

no one has been more strenuous and emphatic in insisting upon the observance of those rights so far as she herself was concerned.

Mr. Ewart's argument before the Privy Council, sitting in its judicial capacity, adds little or nothing to what he had previously urged before a Committee of that Council. Upon this we have already commented. Whether his reasonings were convincing to the members of the Council or otherwise, we shall know in due time. A prior question seems to be whether he was constitutionally justified in falling back upon the provisions of the B. N. A. Act for an interpretation which he certainly could not otherwise have read in, or into, the Manitoba Act. We do not know that the validity of his main contention depends upon the soundness of his preliminary arguments. If so it might not be difficult to show that those arguments contained and were largely based upon assumptions, some of which stand themselves sadly in need of proof. There is for instance, the fallacy upon which we have more than once remarked of regarding the public schools as Protestant, in the same sense in which the Separate schools are Catholic, and this, too, notwithstanding the fact that under the provisions of the Manitoba School Act, the selection of teachers and general management of the schools within certain general limitations would be naturally and necessarily in the hands of Catholic trustees in those sections in which the population is mainly Catholic. A second assumption (which "W" also makes in his letter) is that Catholic parents cannot conscientiously send their children to the public schools, though the highest authorities of the Roman Church have formally declared the opposite within the last few weeks, in the United States. A third remark, which may be a little presumptuous in a layman, we will venture to make, viz., that as it seems to us, no one but a lawyer with a brief would ever have discovered in subsection 3 of the B. N. A. Act, any reference to a possible repeal of the very law whose existence the subsection predicates and for whose enforcement it seems intended to provide. Does Mr. Ewart give to the word "act" in that subsection its technical meaning of a legislative statute? To the lay mind that seems to involve something very like an absurdity. Would not the common-sense interpretation understand the provisions of the subsection as referring to judicial decisions and administrative or executive acts, under the established Separate school system?

The animated but thoroughly friendly discussion of the possibility of organic church union, which took place at the last meeting of the Toronto Ministerial Association, was a sign of the times, so far as the kindly sentiments of the various speakers were concerned, but it can hardly be thought by the most sanguine friend of such union to have sensibly helped the movement. The two facts which stand out to the view of the on-looker are, first, that the spirit in which the discussion was carried on marks a distinct advance in the direction of true brotherly feeling between the representatives of the different denominations—and this may in itself be the better part of the desired union—and second, that the addresses themselves served but to set in a clearer light the radical differences of opinion in regard to fundamentals which seem to

render organic union impossible. On no one foundation principle did the speakers seem to be agreed. While one appeals to the whole Bible, and another to the New Testament, a third is profoundly convinced that history should also be taken into the reference. So long as there are such diversities of view with regard to the source of authority and law, there can be little hope of progress in the direction of unity in the conclusions reached. The divergence was equally marked in reference to the very nature of the church itself, which some conceived mainly as an invisible, spiritual entity, composed of all true believers, and others as a visible, organized body, continuous from age to age. Evidently the brethren will have to come nearer together in regard to first principles before they can hope to discuss minor matters of creed and ordinances and government, with any hope of agreement. By the way, those members of the conference who represented the congregational method of church government surprise us somewhat by their alleged readiness to treat the form of church government as a secondary matter. One would suppose that the difference between an oligarchical and a democratic organization between essential equality and a gradation of ecclesiastical orders was sufficiently broad to be important.

A good deal of allowance may probably be made for exaggeration in the despatches, else the situation in Egypt might be regarded as somewhat serious. Should the sequel prove the existence of any strong and widespread dislike on the part of the Egyptians to British ascendancy, the fact would add much force to the contentions of those who regard England's position in that country as a false one. Meanwhile it is, perhaps, more probable that the excitement is caused mainly by the influence of Russian or French agents and partisans, working upon the ignorance and want of experience of the youthful Khedive and those by whom he is surrounded. The fact, if it be such, that Germany, Austria and Italy all approve the action of the British Government is reassuring. The good faith or otherwise of England's retention of control beyond the time originally stipulated depends, we suppose, upon the consent of the powers concerned in the original agreement. With the three powers named approving her course as necessary and wise, England can afford to disregard the protests of France. Still, it must be confessed that the holding of the country by force of arms, contrary to the wishes of its people, would be an undesirable thing for a British Government, and above all, for a Liberal Government.

The death at his home in Fremont, Ohio, of ex-President Rutherford B. Hayes, has served to bring to mind again one who from being Chief Executive of a nation stepped at once into the seclusion of private life and passed almost from memory. Perhaps in no country but the United States is so complete a transition possible. There seems to be an unwritten law in that country which declares it beneath the dignity of an ex-President to continue his political career. The tradition was successfully violated by John Quincy Adams, who after his defeat for re-election wielded an influence as a member of the House of Representatives perhaps greater than he had wielded as President. But his example has not been followed and there is now no

career open to an ex-President unless, as in Mr. Cleveland's case, he is strong enough to again aspire to the highest office in his countrymen's gift. If the Presidents of the Republic were, as a rule, its leading statesmen in the sense in which the Premier and the leader of the Opposition are the leading statesmen in England and in Canada, this condition of things would be anomalous enough. Inasmuch as they are usually chosen from the second rank of political leaders, it is perhaps well and in harmony with true democracy that when their terms are over they should step to the rear and become again plain citizens of the Republic, undistinguished by rank or habit of life from those amid whom their lot is cast. The lesson thus afforded is an impressive one.

To the class of secondary statesmen Mr. Hayes belonged. He was not a great man like Lincoln, or a strong one like Cleveland. His administration, moreover, rested under a cloud on account of its defective title. Whether he did right to accept an office to which a commission authorized by the national Legislature to settle the disputed succession, and with whose appointment and conclusions he had of course nothing to do, declared him elected, or whether, believing, as his subsequent conduct showed that he probably did, that Mr. Tilden was the real choice of the people, he should have taken the heroic course of refusing the honors within his reach, is a question that still gives rise to bitter controversy in the American press and upon which we are not called to express an opinion. Mr. Hayes is admitted by his opponents to have been both an able and a well-meaning man. Few denied that he acted conscientiously in the course that he pursued. His private life was irreproachable and his administration free from scandal. His term will be remembered as the one which witnessed the withdrawal of the last Northern troops from Southern territory and thus the establishment of conditions under which the great national sore could heal more certainly and more rapidly.

THE COMING SESSION.

There is no lack of important matters to come before Parliament at its approaching session. First in importance is the vital question of tariff reform. From intimations given in Sir John Thompson's speeches and otherwise, it is pretty certain that changes more or less important will be proposed by the Government itself. It is, in fact, safe to assume that the Ministers are too wise to shut their eyes to the abounding indications that the people are becoming thoroughly impatient of the regime of high taxation. But whether the Government will attempt to forestall the coming storm by serious modifications, or merely to allay it by lopping off a decayed branch or two, is uncertain. In either event we hazard little by predicting that the period of protection as a fiscal policy in Canada is near its close. If the Government initiate important changes in the right direction, the people may accept them for the time being. But the breach will have been made in the wall. Having proved the benefits of unshackled trade in a few staples the people will not be slow to draw the inference that if free trade or a revenue tariff in a few articles of commerce is good, the same liberty with reference to many or all the commodities which they have to buy