

THE BYSTANDER.

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THE great question before the mind of the people of Canada is, and till it is settled will continue to be, that between the Continental and Anti-Continental policy, in its bearing on our commercial relations and our public works. Opinion is moving, and moving fast, as appears from the altered tone of Anti-Continental organs, which a few years, and even a few months ago, thought it safe to indulge in ridicule, but now find themselves compelled to treat the subject as extremely serious, and even occasionally to use the unfamiliar language of decency towards opponents. They have yet another step to take in this case as in the case of the Reform of the Senate. Freedom of thought and discussion respecting the vital interests and future destinies of the nation has at least been asserted. The victory is not one of which men of English race need be very proud; but at all events it has been gained, and not an hour too soon. "Let well alone," cries the *Montreal Journal of Commerce*.^{*} Well for whom? For the knights or the country? Has not the *Journal of Commerce* itself told us that Canada is "piling up debt," that "she is drifting into bankruptcy," that her day of reckoning is near? The Anti-Continentalists they are who have forced the discussion on us, by pushing forward Anti-

^{*} The *Journal of Commerce* upbraids the BYSTANDER with violating the rule of impersonality in journalism. We think the rule a good one, though we have no special interest in it; and we invariably observe it towards all who observe it towards us. Sir Francis Hincks must be aware that he has not observed it towards us.