

disposition to disregard traditional restrictions, and use power to the utmost. We need not be surprised if a Lieutenant-Governor, to serve his own party at a pinch, dismisses the Ministry of the majority, if a Provincial Premier, finding it inconvenient to face a general election, takes advantage of a legal technicality to give his legislature an extra session, or if the Dominion Parliament uses its plenary power to set summarily aside the Independence of Parliament Act for the benefit of a member of the dominant party who has violated its provisions. Even in the Old Country unwritten principle is greatly losing its force, and instead of the silken bands of social tradition, the iron fetters of the Clôture are required to maintain order in the House of Commons. The other inference is, that constitutional right ought no longer to be left in the treacherous keeping of party, but be consigned to the inflexible guardianship of a court of law. This has been apparent in all the cases in which the veto of the Dominion Government has been exercised on Provincial legislation, as well as in the dispute about the Boundary between Ontario and Manitoba. Nobody imagines that in any of these instances the head of the party in power at Ottawa has used, or that he could possibly use, his power judicially or in any interest but that of his party. In the Boundary suit the interposition of the Bleus was manifest and all but avowed. The Canadian Confederation wants, together with a complete written constitution, a Supreme Court invested with powers of interpretation as full as those which belong to the Supreme Court of the United States, and sitting on this side of the Atlantic.

AFTER all, the chief event of Lord Lorne's Governor-Generalship was one with which the historiographers can hardly venture to deal. It was the failure of the attempt to introduce the forms of Old World Royalty into the New World. The edicts prohibiting the presence of buggies in Viceregal processions, and prescribing high dresses at Viceregal receptions, were test questions put to Destiny and by her decisively answered. Mr. Collins, conscious of the catastrophe, endeavours to avert censure or ridicule from the heads of the Governor-General and his Royal consort by the historical sacrifice of a secretary. This is, of course, most proper, and the secretary will rejoice in the immolation. But that humble functionary would never have thought of introducing a code of etiquette without superior inspiration. The way for the experiment had been paved by Lord Lorne's predecessor, who had turned Government House from the official residence of a British nobleman, which it was in the time of Lord Lisgar, into a little Court with an affable prince, while his rhetoric had done all that rhetoric could do to bring the people into the most desirable frame of mind. Lord Beaconsfield might well think that the propitious hour had come for the inauguration of a policy most congenial to his taste. The measure happened at the same time to promise the Court at home relief from a social embarrassment, which was also a domestic infelicity. The result of the experiment is well known. It was only emphasized by the cordiality with which the Princess, while she was among us, was everywhere personally received. That she was so little among us is a circumstance of which Mr. Collins, of course, can only tender us the authorized explanation. If the Princess found any fault with our climate, her offence is inexpiable; but if she only disliked the race of courtiers with whom she was called upon to associate at Ottawa, she will, by many Canadians, be deemed within the pale of mercy.

AT the meeting of the Royal Society of Canada the Governor-General performed with grace and ingenuity the task of suggesting plausible reasons for his predecessor's institution. More he could not do. The plant is weak even on its native soil, and it is too manifestly an exotic here. The bulky volume of transactions, printed at the public expense, was called by an uncourtly reviewer a "culpable luxury," and its publication was certainly not the most indispensable item in the estimates. Scientific or archaeological treatises of a strictly local character, such as have real value but would not find a publisher, may perhaps be properly printed at the public cost, but it hardly becomes the State to print and circulate *fantaisies littéraires*, comedies, or effusions of the Canadian Muse such as might, or might not, find insertion in the magazines. There is also something more incongruous in a bi-lingual Institute than even in a bi-lingual Parliament. M. Frechette was spoken of the other day as "our great Canadian poet," but he is a great Canadian poet whose language not one Canadian in three can understand. Lord Lansdowne's suggestion that the Society might employ itself in collecting materials for history would be happy, if only such materials existed. The Marquis is an hereditary friend of letters. If he has any interest with the Government of Canada he may possibly be able to render them a real service. What we want, far above any patronage or any artificial organization, is an alteration of the Tariff which shall give

our Canadian booksellers access to their natural centres of distribution, and thus render possible, what under the present fiscal conditions is impossible—the existence of first-class book-stores on this side of the line. The admission of books duty free for public libraries alone, if it were conceded, would not much improve the case; indeed it would probably depress the book-stores more than ever, and thus in the main make matters worse. We want also such a rectification of our position with regard to copyright as will give Canadian writers the privilege on their own side of the Atlantic where it might be of use to them, whereas on the other side it is of none. The question is so completely clear of party that the Governor-General might use his personal influence without impropriety, and if he used it with success, Canadian literature would be very grateful.

THE *Sarnia Observer* and the *Hamilton Times* have been wailing in concert over the exceeding wickedness of "Bystander." Their symphony is joined by the *Hamilton Spectator*. The *Observer* and the *Times* being Grit, the offence in their eyes consists in saying too little against the Government of Sir John Macdonald; in the eyes of the *Spectator*, which is Tory, it consists in saying too much. The *Observer* and the *Times*, while agreed as to the fact, directly contradict each other with regard to the explanation. The *Observer* is of opinion that Sir John Macdonald by some occult process of "sycophancy or subtle flattery" has succeeded in making the "Bystander" his devout admirer, and has brought him "as securely under his influence as any of the paid writers on the *Mail*." But the *Times* rejects such an account of the phenomenon as superficial. "Only start," it says, "with the idea that the 'Bystander's' object is to bring about the annexation of Canada to the United States, and it will be seen at once that his reason for supporting Sir John Macdonald and palliating all that miscreant's crimes is that he knows Sir John Macdonald will ruin the country by misgovernment and thus render annexation inevitable." According to one critic, then, the "Bystander" is making a tool of Sir John Macdonald, while, according to the other, Sir John Macdonald is making a tool of the "Bystander." It is a proof, according to the *Sarnia Observer*, of the "Bystander's" subserviency to corruption that on the occasion of the Pacific Railway Scandal he did not pronounce Sir John Macdonald guilty "till he could no longer resist the force of the evidence." Precious morality, indeed, is that of a writer who waits for evidence before condemning a Tory! Is not every Tory convicted from his mother's womb of all imaginable offences whether there happens to be any evidence against him or not? The *Sarnia Observer* had better ask Mr. Mackenzie what "Bystander" did in the case of the Pacific Railway Scandal. But if Sir John Macdonald has such a genius for managing men that he could securely establish his influence over one who had never had anything to do with him and had only just come into the country, he surely must be fit to govern any nation. All our ideas, according to Locke, are the products of our experience, and the experience of the *Observer* and *Times* has not yet furnished the idea of a journalist who has no assignable object beyond those of his profession, nor any imaginable motive except the desire to engage the confidence of his readers by keeping as near to truth and justice as he can. Such a writer is set down as a knave who has some covert object in view, and occasionally drops his mask. This unmannerly nonsense will some day disappear from our journals, together with the slavish devotion to party from which it flows.

HAD the "Bystander" when he said last week that there was practically no Conservative party in England, been able to divine what was going on in the House of Commons, he might have omitted the qualifying word. Formally, as well as practically the Conservative party is in the throes of dissolution. "Mercy on us, we split, we split, we split," is the cry in "The Tempest" when the ship is going down. Some such yell of dismay must have arisen from the Opposition benches, the other night, when, in the midst of the debate on the Irish franchise, the Tory Democratic section suddenly parted from the Conservative section, and under Lord Randolph Churchill went into the lobby with Mr. Parnell. This Tory Democratic party of which Lord Randolph Churchill has made himself the demagogue, is mainly the offspring of the Disraeli Franchise Bill of 1867, which let into the city constituencies a fresh flood, to use Carlyle's phrase, of "corruptibility, gullibility, amenability to beer and balderdash." It is simply a mob, hostile to the respectable middle class and to the higher grade of artisans among whom Liberalism has its principal seat, but otherwise with nothing really Conservative about it. Its voice is heard in the Music Halls, and like its counterpart everywhere, it is in favour of war and violence of every kind. For Socialistic rapine it is evidently just as ready as the most revolutionary elements on the other side. It is now evidently in full revolt, under a rowdy-aristocrat ringleader, at once against the patricianism