

ployed, we can only say that we are mistaken in our estimate of Nova Scotian clarity. The effect of such constant night work is best illustrated by the fact that, within the last few years, three clerks have had to retire from the postal department owing to loss of sight. The whole department is in a state of almost hopeless confusion, owing to that pernicious system of Government interference which paralyses the action of the POST MASTER GENERAL. Mr. WOODGATE is in reality not the POST MASTER GENERAL, but rather the Post Master of Halifax, an office for which special provision should be made. Government interference prevents all hope of postal reform, and we can never expect to see the General Post Office properly conducted until the management of its affairs is vested solely in the hands of the POST MASTER GENERAL. It is the merest folly to dub a gentleman P. M. G. and at the same time not allow him to appoint or dismiss the subordinate officers of his own department as he may think fit. To allow a ministry to dispense Post Office appointments is not a whit less absurd than would be an attempt on the part of Lord PALMERSTON to give away the colonelcy of a regiment. But in this Province politics are the curse of the Post Office, as of every other institution subject to their baneful influence. It will scarcely be believed that although no fewer than 2,527,824 newspapers passed through the General Post Office during the year ending September, 1864, there is no regular staff of newspaper sorters, the duty of sorting papers being performed by the letter carriers. This fact fully accounts for the numerous notices which appear in the columns of the press regarding the non-delivery of newspapers. The letter carriers should be distinct from those employed within the Post Office, and it would be well if in Halifax, as in all European towns half its size, the carriers were distinguished by means of a uniform of some sort. The duty of sorting papers should be performed by young men appointed for this important duty, and at the same time kept in training for promotion to clerkships should any vacancies occur. The Post Office might very easily be reformed if the so-called POST MASTER GENERAL was allowed to manage his own department, but, as we before remarked, Government interference is the bane of our public Institutions, as politics are the curse of the community. If our public men would only attend a little more to the present affairs of the Province and a little less to its possible future, we might make a better figure in the eyes of the world in general.

INCIDENTS OF THE UNION DISCUSSION.

There is a story on record of a trial for sheep stealing, the chief interest of which hinged upon the difficulty of proving whether the field, from which the sheep had been stolen, was square or oblong. Some of the questions discussed in the newspapers in connection (?) with the Federation scheme, seem to have been equally to the point, so far as the merits of the scheme were involved. The following are among the least irrelevant questions brought before the public.

1. A correspondence between Messrs. ANNAND and McCULLY, relative to the interior economy of the office of the *Morning Chronicle*. This question was of paramount interest to the public in general, inasmuch as the public cares nothing for the arguments put forth in the *Chronicle*, but attaches great weight to the individuality of those who write for the public press. The public has naturally gained much valuable information from this direct method of dealing with the Union question in its broadest aspects.

2. Various speculations as to the writer of the articles headed "The Botheation Scheme."

3. A discussion in the *Colonist* upon the relative claims of Messrs. HOWE and TUPPER to be considered great statesmen.

4. Sundry futile attempts on the part of the *Unionist*, to

enlighten the public as to the individuality of the *Bullfrog* writers. The immense importance to the general public of the issue involved in these attempts must convince all right minded persons that the *Unionist* is the "best conducted paper in the Province," and that the *Unionist* writers disprove in their own persons the assertion that "small countries produce small men."

5. A correspondence of three and a half columns of small print between Messrs. McCULLY and E. M. McDONALD, upon the tactics of the liberal party in Nova Scotia. None but the most enthusiastic students of Provincial literature having read this correspondence, its publication cannot be said to have produced any very startling effects upon the minds of those undecided as to the merits of the Federation scheme.

6. A question as to whether the *Chronicle* or the *Unionist* was most to blame regarding personality, likewise a wager upon this important point. It was found impossible to decide this wager, inasmuch as neither paper seems to know what really constitutes personality in journalism. Hearken—both *Chronicle* and *Unionist*. There is no more offensive and unwarrantable form of personality than that common to both of you—viz.—saying, "Mr. so and so, in yesterday's issue of such and such a paper, said this or that." Views published in newspapers should not be regarded as those of any particular individual, but rather as those of the journal wherein they are set forth. This rule holds good in countries less advanced than ours, and should be carried out by those who assert that Nova Scotians have not in this Province a field wide enough for their ambition.

7. An article headed "The wild man of the mountain," likewise a reply thereto—neither having any point whatever.

8. Many articles penned, seemingly, with no object save to convince dispassionate lookers on that all those who take a leading part in Provincial politics are notoriously corrupt, dishonest, inconsistent, and untrustworthy. It is not easy to perceive what the public has gained by all this. Let those who assert that we are ripe for "greatness," reflect upon the conduct of our "fourth estate" in connection with the only question of any magnitude which has ever come before it, and then say whether Nova Scotia is not large enough for the peevish, school-boy wrangles, of those who seek to guide public opinion.

OUR POLITICAL PRESS.

It would, all things considered, be unreasonable to expect in Halifax that polish and refinement of manner which are the attributes of the upper classes in European capitals; but, on the other hand, there is no reason why courtesy and suavity should not be cultivated in Halifax as in London and Paris. The writers for our political press may not have that power of language to be met with in the columns of the *Times*, but it is at least in their power to exercise forbearance, charity, and moderation. Without in any way abandoning a principle a great deal may be effected by a conciliatory manner. "No one," says BULWER, "overcomes the difficulties in his way by acridity and spleen. Hannibal, in spite of the legend, did not dissolve the Alps by vinegar. Power is so characteristically calm, that calmness in itself has the aspect of power. And forbearance implies strength. The orator who is known to have at his command all the weapons of invective, is most formidable when most courteous." We might quote as illustrative of the truth of these remarks the present tone of the English papers. When a public man merits chastisement, he receives it as soundly from the *Times*, or the *Saturday Review*, as his worst foes could wish, but these journals never use harsh words—they may sometimes cut deep in order to effect a complete cure, but they never bruise merely for the sake of inflicting pain. There is, after all, no style of writing more easy than that of

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