

"BYSTANDER" ON CURRENT EVENTS AND OPINIONS.

IT was a matter of course that after the line taken by the Independent Republicans in the Presidential election, the thorough-going partisans should be for reading them out of the party. Nor does it seem possible that they should ever find shelter beneath that roof again. Having voted Mr. Cleveland into the Presidency they cannot oppose his Administration, and to oppose the Administration is, under the system of party government, the regular duty of the party out of power. This will remain a bar to re-union for the next four years at least. But it is difficult to think of any great question at all likely to present itself which would restore community of sentiment between the divided sections and open to the exiles a door for their return. The Republican Party was the party of opposition to slavery, and when secession sprang from slavery, of the Union. The Democratic Party was, under colour of allegiance to State Rights, the party of slavery, having the centre of its power in the Slave States. Slavery being long since dead and the Union out of all possible danger, the Republican Party has degenerated into a machine subsisting partly by habit and tradition, which to a great extent are hereditary, partly by the recollection, studiously kept alive, of the great conflict, partly and principally by the corrupt use of an enormous mass of patronage. Against the corrupt use of patronage the Independents have decisively revolted; and of course they can never consent to a renewal of the system, while it is the one thing for which the Stalwarts really care. It is possible that the Republicans may take up Negro education, both as a means of reviving some spark of war feeling and on Protectionist grounds, as a device for disposing of the surplus without a reduction of the Tariff. No other issue, or semblance of an issue, in any way cognate to those of the Civil War appears to exist or to be capable of creation. Not another shred of the Bloody Shirt is left to flutter on the Republican flag-staff. Both the parties have lost that which gave them life and on both sides decomposition has set in. Besides the great Republican secession there was a good deal of minor bolting in the election; bolting to Prohibition, bolting to Butlerism, bolting, happily for the Republic and all who have to deal with it, of Tammany and the Irish from the Democratic Party to Blaine. The Tariff question, which the growing surplus must inevitably bring to the front, will give the party organizations another shock. It divides each of them into two, though not into equal moieties, most of the Republicans being Protectionists and most of the Democrats Tariff Reformers. The mental independence which spurns the yoke of party discipline is meantime increasing with the advance of intellect in the United States as elsewhere. American statesmen and publicists are confronted by the question, What is to be the basis of government for the future?

THE commemoration in St. Paul's of the hundredth anniversary of the American Episcopate seems to have been an impressive ceremony. English journals moralizing upon the event observe that the vitality of the Anglican Church in the United States proves its ability to hold its ground in England even should it be disestablished. Perhaps it might be said that Anglicanism in the United States and in the colonies owes its vitality in some degree to the charm of ecclesiastical aristocracy shed over it by its connection with the magnificent Establishment and the Spiritual Peerage of the Mother Country. Still Anglicanism has independent sources of strength. The Prayer Book has proved itself a powerful bond of union among worshippers cultivated enough to feel its general beauty and not critical enough to be troubled about the doctrinal contradictions which lurk in its composite structure. In Christendom, as in Heaven, there are many mansions; and denizens are assigned to each in some degree by social influence, as well as by theological convictions. When it was proposed to drop the first word in the title of the Dutch Reformed Church in order that, as became a spiritual community, it might be not national but universal, an old lady at Albany protested against the change, saying that she did not want the Church to be universal, but to remain as it was, the Church of the old Dutch families of that State. The Anglican Church is the religious home of the opulent and the cultivated, who like the presence of reverence in its services, the absence of enthusiasm, and a form of government which, whether Apostolic or not, is ancient, tranquil and not democratic. The same class of persons is attracted, especially in times of theological trouble, when people do not wish to have their convictions too much probed, by that happy freedom from the spirit of interference mentioned among the graces of the Anglican Church by a *Saturday Reviewer*, whose words were quoted the other day by a Canadian bishop and thus entirely divested of any cynical significance. There is no church, said a social convert to Anglicanism in the United States, that meddles so little with your politics or your religion. Other churches have

found in like manner the social strata to which their mode of worship and their form of government are adapted. It is stated that at St. Paul's the representatives of different dissenting bodies were present. This seems to indicate a tendency to the amicable recognition among the churches of separate spheres, and to a partition by mutual consent of the vineyard, which no one church, and certainly not the Church of England, has in this country economical resources enough to till alone.

A LIVELY discussion has been going on among the party journals as to the value and significance of the Grand Cross of the Bath, which has been bestowed upon Sir John Macdonald. The "Bystander" does not pretend to be an authority on such subjects, but he has always supposed the Grand Cross of the Bath to be the highest honour not of an hereditary character that can be conferred upon a commoner. The Garter, once borne by simple soldiers, such as Hugh Loring, who had fought well at Sluys or Crecy, is now reserved for grandees of the first order, and its blue ribbon is displayed upon the breast of a Marquis of Steyne. An old Peer once said that the reason why he valued the Garter was that it was the only thing in these days which was not given to merit. Conservatives who expected that Sir John Macdonald would be made a Peer, and that hereditary aristocracy would be introduced into Canada in his person, must have forgotten that the British Government is Liberal, not reactionary, and that it has the result of the Lorne-Louise experiment before its eyes. Moreover, as Canada has no entailed estates there would be reason to fear that at some future day a Lord Macdonald of Ottawa might be found keeping a tavern or cleaning boots. Of Life Peerages the number is limited, and they are strictly appropriated to Law Lords. Conservatives therefore may give vent to their exultation without misgiving as to the quality of the decoration bestowed upon their chief. The event will add zest and brilliancy to the ovation which they are preparing for him on his return. But their applause will make it manifest that this act of the Home Government, though it may be intended as a general compliment to Canada, involves a virtual interference in a party conflict. Draw what metaphysical distinctions you will between the man and the party leader, it is impossible not to feel that a meed of honour conferred upon the politician is a mark of approbation bestowed upon his policy, and is intended, as it is certainly calculated, to strengthen his hands. Peerages and decorations are never given in England to politicians unless their principles are those of the party in power. The British Premier no doubt is totally uninformed of many things in Sir John Macdonald's method of government which awaken opposition here; but the inevitable ignorance which excuses the individual condemns the system of blind intervention by a distant authority in the politics of Canada, and makes us desire to see the day when Canadian statesmen will look for the meed of those services only to the community which they serve.

It is notable, too, that the Grand Cross seems to have produced an immediate and magical effect upon the opinion of the wearer. Mr. Blake has always, at least till lately, fondled the idea of Imperial Federation. Sir John Macdonald has always been understood to scout it as an impracticable chimera. He it was who asserted the fiscal independence of Canada by imposing duties, now declared to be protective, on British goods, and who, on that occasion, loudly defied English criticism and remonstrance, declaring himself to be for "Home Rule to the hilt." Yet we now find him figuring among the Imperial Federationists and, if he has been rightly reported, declaring himself in favour of the movement. How has he contrived to satisfy his associates on the subject of the Tariff? The *Spectator*, an Imperialist journal and friendly to everything Pan-Britannic, in a review of Mr. Fleming's book, says, "Mr. Fleming mentions with pride that the Dominion has one Tariff, and, he might have added, a Tariff which does not bespeak a very ardent desire on the part of the Canadians to maintain that Union with the Mother Country which they profess to have so much at heart. Power is passing more and more into the hands of classes with whom material interests outweigh sentimental impulse and to whom outlets for the products of their industry are of greater importance than a sense of Imperial greatness. They will doubtless be glad to keep up the connection and draw closer the bonds which bind us to the Dominion and our other great colonies, and accept the responsibilities which the connection entails; but it must be on condition that the colonies accord to us that freedom of trade which we willingly extend to them. Political union without commercial reciprocity is no more likely to turn out happily than marriage without affection." Apart from the difficulties of constructing the Federal Legislature and defining its authority, Federationists will find themselves at the outset confronted by two thorny problems, that of armaments and that of the Tariff. There will, of course, in the case of