

THE BULLFROG.

Nec sumit aut ponit securus,
Arbitrio popularis auro.—*Hor.*

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THE CRISIS.

The present aspect of affairs in Nova Scotia is extraordinary beyond all precedent. Those who have been elected to make laws, appear before us not as Legislators, but as Legislature makers. Not content with Legislating for the people they represent, they seek to place the people under the Legislation of others, and this too, without any appeal to the people themselves. The leaders of both Provincial parties have coalesced, and stand pledged to a measure concocted by the Statesmen of a Colony whose political affairs are at a dead lock. Then again, we have the two papers most widely read throughout the Province, ardently advocating Federation, while the whole of the country papers, save one, are against the scheme. And, as regards the two leading political journals, we must, without the smallest leaning towards either of the parties which these journals represent, award the palm of fair dealing to the *Chronicle* rather than to the *Colonist*. The managers of both these papers give prominence to the various speeches of the delegates, which invariably appear accurately and ably reported; but the speeches of those opposed to Federation are, as a rule, but partially reported. The *Chronicle*, it is true, faithfully narrated the proceedings of the Anti-Federation meeting of Dec. 23rd; but the *Colonist*, had no reporter in Temperance Hall, and gave to its readers a most one sided summary adopted from the columns of the *Reporter*; while upon the meeting of Dec. 30th, the Conservative organ was all but mute. Now, without presuming to dictate as to the course to be adopted by any Halifax paper, we are of opinion that both the leading political journals should, all things considered, give as much publicity as possible to both sides of this important question, as illustrated by public speakers on either side. It would be folly to affect ignorance of what every one seems fully assured—viz:—that the sentiments of at least two of the delegates find utterance in the columns of the two leading papers to which we have referred. These two delegates affirm, (and we believe honestly affirm) that they court opposition: why then did they not use all their influence to put their opponents speeches fairly before the outside public?

Let us note the leading points whereon the parties for and against Federation are opposed. The Federation party is of opinion that by an Union with Canada, we should be the better able to resist aggression without further taxing the resources of Great Britain. This sentiment is as unselfish as it is patriotic, and if based upon sound calculations as to our own innate resources, must demand all honor and respect. The principle involved is essentially sound and honorable, indeed, as Mr. GLADSTONE remarked, before a select Committee on Colonial Military expenditure: "No community which is not primarily charged with the ordinary business of its own defence is really, or can be, in the full sense of the word, a free community. The privileges of freedom, and the burdens of freedom, are absolutely associated together: to bear the burdens is as

necessary as to enjoy the privilege, in order to form that character, which is the great security of freedom itself." We believe these principles are heartily endorsed, not merely by the delegates and their supporters, but by every sensible man in Nova Scotia. But the Anti-Federation party say, with seeming reason, that the sum voted for defence, is utterly insufficient to cope with the items detailed in the scheme laid before the British Government. Dr. TUPPER, when pressed for an explanation upon this head, clearly stated, towards the close of a speech of most marked ability, that the entire sum voted for defence would be applied to the maintenance of an efficient militia force. So far, so good. That an annual vote of one million dollars would support a militia capable of holding out until reinforced by English troops, is we think, more than probable. But we should like some information regarding naval defence, munitions of war, &c. England will of course defend our sea board, but will the Ottawa Government undertake the naval defence of Lake Ontario? Will England find the necessary gun boats, as well as the men to fight them? Should such not be the case, our Lakes must, under existing arrangements remain undefended, inasmuch as the Militia force is to swallow up the whole of the money voted for defence! It is through lack of information upon these points that men are chary of accepting the scheme in its relations with self-defence. We do not oppose Federation for the sake of opposition, but because we are, so to speak, in the dark regarding some very important monetary items. If England will undertake to keep our military stores well supplied with all the most approved implements of modern warfare, and will moreover make us a handsome present of ten or fifteen gunboats, ready manned and officered,—if England be pledged to this generous policy for all time to come, let the delegates say so, and by so doing calm our fears for the future. But if, on the other hand, England is pledged to no such policy, we must set aside Mr. ANCRIBALD'S figures as worthless. The item "naval defence" is put before us as prominently as the item "militia," upon which we are to expend one million dollars. The words "naval defence" must therefore be expunged, or an extra defence expenditure voted, in which case a new budget must be prepared for our acceptance, or rejection. We have but little sympathy for those who haggle about twenty, forty, or sixty cents per head, when a really great question is at issue; but we heartily sympathize with those who refuse to accept the Federation Scheme until the meaning of perhaps its most costly item (naval defence) is fully and clearly explained by the delegates. If the latter can afford us any information upon this head, it is, we think, their duty to do so. The tariff question, a question of thousands, has been most minutely commented upon, while "naval defence," a question of millions, remains, totally unexplained.

The other great point at issue is that which treats of a general election. The anti-federation party is of opinion