

selves superior to those whom the people have sent to represent them. These undoubtedly would be serious deductions from any good that an independent journalist could do. But, as to the first, let our contemporary look over his own files, even for the last week, and see what epithets are there bestowed upon the opposite party and its leaders; with the savory fruits of this research let him combine a similar anthology culled from the files of his chief antagonist. He will find that if ten per cent. of the things said on both sides is true, the most adverse judgments of the "Bystander," instead of being charged with evincing a want of proper sympathy, ought rather to be arraigned as attempts to whitewash infamy. To the second charge the "Bystander" would reply, that cynicism is a very bad habit of mind, but its root is the indifference to good or evil begotten of a despair of improvement; and the "Bystander" would hold that he was guilty of propagating it, indeed, if he were to preach that an everlasting faction fight, with its passions, its corruptions, its calumnies, its substitution of party feeling for patriotism, of party morality for the rule of public honour, with its fatal selection of low natures for high places and its progressive ostracism of those who would best serve the state, was the only political system possible for Canada. He always recognizes the system as established, and tries to judge public men by its rules and with equitable allowance for its exigencies; but he cherishes the hope of better things. Perhaps his readers often think that he has Party on the brain. There is present to his mind, perhaps, more vividly than to the minds of those whose studies have not lain in the same direction, the conviction that faction is the ruin of commonwealths, and that elective institutions, sacred and deeply rooted as they may seem to us, have no charmed life. Finally, respect for constituted authority is an excellent thing in freemen, and we may well wish that we had a good deal more of it; but it is not exactly the sentiment which a Party opposition most sedulously or effectually promotes. The reputed representatives of the people will have a better claim to it when they are really chosen by the people and not nominated by the managers of a machine.

THE utterances of Mr. Gladstone's new Secretary for Ireland, Mr. Campbell Bannerman, have made that still more clear which was clear enough before. The Radicals are prepared to purchase the Irish Vote by the sacrifice of the Union, and in this matter Mr. Gladstone is in the hands of the Radicals. He is now like any other king, inaccessible to unwelcome truth. If his policy of conciliation is a failure, masked only by the operation of the Crimes Act; if all his appeals to Irish good-will are met by renewed outbursts of insolent hatred; if his own life and those of his colleagues have still to be guarded by squads of policemen against the daggers of a grateful and admiring people; if Irish obstruction and vituperation are unabated in the House of Commons; he is still persuaded by those who have his ear that the policy, nevertheless, is preternatural wisdom, and that its success would at once be apparent if it were only carried out by more docile and faithful agents. He got rid of Lord Cowper and Mr. Forster, and was prevented from ratifying the compact of Kilmainham only by the Phoenix Park murders, which compelled him to do something for the protection of loyal life in Ireland. The successors of Lord Cowper and Mr. Forster, Lord Spencer and Mr. Trevelyan, have governed in the mildest and most equitable manner: indeed they have protected rebel and discouraged loyal demonstrations to an extent of which loyalists had not a little reason to complain; but they have enforced the law, and for so doing they have been assailed by the Disunionists with rabid and bestial abuse. They accordingly are to give place, Mr. Trevelyan to an ultra-Radical Secretary who somewhat ludicrously makes his debut in Disunionism surrounded by detectives; and Lord Spencer, if the announcement is correct, to the Roman Catholic Lord Ripon, in whose favour the law excluding Roman Catholics from the office of Lord Lieutenant is first to be repealed. The repeal of any religious disability would in itself be welcomed by all men of liberal mind; but the measure will wear a different aspect if it is intended as a fresh concession to violence, and at the same time as a rebuff to the loyal Protestants of the North of Ireland, who are the greatest obstacle to Disunionist machinations, and are accordingly the constant objects of Radical hatred and abuse. Mr. Campbell Bannerman talks in the usual strain of England governing Ireland and governing her with injustice. Ireland has not been a dependency; she has had more than her share of representation in Parliament, and there has been nothing to prevent her delegation from exercising the same influence in everything concerning her local interests which has been exercised by the Scotch delegation in everything concerning the local interests of Scotland. Saturated with the venomous hatred of England and the British Government which has been instilled by the Disunionist platforms and press, the Irish people will receive these new bribes and flatteries as they have received all the rest. As a finance minister and a

legislator Mr. Gladstone holds the highest place: as a Prime Minister, while nobody questions the purity of his intentions, he has brought the country into a complication of dangers such as have not beset it for many a day.

WILL the festival at which Christians celebrate the advent of charity as well as of spiritual life never cease to be marred by the uncharitable anathemas of the Athanasian Creed? This is a question which not a few members of the Church of England ask when they attend service on Christmas Day. Old George III. never would stand up when the Athanasian Creed was read, and he showed by this silent protest against its parade of paradox and its reckless denunciations the spirit of a true Christian. Some of the best and wisest of Anglican prelates and divines have avowed that they wished the Church well rid of it. It is an ecclesiastical fabrication like the false Decretals, the Donation of Constantine and the list of the Early Popes of Rome. If it embodies the spirit of the age in which it appeared, the other forgeries did the same. It never existed in the language in which St. Athanasius spoke and wrote, nor can its origin be traced even in the Latin Church higher than the end of the eighth century. This seems now to be a settled point. Its anathema includes the whole of the Eastern Church, which has never embraced its doctrine as to the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Second Person; and thus High Anglicans are constantly consigning to eternal perdition a communion with which all the time they are trying hard to bring about an alliance. Nay, the writer of the Fourth Gospel can scarcely escape the ban, for it is hardly possible to construe the fourteenth verse of the first chapter in the original otherwise than as a contradiction of the words "not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh." Active participation in denouncing curses on your fellow-Christians for misbelief is a different thing from mere tacit acquiescence in doctrinal definitions for which you do not care; and those who do not concur are bound positively to express their dissent. If a lie is, as Bacon says, an unclean sacrifice to be offered to the God of Truth, surely the solemn recitation of a form of words without meaning is not much better; and what meaning can any human understanding attach to such terms as "begotten" and "proceeding" when applied to relations between Beings believed to have existed from eternity? If venerable antiquity is pleaded as the title of the Athanasian Creed to retention, the antiquity of the whole Roman Catholic system, or at least of its essential parts, is at least equally venerable. This unhappy relic of mediæval dogmatism and intolerance is a heavy stone round the neck of the Church while she is struggling in deep waters. Is there no hand which can set her free?

A BYSTANDER.

#### AMERICAN CLERGYMEN IN POLITICS.

AN important consequence of the nomination of Mr. Blaine to the Presidency was the strain it put upon the morals of the people, who, either willingly or reluctantly, came to the support of their party's candidate. Politicians, hitherto deemed to be high-minded and conscientious, found themselves gradually driven to juggle with the hard facts of the letters to "Dear Mr. Fisher"—all the harder by reason of the untenable explanations which the author had given of them from his seat in Congress. Editors and stump-speakers plunged into an abyss of cant, hypocrisy and wilful exaggeration with regard to the private character and habits of Governor Cleveland, in desperate efforts to turn public attention away from the real issue raised by the appearance of Mr. Blaine as the leader of the party of moral ideas. Voters yearning for righteousness in politics drugged their consciences by adhering to "the regular ticket" while disclaiming responsibility for the names upon it. All these classes are more or less hurt in their own esteem and in popular estimation; such is the chastening effects of defeat. But no class has been so hard hit as the clergy: a misfortune all round; for what with one thing and another the clerical profession has been steadily losing in position and influence these latter years. The lubricious inventions of the Rev. Mr. Ball, of Buffalo, first given to the public in the columns of a sensational and disreputable newspaper, and subsequently enlarged, improved and circulated by millions in the form of pamphlets, came at an opportune moment to the relief of the unscrupulous men in the inner circle of management, who had found to their despair that the Mulligan letters would not do, and that the gauzy "American policy," which had found a name, but not an exposition, was overshadowed by them. The word was accordingly passed along the line of local committees to "work the ministers" in behalf of imperilled purity in the American home, and unhappily many of the clergy took the bait and worked far more zealously than honestly in behalf of good morals and the Grand Old Party. The ill-assorted alliance between religion and