

THE BULLFROG.

*Nec sumit aut ponit securus.
Arbitrio popularis aures.—Hor.*

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A GENERAL ELECTION—IMPERATIVE. 6

Whatever treatment may be accorded the proposed Federation Scheme by the Home Government, it will be the bounden duty of the Lieutenant-Governor to dissolve the House of Assembly prior to the discussion of Federation in the local Parliament. The reasons for such a course are numerous and weighty. The members of the lower House have been elected upon certain questions, altogether foreign to the question of Federation, the magnitude of which throws all other questions into the shade. The very essence of the constitution under which we live, is concession to the wishes of the people as manifested in the election of their representatives. This is indeed the only legitimate manner whereby the public can make its wishes known upon a question of such vast importance. Those in favor of Federation may endeavour to quote precedent in support of a non-dissolution of Parliament, but their labors in this direction will be fruitless, inasmuch as no British Parliament was ever called upon to decide a question so important to Great Britain, as is the question of Federation to Nova Scotia. The late Government was shattered upon a question of franchise, and it perished, nobly advocating a righteous cause. It carried a measure depriving the people of what they had injudiciously been taught to regard as a blessing, and the people forthwith returned a majority hostile to the liberal party. But now, we find the Government in harmony with the Opposition upon a question in itself of graver importance than all the questions that have ever been argued in the Assembly. Why, this fact alone is so utterly unprecedented, that the people know not where to look for advice or sympathy. Let any one possessing a grain of common sense, ponder well upon the extraordinary fact of Messrs. TUPPER and McCULLY thinking in common upon any one question! Such an event is in itself tantamount to a political revolution; the least clear headed village politician may well stand aghast, and exclaim, "Surely a tremendous crisis is at hand!" It is most true,—A TREMENDOUS CRISIS IS AT HAND,—and it is imperative that the public should be instructed from the hustings as to the nature of the crisis. If the people of this Province really desire Federation, our Legislators need not shrink from the gaze of their constituents; if, on the other hand the people are averse to Federation, it is the duty of our Legislators to respect public feeling. Let our patriots be sent to the people upon the one issue of Federation, and then, and not till then, will we be able to know whether this great question is palatable to Nova Scotians. However much the two leading political journals may discuss the details of some petty measure, affecting it may be the interests only of a small country town, they are, by tacit consent, silent regarding some of the most important details of the most important question ever brought before the people of this Province. Why is this? Something must be wrong. Why should writers so habitually shrewd regarding the smallest items of public expenditure, shrink from the task of analysing details, any one of which must involve a yearly

expenditure greater than any at present under public control? We repeat,—something must be wrong. A great, a TREMENDOUS issue is at stake, and the leading men of either party are pledged to carry it out. The whole thing is an anomaly,—an event utterly unprecedented. Our constitution as it stands at present is *not* the British constitution, for at no period in the history of that constitution, was a really great question carried without opposition. And why? Because no measure of vital importance to the English people, was ever so drawn up as to put money into the pockets of the leaders of *both* political parties. It is against the nature of things that any such measure could possibly arise in the country whose constitution we have adopted. But we may be told, that it is highly uncharitable to impute any personal motives to those who, on behalf of Nova Scotia, pledged themselves to the Federation Scheme. We meet this objection, by republishing some of the opinions put forth in print by the leading political journals during the last twelve months. Far be it from us to malign those of whom we know nothing. We believe every man to be honest and patriotic, until he is proved to be the reverse. We would fain think well of the PROVINCIAL SECRETARY and his colleagues, but we must judge them by the opinions of those whose study of Provincial politicians ranges over a large interval than has fallen to our lot. We are as yet young in our knowledge of public men, and must perforce bow to experience. The Opposition Press knows, or should know, the character of those in power; the Government Press knows, or should know, the character of those in Opposition.

Let us note some of the opinions put forth in the columns of the Press, regarding those of whom it would be heresy on our part to speak disrespectfully. If we remember aright, the *Recorder* asked Nova Scotians, "What they think of the men who attempted to pass off this garbled statement before the public, for the sake of getting into office and fattening on a salary? Would he (Mr. McCULLY), or would he not, walk up to your counter with a forged check? Will you not then gentlemen, put him down as a public deceiver? Is he not a disgrace, a filthy fester, an ugly blotch, on our journalism?" Our next extract is from the *Free Press*, and has relation to the Conservative party:—"Mr Johnston has made his bow and retired from the political stage, to enjoy his salary of \$3,200 per year. * * * The day of Longley's prestige is over, and the despicable system of swindling so suspiciously inaugurated by Johnston is not likely to be successfully carried out by his insignificant disciple, of Paradise." The *Express*, talking of Mr. McCULLY, says—"Verily Jonathan thou art an ass." The *Citizen*, says of Dr. TUPPER and retrenchment:—"Dishonest as is the Provincial Secretary's last assertion, it is no more dishonest than every position he has assumed." Of the men now in office, the *Chronicle* remarks:—"What the public perfectly understand is this—that the leading men in power now, late in opposition, are the veriest impostors the world ever witnessed. They duped the country, deluded honest men, cheated their own supporters, made promises they never intended to fulfil, broke their pledges, falsified their engagements—and all to displace those who would not, and did not, and could neither be persuaded nor compelled to vote for or promise retrenchment, such as they advoca-