

DISBANDMENT OF THE POLICE.

If a vote were taken to-morrow on Wentworth's Ordinance to transfer the appointment and control of the Police from the Board of Commissioners to the Mayor, under the pretext of allowing "the city of Chicago to elect its own officers," a majority would go for it—perhaps a very large majority. This is singular, but yet it is so. The hook is so temptingly baited that thousands would snap at it. There is something very attractive in the idea of having "the people of Chicago elect their own officers." It is said that men love to be humbugged, and do not thank him who exposes the deceit and shows them how they have been duped. We expect no thanks for undeceiving people in relation to the true intent and meaning of the ordinance in question. Still it is our duty to point out the deception that is being practiced. As we said yesterday, the proposition is not to enlarge the power of the people; but to put the police under the control of the Mayor, to the end, that he may use them to promote his personal ends; to punish his enemies; to persecute those whom he dislikes, and to disturb the peace and harmony of the community instead of preserving order or promoting the public good.

But without taking the affirmative or negative of the question, we wish to call the public attention to the *legal* consequence of abolishing the Board of Police Commissioners, by a vote of the citizens at the April election.

When the law creating the Board was enacted, the Legislature *repealed* the former act, which conferred the power to appoint the police on the Mayor. This repeal clause is in plain, positive and emphatic language. Now, suppose the people vote to abolish the Board.—What are the consequences? Why, simply, *that the city will be left without any police at all.* The old law that conferred the appointing power on the Mayor, will not be revived, but will remain "dead as a smelt." The statutes of the State leave no room for doubt on this point. Sec. 26, page 1024. of the Statutes of Illinois, reads as follows: "No act or part of an act, repealed by another act of the General Assembly, shall be deemed to be revived by the repeal of such repealing act."

It is clear from this law, that the Mayor will not have the legal authority to appoint policemen after the Board is voted down. The present police force would be discharged, if such vote be legal, but the city is left destitute of substitutes. Perhaps we can get along without any police. Let every man buy a revolver, a bowie knife and a bull dog to defend person and premises. Or, the law-abiding class might assemble and resolve themselves into a Committee of Public Safety, and detail one or two hundred of their number as night and day patrols, to preserve the peace and protect the citizens from the assaults and depredations of ruffians, thieves, burglars and incendiaries. If we had no police, something of this sort might be resorted to. Necessity is the mother of invention. But is it the part of wisdom to dismiss our present police before we have provided for efficient substitutes? Our readers will all recollect the fable of the silly sheep which were persuaded by the wolves to dismiss the watch dogs that guarded them, and the result.