

of Central and South America in our own hemisphere, and the plottings of socialists and dynamitards the world over, we have France engaged in an aggressive conflict—which can hardly be called war—with China, while England, in the van of Christian nations, has a perpetual insurrection in Ireland, has had serious difficulties with Germany, is on the verge of conflict with Russia, and is in imminent danger of trouble with France. Of course the fact that England is one of the parties to almost every threatening conflict does not prove that she is more quarrelsome than other nations, by only that, by virtue of her world wide possessions and interests, she is at some point or other, in contact with every great people under the sun.

The *Week* thinks it not only strange but “unseemly and impolitic” that Mr. Arthur on his retirement from the Presidency, should be thinking of returning to the practice of law and that, after being the peer of Kings, he should “not only have to earn his bread, but take rank again beneath his seniors in the profession, and be exposed to the contentious buffetings of the Bar.” The *Week* further talks of “disregard of the proprieties, not to say the decencies, of State,” and thinks that a dignified retirement on a reasonable pension would be the proper close of a presidential career. Most of our readers, will, we think, rather sympathize with Matthew Arnold in admiring the readiness with which the true American can pass, if necessary, from a higher to a lower sphere of work without loss of social or self respect. So far as they can do this our neighbours prove that they have reached the elevation of true philosophic Republicanism. To begin to pension off ex-presidents would be to sow the seeds of an aristocratic caste, and to outline the foundations of a future court system, repugnant to the spirit of genuine Americanism.

The School.

We are glad to observe that the Minister of Education has, in deference to the charge of breach of contract urged against his proposal to increase the yearly fee of subscribers to the superannuation fund, consented to withdraw the clause increasing that fee to eight dollars. It will now stand as before to those who wish to continue their yearly payments. This is as it should be.

The Report of the Superintendent of Education, Nova Scotia, announces that the Faculties of the various Colleges in the Province have agreed upon uniform matriculation standards in classics, to take effect in 1866. This will be undoubtedly a convenience to the High Schools and Academies, where the work of preparing for matriculation is done, and by simplifying their necessary courses may promote thoroughness. It will also, probably, bring more of competitive stimulus into those schools.

A movement is on foot amongst some of the English schoolmasters aiming at legislation to secure “fixity of tenure” to the members of the profession. No doubt unpleasantness and

sometimes injustice result from the teachers being completely at the mercy of school boards,—often, it may be, of one or two cantankerous members of such boards. But it may well be feared that any legislative remedy would be worse than the disease. To say nothing of the removal of a strong incentive to the teacher to do his best work, and secure his position by efficiency, it is clear that any such Government protection would tend in a direction opposite to that elevation towards professional independence and dignity for which many of the ablest representatives of the teaching body are assiduously and hopefully striving.

The question of co-education at McGill has been settled in an eminently satisfactory manner, as pointed out in our Quebec notes in last issue. The University, the students and the public are to be congratulated and all owe a debt of thanks to the Hon. D. A. Smith, by whose liberal gifts such a settlement has been made possible. The fact is often lost sight of by theorists, that there is a very large class of young women who will forego the advantages of a college course rather than enter mixed classes. Many of them shrink personally from entrance on such conditions; in many other instances the objection is on the part of parents or guardians. The feeling may be the offspring of prudishness in the one case, or prejudice in the other. We are now simply stating the fact. Long years at least must pass before a change of sentiment can be brought about, if indeed, it ever comes. Meanwhile what is to be done? The Faculty of McGill have answered the question so far by providing separate classes all the way through in all imperative and some optional subjects, and at the same time throwing open the classes in other optional subjects to young women who may choose to join them. Thus McGill has the high honour of being the first institution in Canada to provide thorough Arts and Science courses for women. It is a high honour. We presume the residence question will still have to be disposed of. This is another and most important question, for constant moral and social training and influence are, for both sexes, not less indispensable than the best professional teaching.

The Executive of the National Union of Elementary Teachers in England, has put the following upon the list amongst other resolutions for submission at the coming Easter Convention of that body:—

“That the time has arrived when the practice of devoting public money to the training of teachers should be modified, with the view of gradually withdrawing the subsidies now paid for the purpose; and that it is inexpedient that the natural operation of the law of supply and demand should be interfered with, in the case of the teaching profession, by the action of the Education Department and the School Boards.”

There can be little doubt that the resolution, however premature, foreshadows the drift of opinion, both of teachers and the public, in the not distant future. The proposition that Elementary Education is primarily the work of the state, is often announced as if it were an axiom in political economy. The most advanced States will probably be the first to recur to the older and sounder thesis, that it is the work of parents and