

# THE BYSTANDER.

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IN the struggle for Provincial office, which is going on with its usual vivacity, the general opinion seems to be that the "ins" will stay in and that the "outs" will stay out. The "ins" have had eighteen years wherein to entrench themselves behind the ramparts of patronage and influence, nor have they failed to make the best use of their opportunities. Moreover, in the eyes of the people, who naturally look first to their material interests, the "ins" have greatly the advantage in administrative reputation. Mr. Meredith is allowed by everyone to be a man of at least equal ability to any member of the Government; he is allowed by everyone except party journalists or preëminent Christians to be a high-minded and honourable gentleman. That the Province should be prevented from availing itself of his administrative ability and integrity because he belongs to the minority in questions which have nothing to do with administration, is a strong example of the irrationality of the party system. That he is lacking in malignant energy as leader of a faction is not the worst of faults in our eyes. But he stands alone: his party can supply him with no lieutenants who are at all equal to himself or have any hold on the confidence of the people. Mr. Meredith, moreover, though he has made a gallant effort to shake off Ottawa, has not completely succeeded, and till he does shake off Ottawa he cannot possibly have a fair chance in Ontario. Victory in Ontario may be a sentimental object, but it is not of vital importance to Sir John Macdonald, so long as he can