

THE BULLFROG.

*Nec sumit aut ponit securus,
Arbitrio popularis auras—Her.*

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There are certain occasions upon which even the most virtuous men emphatically assert that which they neither believe themselves nor wish others to believe. When Paterfamilias makes a speech at a wedding breakfast, or after dinner, he almost invariably alludes to himself as altogether unworthy of the position wherein he is placed for the time being. This is especially the case when the task to be performed is that of lauding one's neighbour, or complimenting one's neighbour's wife. On such occasions the speaker always declares himself utterly unable to render fitting homage to the genius of his esteemed friend, or to the manifold graces and accomplishments of his esteemed friend's spouse. To such assertions, well bred people in general, and poor relations in particular, should promptly respond—"no, no,"—inasmuch as Paterfamilias thinks, in his heart of hearts, that he is the right man in the right place. But rude persons sometimes take orators at their words, and have the audacity to cry—"hear, hear!"—upon the first admission of incapacity, or unworthiness, albeit by so doing they make an enemy for the remainder of their lives. The fact is, no sensible man undervalues himself in public, unless he feels tolerably well assured that his audience rates him pretty highly, though perhaps not so highly as he rates himself. No man, having the slightest pretensions to statesmanship, undervalues himself in public, save when discussing a question about the merits of which no two opinions can possibly exist. We never heard Mr. GLADSTONE, or Mr. DISRAELI, preface even the most heartrending budget, by assuming themselves to be narrow minded men: a question involving peace or war is approached by Lord DERBY, or Lord PALMERSTON, without any apology whatever. Such men are real statesmen, and as such, fully aware that others are alive to their shortcomings: they comport themselves proudly while they reason modestly. It is only upon topics whereon all are agreed—such, for example, as a tribute to the talents of a great man recently deceased, that real statesmen are genuinely bashful. Colonial politicians, on the other hand, are apt to comport themselves meanly while reasoning egotistically,—to affect humility while bursting with arrogance. A brief glance at the conduct pursued by the delegates and their supporters will best illustrate our meaning. We think it was the Hon. J. McCULLY that so often repeated the assertion—"small countries make small men." A more unwise and unstatesmanlike assertion it would, all things considered, be difficult to imagine, inasmuch as it implies a galling consciousness of smallness on the part of an Hon. gentleman who would fain lead us on to greatness. We cannot imagine that the Hon. J. McCULLY, when uttering the words quoted, really thought himself a small man, because he was a Nova Scotian,—on the contrary, we incline to the belief that, like Paterfamilias at the wedding breakfast, he never intended that his audience should take him at his word, and cry—"hear, hear,—instead of—"no, no." It is, indeed, impossible that the Hon. gentleman could have believed himself small, at a time when his happiest argument rested on the supposition that Nova Scotia offered no fair scope for the enterprise and genius of her sons. Mr. McCULLY is a Nova Scotian: Mr. McCULLY says, "small coun-

tries produce small men:" Nova Scotia is a small country: therefore Mr. McCULLY is a small man,—or else he, in his own person, is an exception to a rule laid down by himself as an axiom—i. e.—a self evident proposition which cannot be made plainer by demonstration. No real statesman would place himself in such a position.

Let us now turn to another delegate—the PROVINCIAL SECRETARY and note his claims to be considered as a statesman, in connection with the Federation scheme. The position held by the PROVINCIAL SECRETARY on the subject of Federation was, from first to last, unstable and treacherous in the highest degree. With a large majority in the Lower House, and pledged to a scheme eminently popular throughout the Province (a Legislative Union of the Maritime Provinces), he allowed himself to be drawn into another scheme, of the probable workings of which the general public was profoundly ignorant. Without attempting to fathom the wishes of those to whom his party is indebted for its large majority, he, in common with his fellow delegates, must needs inaugurate a political revolution, and spurn the feelings of those who had helped him to power. The fall of Cardinal WOLSEY should have taught the PROVINCIAL SECRETARY the danger of seeking to elevate himself at the expense of those who, having set him up, have the power to pull him down. Under our constitution the people have the power formerly held by kings, and are as zealous of their prerogative as was ever bluff king HAL. That HENRY's regard for WOLSEY was as great as that of the people of Nova Scotia for Dr. TUPPER, there can be no doubt, but it is clear that the Tudor king did not relish the Cardinal's presumption, in seeking to be a legate without the Royal assent, and in corresponding with foreign potentates in the form, "*Ego et Rex meus.*" In those days, the king liked to be consulted as to the management of his kingdom, and in this degenerate age, the people, small though they be, like to have a voice in any revolution that may be going on in the land of their birth. No men, having the faintest claims to be regarded as statesmen, would have pledged themselves to a measure (reported at home as universally desired by Nova Scotians) without previously sounding public opinion. Should the people of this Province ultimately reject the Federation scheme, what will the Imperial Government think of the delegates? Her Majesty's ministers may well exclaim:—"For what purpose have we been wasting our time over the affairs of these North American Colonies, when it appears that their leading men have been deceiving us. These delegates have given us to understand, that the Provinces they represented at the Quebec Conference were nervously eager for Union, whereas it now appears that the people are averse to Union. Truly, "responsible government" has failed to produce statesmen." With this prospect in view, we can readily understand the anxiety of the delegates for the success of their scheme, and we cannot but admire the craftiness with which the *Unionist* and *Colonist* endeavour to prove that, in the event of the scheme breaking down, the English Ministry will blame the people of Nova Scotia instead of her delegates. It was, doubtless, from a knowledge of his false position, that the PROVINCIAL SECRETARY was so anxious to hurry the consummation of a scheme to