

THE BULLFROG.

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The BULLFROG can be obtained at Hall's Army and Navy Bookstore, Hollis Street, Messrs McKinlay's and R. T. Muirs, Granville Street, every Saturday Afternoon at Three o'clock.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Talpa's contribution, though clever, is unsuited to our columns.

TENURE OF OFFICE.

Setting aside the unpleasant revelations contained in the blue book published upon "Tenure of Office," it seems that there is now a fair chance of this much vexed question being finally settled. We have had sufficient training in the politics of self government to shew us the evils which necessarily accrue from government is anti-English and republican in the extreme. It is a system which must be heartily condemned by all sensible men, not because it is anti-English, but because it is fraught with much evil to the public service. We have never heard an argument in its favor, whereas the arguments against it are clear to all. The speech of the Lieutenant Governor at Pictou was, it is true, commented upon by a portion of the Press with some shew of displeasure, but displeasure is not argument, and the sentiments of his Excellency are, we feel assured, approved by right thinking men of all parties. It may not be out of place to notice what has been said in favor of the dismissal system, or rather what has been said against the tone which his Excellency thought proper to adopt. The displeasure evinced by a small portion of the community was based upon the two-fold consideration of custom and retaliation. On behalf of custom, it was argued that the people of this Province had, since the introduction of Responsible Government, "been educated in the advocacy of the Responsible system, as applicable to all subordinate offices in the gift of the Provincial Government, equally with the Heads of Departments, for more than thirty years." Now, if this be true, we can only say that the people have been educated in direct opposition to the spirit of the constitution under which we live, and the sooner the pernicious effects of such an education be eradicated, the better for us all. But we are inclined to think that the dismissal system has not formed part of our political education, but has rather been hastily forced upon us within the last few years by men more anxious to strengthen party ties than to place the Civil Service of the Province upon a healthy footing. Such men were the foes rather than the friends of good order in the state, and we would fain believe that those who inaugurated the dismissal policy did so in the heat of party triumph, without pausing to consider the inevitable results of such short-sighted wisdom. Our business is not, however, to mourn the past, but rather to make the most of our present opportunities in order to rectify abuses. Our political system has been subjected to a rude shock, and our repentance must be bitter ere we can hope to regain our moral vigour. If our political education

has been faulty, we must leave no stone unturned to lay a new foundation—and this too without

reference to any considerations on the score of false precedent or wounded pride. As regards the system of retaliation, it is utterly beneath the consideration of men entrusted with party leadership, and entirely opposed to the interests of the public service. There can be no just measure of retaliation beyond that which a change of Government of necessity involves. The limit of retaliation is fixed by certain well understood laws, to go beyond which is virtually unconstitutional. The guiding principles which determine the actions of either party—whether Liberal or Conservative—must not be clogged by such party considerations as the vote of a Light House keeper, or the political tenets of a man nearly allied to a Postmistress. The political bickerings which serve to enliven the back alleys of a country village, must not be deemed vitally important by a ministry entrusted with the revision of legal statutes, and the control of the public revenues. It is absurd to invest the puerile squabbles of country villagers with an importance worthy to be considered in the ominous light of "pressure from without." A ministry that cannot withstand such a pressure is unworthy of confidence, inasmuch as the first duty of a ministry is that of protecting the people from themselves. When our rulers consent to be led by the dictates of a few of their supporters, they forfeit all claim to be regarded as rulers, and become the flatterers rather than the guides of the people. We are well aware that sentiments of this nature savour more of the old world than of the new; but so long as we affect the British form of government we must hold its principles intact. Such principles may at times require modification to meet changes in external circumstances, but principles themselves cannot be modified, for truths are perfect in themselves, illimitable and immutable. If they are right, they must be kept—if wrong, abolished—whole and entire. Perpetual change is not necessary even to common life, nor common life necessary to human happiness and goodness. Men cannot steer at sea without some fixed point, nor act in their daily dealings without some undisputed law, nor even move their limbs without an unshaken ground to rest on; and in politics, as in morals, and education, and religion, the same provision is required; and something which sounds like bigotry, something strange to ears that are full of novelties, must be somewhere preserved in a nation, or the nation will perish. It was, doubtless, considerations such as these, that led our Lieutenant Governor to allude to the dismissal policy as a "social canker," and we fully agree with his Excellency in characterizing the system as "suicidal." The evil effects of continual change in the public service cannot be set forth better than in his Excellency's speech. "*If no man can, by any length of service, or by any amount of devotion to the public, feel assured that he will be left unmolested in the discharge of his duty, how many competent servants do you suppose the trivial pay which is here given will secure? Believe me, that ere long those who may remain in your service, if competent, will probably be corrupt.*" This argument is undeniable, and it is our bounden duty to act upon it. The dismissal policy was thrust upon us, and it is our duty to ignore it as a mere temporary blot upon our political constitution.