

shall be both consistent and continuous; and after following this with his minor, that England has not only studiously endeavoured to appear to the Egyptians as if she were only advising them, but has never known her own mind about Egypt, or been able to come to any definite decision as to why she is in Egypt, or what she intends to do in regard to the future relations of the two countries; reaches the very illogical conclusion, forced upon him by the sternness of the facts: "The English have succeeded in Egypt."

The Spectator hastens to assure us that Mr. Milner is perfectly well aware that his book might have appropriately borne as a sub-title, "The History of a Non-Sequitur." Possibly the illogical conclusion forced upon him by fact might be accounted for by the weakness or absence of fact in one or the other of the alleged premises. Into that we need not here inquire. But if any one were disposed at first thought to adduce the action of the British logical faculty, a little further reflection will probably lead him to rectify that conclusion. However inconsistent it may seem at first sight that a Radical Government, many of whose supporters are strongly opposed to the permanent occupation of Egypt, should so promptly and peremptorily veto the Khedive's choice of Prime Minister and compel him to replace with one pleasing to themselves, fuller information makes it clear that no other course under the circumstances would have been consistent with national self-respect, or with the objects for which the occupation was originally undertaken with the approval of the Great European Powers. To have allowed the young and not over-wise Khedive to instal as his chief adviser a well-known enemy of British control and to follow up the change by a wholesale dismissal of British officials, would not only have destroyed England's power for good in Egypt, but would have made her position there utterly ridiculous and herself a laughing-stock. On the other hand, to have "scuttled" out of the country under such circumstances, would have been fatal to the great and acknowledged reforms which she has wrought for the country. There was in short, no other course possible for Lord Roseberry than that which he adopted, by which he said in effect, "We are in the country, and in nominal control, by international consent. So long as we remain here that control must be real and effective. When our work has been finished to the satisfaction of all concerned, we will take our leave in accordance with our treaty engagements, quietly and deliberately, but never under constraint of a ruler who could not retain the throne for a month but for British support." It is by no means improbable that the Khedive's ill-advised attempt at revolt may prolong the period of occupation indefinitely.

It would not be surprising if certain enterprising and energetic editors and politicians in the United States should have felt, on reading the brief account of the debate in the Imperial Parliament the other day, on the Hawaiian question, something of the same bewilderment which is said to be so trying to the French statesmen, in view of the alleged utter

want of logic in the English mind and of predictability in English action. Here they, the Americans referred to, had been working themselves up to a high pitch of excitement, becoming in fact almost belligerent, over the policy which they imagined grasping Albion would surely pursue in order to gain control or possession of the Sandwich Islands, or at least to prevent the United States from obtaining the one or the other. And then, just as they were prepared to breathe out defiance and destruction to any nation which should dare to object to their right to annex the coveted territory, it is coolly announced in the British House of Commons that as at present advised the British Government do not intend to bestir themselves even to the extent of sending a solitary gunboat to look after British interests in these islands. And why? Because they have full confidence that the lives and property of British subjects are safe under the protection of the United States.

It has often been said by Canadians that British statesmen do not understand the American character and consequently do not know how to deal with American politicians. Let that be fancied no longer. Assuming that the British Government are unwilling that Hawaii should become annexed to the United States,—whether they or not does not yet appear—it would have been difficult to have adopted a more effectual means of preventing or at least delaying such a consummation. The danger was that the American Government and Congress should, under the pressure of the sudden excitement, commit themselves to a policy from which it might afterwards be difficult to withdraw without humiliation. Those cordial words spoken so opportunely in the Commons, and cheered by the House—we have no doubt that they were perfectly sincere—would have removed all occasion from the American mind for undue haste and will probably result in such calm and deliberate study of the whole question by the shrewd statesmen and people of the Republic, as may lead possibly to conclusions very different from those which might have been reached under the spur of opposition from another nation.

Which would be preferable in a given State, a system of education which should ensure only that every adult citizen should be able to read and write, or one which should give to one in a thousand, or even a hundred, of its citizens a thorough university culture and leave the rest utterly illiterate? It should not take any thoughtful friend of his kind very long to answer the question. Yet something like such an issue seems to us to be involved in much of the current and fashionable criticism of the want of thoroughness of the educational work of the day. Of course much of it, as imparted both in public schools and in so-called colleges, is extremely deficient in point of quality. Of course, too, it is greatly to be desired that all education, elementary or otherwise, should be the best possible of its kind. But then it must be remembered that all our public school systems are but in their infancy. It was but a little while ago, the time must be within the memory of many now living, when the dream of

universal education began to be regarded as anything more than a beautiful dream. So stupendous a conception cannot be thoroughly wrought out in action in a generation or a lifetime. Measured by the ideal yet before the mind of the enthusiastic believer in popular education, all that has yet been accomplished is but the small beginning. Measured by the condition of the masses at the time the dream first began to take shape as a possible reality, the results already achieved are marvellous. This is the sufficient answer to such supercilious pessimism as that which prompts Professor Mahaffy in the Nineteenth century to express himself as diametrically disappointed in the results of popular education so far, and to intimate that his only comfort is in the prospect of a general burst-up, under the impact of some opportune wandering star which will convert all our schools into their proper element of gas. The effective answer is that given by Lord Justice Bowen, in the course of a very witty and wise address at the London Working Men's College. The consolation for any and all defects in modern popular education is that the lesser good is much more widely distributed than the greater could possibly be, and, we should be disposed to add, without any necessary detriment to the quality of the greater as still enjoyed by the few. In the State whose citizens could all read and write, a number sufficiently large to supply all the needs of the time would make their way from that starting-point to high attainments. Under the alternative supposed, we should speedily return to the oldtime condition of lords.

### COMBINATION VS. COMPETITION.

Will the twentieth century be shut up as the nineteenth and all preceding centuries have been, to one of these alternatives as the law of its industrial and business life? Shall civilized peoples, even in their most highly organized communities, be perpetually condemned to a choice between two evils, each of which has so many objectionable features that it is often no easy matter to choose between them? According to the ancient Empedoclean philosophy the material elements of which the world is composed were kept in their places by the operation of the two warring principles of love and hate, or friendship and strife, the one operating as the great uniting, the other as the great separating force. There was consolation in this system in the fact that one of the two, at least, was a beneficent power. But in the great social cosmos of this age of high civilization the best we have hitherto been able to do is to entrust the well-being of the individual and of the mass to the operation of one of the other of the two great forces both of which are in their nature divisive and malignant. Alas that our boasted economic science can do no more for us than this!

Some such reflections as the foregoing force themselves upon one as he reads the debate on the binder-twine question and on that of the tariff generally which took place in the Commons at Ottawa the other day. By almost universal consent wherever the choice is between competition and combination, competition is preferable as the lesser evil. It is a sad comment up-