOBER 16th, 1891, BY CHANCELLOR FLEMING.

At the beginning of the session, when our professors have returned from their well earned holiday and students are again present from all sections of the Dominion, it will not be considered ill-timed or inappropriate that on our re-assembly I should say a few words on a subject of common concern to every individual in the community and to none more than to those connected with educational institutions.

The matter which I take upon myself to bring to your notice involves the consideration of an evil to which it is impossible to shut our eyes, and in the removal of which every honest minded person is directly interested; and this fact will I am sure be accepted as my reason for dealing with it specifically. Wherever there is a public evil, there is a public wrong to be righted; and it becomes a duty, which we owe to the community, to apply our utmost intelligence to discover the proper remedy, and act with energy in its application. The theme of my address is *Party Government* versus *Parliamentary Government*.

At the recent prolonged meeting of parliament at Ottawa, there was brought to light a series of transactions, which have given a shock to the moral sense of many of our people. These revelations will little surprise those who are familiar with public affairs in the United States.

I believe I am correct in saying, that in Canada we have not reached the length which our neighbours have attained in what passes by the name of "politics." Methods and practices have, however, been introduced into our public life, in some respects the same as theirs, and if our system has not yet reached the same development we may reasonably expect that if we continue on the path which they have

followed and which we have entered upon, we shall in course of no long time arrive at the same goal.

In a work recently issued from the press, "Bryce's American Commonwealth," there are twenty-three chapters devoted exclusively to the subject of government by party, and many of the other chapters have a bearing on the same matter. Within the pages of this valuable and instructive work we find a full and detailed account of the party system which prevails among our neighbours. The author describes at length the business of the politician, the machinery of parties, how it works and what it effects. He reveals the fact that the machinery has many and costly ramifications, and that a great deal of money is required to keep it in motion. Where the money comes from is another question. He points out that "the politicians themselves belong to, or emerge from a needy class" and the funds generally must come from other sources than the pockets of the men most actively engaged, but from whatever source money may in the first place be obtained, the startling conclusion is irresistibly reached that "the whole cost in the long run is thrown on the public."

At the first glance it is not easy to see that this conclusion can apply to the party out of power and in no position to help themselves. The author, however, explains that its members live on hope; they hope that they will eventually succeed in overthrowing their opponents and are buoyed up with the belief that the minority of to-day will be the majority of to-morrow. He points out that as a fund must be raised meanwhile to carry on the struggle, the vassals of the party are assessed and subscriptions levied on manufacturers, contractors, office seekers and expectants generally. Thus,