

# THE BYSTANDER.

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APRIL, 1883.

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BY the meeting of the Dominion Parliament and the Ontario Election, we have been once more launched on the full tide of politics. Here, and in all communities governed like ours, politics are the conflict of parties. As was said before, we must take things as they are. We must accept Party as the established system, and judge the characters and actions of public men by the moral standard of partisans, which is lower than that of ordinary life. We must not blame the combatants so long as, to use the phrase of Lord Dufferin, "they do not strike below the belt." We must assume that to party, above all things, their allegiance is due and try to believe that they identify the victory of their own side with the welfare of the country, though the degree in which they do this will necessarily be in inverse proportion to their breadth of mind. We must expect of political journals, not impartial criticism, but advocacy, and be satisfied if their advocacy is at once effective and kept within decent bounds. But while we take things as they are, we may be allowed to cherish the hope that they will not be so always, or even very long; for party, when it has outlived great issues, is nothing but faction; and faction, if its reign lasts long, will assuredly wreck liberty.

The abuses of the old monarchies and the revolutionary sentiment developed in the struggle to overthrow them have impressed men with the belief that a strong government is an evil. A strong