

"BYSTANDER" ON CURRENT EVENTS AND OPINIONS.

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SIR RICHARD CARTWRIGHT has, at all events as a speaker, the inestimable power of making an impression. This he owes to his general habit of taking a single nail and driving it home. His speech about the Exodus has given birth to another lively discussion of that theme. Yet there is no subject the discussion of which is more barren, at least for the purposes of party. Neither Grit nor Tory can be held responsible for the outflow, nor would either of them deserve the credit if the outflow were to cease. The movements of population on this continent are governed by economic causes; they disregard the political line; they disregard it as completely as the movement of population in Great Britain disregards the line between Scotland or Wales and England. Not only the farmer and the artisan, but Canadians of the classes in which it would be supposed that the political sentiment would be strongest, the clergyman, the physician, the financier, even the cadet whom the halls of our Military College have nursed, seek their fortune without the slightest compunction, whenever it suits their convenience, on the other side of the line. The regular current naturally sets Southwards, towards great centres of wealth and employment; but sometimes commercial depression in the United States causes a back-stream to run towards Canada. These tendencies a government can, as a rule, no more control than it can control the weather or the tides. Nor is emigration an evil, much less a disgrace, if there is not subsistence for the people here. What would happen, if the fast-breeding French Canadians were confined to the limited area and somewhat niggard soil of Quebec? We should soon have a counterpart of Ireland, in destitution, if not in disaffection. Many of our factory and mill hands have lately been thrown out of employment by the shutting down of works. Is it not lucky for us that these men, instead of starving and perhaps becoming turbulent here, can seek bread on the south of the line? Increase of population is no blessing unless the population can be fed.

It is particularly unwise just now to be upbraiding the Government with the Exodus, because the taunt will have a tendency to goad it into an extended policy of assistance to immigration. To this question serious attention must soon be turned. Those who are connected with the charities of our cities are too often called upon to deal with heartrending cases of emigrants who, having been induced to come here, sometimes with families, by delusive assurances of employment at high wages, find themselves destitute, unfriended and helpless in a strange land. There is not even a poor-house to offer these unfortunates a certain shelter for their heads; they are cast upon the streets with nothing but casual charity to save them from starving. Everything portends a winter of more than usual distress from the suspension of works in this country, and we can ill afford to have the volume of destitution and suffering swelled by immigrants for whom there is no employment. The North-West needs peopling; and if the SKye Crofters could at once be transferred thither, it would be well both for the country which they left and for the country to which they came. But so far as old Canada is concerned, it appears to be the growing conviction of those best qualified to judge that the point has been nearly reached at which only spontaneous emigration is any longer to be desired. The emigrant who comes to us of his own accord, and unassisted, or assisted only by those who purpose to employ him, is sure to be the man we want. To the zeal of steamship agents, probably, rather than to the agents of the government, who no doubt receive proper instructions, the cases of disastrous emigration may be most frequently traced. In this quarter remonstrance avails little. The only effectual check would be a regulation requiring the companies to issue to emigrants return tickets available within a certain period after landing, of which those would take advantage who had failed to find employment. To prevent fraudulent transfer the ticket might be made out like a passport, with a description of the holder. Government and steamship agencies, however, are not the only influences at work. That Canada may be advertised in England appears to be the dearest wish of us all; and from the language sometimes held, it might almost be supposed that we looked for prosperity more to our success in attracting notice and patronage than to our own energies and resources. When the British Association paid us a visit, we seemed to think not so much of the honour done us, or of the union of Canadian with British Science, as of the grand advertising medium. What is to come of it all nobody seems clearly to know; but the practical inference

sure to be drawn by all Boards of Poor Law Guardians and others who are struggling with social problems in England, is that a colony so prosperous and so obsequious must be the best of all dumping grounds for British destitution.

EMIGRATION of certain kinds is of course still needed, and can be encouraged by special invitation. There is room for good domestic servants, and the demand is not likely to be fully met here. Our Canadian girls prefer the independence, real or supposed, of the factory. Perhaps the democratic sentiment has something to do with their dislike of domestic service, as well as their love of liberty for the evening promenade. In the case of the English girl, the democratic sentiment, at all events, does not interfere; there is nothing degrading in her eyes in being a member of a household in which she is made comfortable and treated with kindness. The only drawback of English domestics is that they are apt to have rigid ideas of their special functions, and stoutly to decline doing anything which is "not their place." In this you must acquiesce, but in all other respects, when you have once formed a good English household, and by your own conduct attached its members to you, you are happy. Mistresses of families in England, however, are as well aware of this momentous fact as we are; they are not likely, if they can help it, to let the best depart; and they give, all things considered, as high wages as are given here. When, therefore, importation of domestics is proposed, it is natural to ask whether precautions have been taken to secure that only domestics worth having shall be imported. Some of the ladies of Toronto, who have formed an Association for the purpose, with the lady of the Lieutenant-Governor at their head, believe that they can safely answer this question in the affirmative, and that they have found in England a correspondent on whom they can thoroughly rely for a judicious selection of young women, as well as for zealous interest in the cause. On this side a House of Rest will be provided for some fourteen emigrants, under the best superintendence, and will also serve as the registry. All who suffer under that by no means light affliction which the Association undertakes to relieve will do well to lend their support to this hopeful experiment.

SIR JOHN MACDONALD in his speech at the Beaconsfield Club had the good taste to acknowledge in emphatic terms that he had received the same courteous treatment at the hands of all British Governments, Liberal as well as Tory. Yet his reception as a Canadian Tory at an English Tory Club could not fail to exemplify the difficulty, already pointed out, of bestowing Imperial honours on the leader of a colonial party without virtual interference in the party conflict. Some passages and phrases of Sir John's speech do credit to the Club's hospitality. Only under exhilarating influence can he have fancied that our Senate was a House of Lords, and that every educated man who came to Canada turned Conservative. This last apothegm, which implies that those who do not turn Conservative are not educated, is sure to set in motion some angry quills. To the project of Imperial Federation Sir John appears to have committed himself only in a champagne sense. He drew the usual picture of universal contentment and devoted loyalty, while New Brunswick was declaring herself anything but contented and by no means devotedly loyal. His Tory hearers did not ask him how he came to be constrained, at the crisis of the struggle against Irish Rebellion, to send over a manifesto of sympathy with Home Rule. On his return he will be able to tell us whether beneath the bust of Lord Beaconsfield in the hall of the Club are inscribed the golden words, "Those wretched colonies will soon be independent, and in the meantime they are a millstone round our neck."

THE chief point of "W. F. C." in the notice with which he has honoured the "Bystander's" comments on the Scott Act, seems to be the special temptation to intemperance involved in the habit of treating. Evidently the habit is vile. Let it then be abolished. Surely in such a community as ours there must be moral force enough to do this without the sinister aid of a sumptuary Act of Parliament. The practices of the Sample Room, says "W. F. C.," are so objectionable that to get rid of them leading men of business are willing to "drop a quiet ballot in favour of the Scott Act," though, it seems to be implied, they are not so ready publicly to advocate that measure. Why cannot they put a stop by their influence to the evil customs of the Sample Room? Surely they are bound to try what they can do before they subject the whole community to legislative coercion. It seems rather hard that a restriction should be laid upon everybody's private tastes, and that everybody's house should be, as it is in Vermont, laid open to the domiciliary visits of the familiars of a Temperance Inquisition, because a few Commercial Travellers choose to keep up a foolish fashion, and their employers have not strength of mind enough to interfere. We