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THERE is probably no question better worth discussion in a Canadian journal at the present time than that which forms the subject of Mr. Robert H. Lawder's letter in this number. We shall, therefore, be glad to give the arguments advanced by Mr. Lawder the consideration in another number which want of time and space preclude us from doing this week. We refer to the subject now simply to put ourselves right on one or two points in regard to which our remarks have been so misunderstood as to leave us subject to imputations under which we should be unwilling to lie for a single week. In the first place Mr. Lawder, naturally enough we admit, seems to think that in saying that "no doubt his figures would be challenged by American authorities" we meant to imply that those figures themselves might stand in need of verification. Nothing was further from our intention than the discourtesy of insinuating any doubt as to the literal accuracy of the statistics given. If our readers will kindly substitute the word "conclusions" for the word "figures" in our sentence they will better understand our meaning. In the second place, when Mr. Lawder says: "In the pamphlet referred to it is suggested that the remedy is reciprocity of tariffs. THE WEEK terms this retaliation, commercial war, etc., and shrinks with dread," etc. Here it is our right to complain. What THE WEEK shrunk from, as will be seen on reference to the passage, was not "retaliation" but *discrimination*, a very different thing. No one can dispute the abstract right of Canada to retaliate or indulge in "reciprocity of tariffs" to her heart's content if she chooses to be guilty of that folly. But however narrow and unfriendly the tariff policy of the United States in respect to Canada, she has stopped short of direct discrimination against us, and, as everyone knows, tariff discrimination against a particular nation would be everywhere regarded as a studied offence, if not an act of downright hostility, and would be resented accordingly. It was this we understood Mr. Lawder to propose. We shall be glad to know that we misinterpreted his meaning. In the third place the question asked in Mr. Lawder's last sentence has, we submit, no justification or excuse in anything that has appeared in our columns and is not, therefore, entitled

to a reply. The question which precedes it is of a different kind and demands a categorical answer. We did more than hint at a better alternative than "reciprocity of tariffs," and we are quite willing to let the country know what, in our humble opinion, that better alternative is. It is a dignified abstention from the attempt to scold or scare the United States politicians into a better frame of mind; a careful adjustment, and, let us add, a gradual reduction, of our own tariff with an enlightened regard simply to what will most benefit our own people, rather than what will most spite our neighbours, and a hopeful anticipation of the good time coming, for which a very large and influential portion of the people of the United States are working, and the coming of which can be only a question of time, and of a comparatively short time, when a more liberal and enlightened trade policy will prevail. Meanwhile a gradual but effective lessening of the burdens of taxation now pressing upon our people, and a steady progression in the direction of the grand commercial liberty of the Mother Country, will not only afford the best stimulus to our own trade and industries and to the immigration which we so much need, but will prove the most effective pressure we can bring to bear upon our neighbours—a pressure ten-fold more effective, we venture to maintain, than any "reciprocity of tariffs" that the perverted ingenuity of politicians can devise.

THE Manitoba school question has entered upon a most remarkable phase. It is announced that parties supporting the appeal of Archbishop Tache will be given a hearing before the Dominion Privy Council, sitting apparently in an entirely new and quasi-judicial capacity. Archbishop Tache's appeal, which is now published, clearly makes out the right of himself and his co-religionists to have their petitions considered by the Governor-General in Council, in accordance with the terms of the report made by Sir John Thompson and adopted by the Council, on the 21st of March, 1891. The concluding words of this report, which are quoted by the Archbishop, and on which the claim for a hearing is based, are as follows:—

If the legal controversy should result in the decision of the Court of Queen's Bench (adverse to Catholic views) being sustained, the time will come for your Excellency to consider the petitions which have been presented by and on behalf of the Roman Catholics of Manitoba for redress under sub-sections two and three of section twenty-two of the Manitoba Act quoted in the early part of this report, and which are analogous to the provisions made by the "British North America Act" in relation to the other Provinces.

The Archbishop points out with irresistible logic that the time spoken of in this report, "for his Excellency to consider the petitions," has come. Two things about these proceedings are very peculiar: first, that Sir John Thompson should have interpreted the clause of the Manitoba Act under which this appeal is taken as being applicable after a decision has been given on the question at issue by the Judicial Committee of the British Privy Council, the highest judicial authority in the realm. The clause of the Act under which the appeal is held to lie, reads as follows:—

An appeal shall lie to the Governor-General in Council from any Act or decision of the Legislature of the Province, or of any provincial authority, affecting any right or privilege of the Protestant or Roman Catholic minority of the Queen's subjects in relation to education.

No one less astute than the Minister of Justice himself, we may venture to say, would have thought of finding in this an authorization of so unprecedented a course as that of the Canadian Privy Council sitting virtually as a Court of Revision, to consider and pronounce upon an appeal from the decision of the Judicial Committee of the Imperial Privy Council. The second peculiarity is the mode in which the appeal is to be heard, viz., by the parties—for the Manitoba Government is to be called on to defend its legislation—appearing in person or by proxy, before the Governor-General in Council, to argue the case. Some difficulties of no small magnitude suggest themselves. Will the Provincial Government admit the competency of the tribunal by appearing before it? We are bound to assume, of course, that the hearing is not part of a pre-

arranged farce. If not, there must be a possibility that a conclusion may be reached contrary to that of the Judicial Committee and adverse to the Province. How is such a decision, or any remedial legislation based upon it, to be enforced, for it may be further assumed that the Provincial authorities, backed by the decision of what has always hitherto been supposed to be the highest and final court of appeal, will not voluntarily submit to a reversal of the verdict? May we not safely predict that no adverse decision will be given and that no redress, where the Imperial judges have declared there is no grievance, will be attempted?

"**ANGLICANUS**," writing to one of the daily papers, complains that the Pan-Presbyterian Council totally ignored the question of church union, notwithstanding the fact that the bishops of the Anglican Church, representing upward of twenty-six millions of Christians, have put forth a proposal looking to this end. "Anglicanus" omits, however, to mention that the bishops incorporated in their proposal a condition which they must have known, unless they are lamentably deficient in knowledge of the views of Nonconformists generally, would be an insuperable barrier to union. We refer to the matter, not with any intention of discussing the question of the Apostolic Succession, but for the purpose of calling attention to what seems to us to be significant both in the speech and in the silence of the great Presbyterian assembly. Taken in connection with the absence of any formulation of projects looking to corporate union with any one or more of the other great denominational bodies, the general tenor and tone of the discussions may be understood, it seems to us, to indicate that the able and far-seeing leaders of Presbyterian thought are coming to see that Christian unity is a much more desirable and at the same time much more feasible thing than any outward, formal union, even were such possible. The strength of personal conviction and the enthusiasm it begets are among the great forces which are driving the denominations forward in aggressive work at a pace before unknown in modern times, but there would be, to say the least, great danger that these forces might be seriously weakened by the compromises which would be almost inseparable from any scheme of organic union. Compromise, always questionable and dangerous, would be doubly so in matters of religious belief and practice. It may even be questioned whether adherence to mistaken convictions, when these are anything better than pure prejudices, may not be preferable from a moral and religious point of view to the profession of beliefs and the use of methods theoretically correct which are the offspring of compromise made for the sake of expediency.

IF we may assume that the churches exist not for selfish but for altruistic ends, that, in other words, they are but so many missionary organizations, whose reason for being is that they may be constantly doing for the promotion of every good work, the question arises whether corporate union is so necessary or desirable for the greatest efficiency as many seem to suppose. The great thing would seem to be unity of aim and effort for the accomplishment of the great work for which all alike profess to exist. Disputes about questions of creed and ordinances are of course often great hindrances to certain aspects of the work which the churches set before them, but there are also great advantages to be gained by the sub-division of the great army into compact bodies. These advantages will readily suggest themselves, especially to those who have studied human nature to some purpose. It is exceedingly doubtful whether the conglomeration of all the great churches into one vast aggregate would not produce a body unwieldy by reason of its great bulk and the heterogeneous materials of which it would inevitably be composed. Nothing short of a perpetual miracle could preserve such a body from danger of internal corruption, or of speedy disintegration. But it is not easy to set a limit to what the existing churches might accomplish for the good of humanity by harmonious co-operation along the lines of aim and action, in respect to which all are tolerably well agreed, if not absolutely at one. How irresistible the power which such a combination of influences might