

more prosaic purpose of learning something about the Canadian constitution. My talk is, I believe, one of a series devoted to foreign constitutions which various members of the diplomatic corps are giving. Your committee has had a very practical object in arranging these talks. You have not asked me to come here because you have an academic interest in constitutions of all kinds but because you are now engaged in drafting a constitution for Pakistan and naturally enough you wish to benefit by the experience of other countries. The Canadian constitution is a big subject and I obviously cannot tell you much about it in the short time at my disposal. I shall, however, keep in mind the object you had in view in arranging this series of talks and do my best to tell you something about the Canadian experience in constitution making. I shall commence with a brief historical account of events leading up to Confederation in Canada, that is leading up to the time when Canada, as we now know it, was created. I shall then describe the sort of government which the Fathers of Confederation established, the difficulties encountered and the manner in which they were overcome. Let me say in passing that as I shall be using the term "Fathers of Confederation" from time to time, I should explain that in Canada the distinguished group of men who created Canada are invariably known as the Fathers of Confederation. Then I will go on to describe how our constitution developed, the weaknesses and strains which in time came to the surface and some of the unsolved problems which still remain. If there is time I shall at the end say something about the various branches of the government.

Let me now give you some historical background and a few simple facts. Canada came into being and Confederation, as we call it, was achieved on July 1, 1867 and ever since then July 1st has been celebrated as our national day. Canada was created by an act of the United Kingdom Parliament called the British North America Act. When any person in Canada refers to the Canadian constitution, he usually means the British North America Act and its amendments. As I shall show later, this document, although a very important part of our constitution is not and does not pretend to be the whole Canadian constitution. There were four original provinces: Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Provision was made in the Act for the admission of other provinces and in the course of time, six more have been admitted. With the admission of Newfoundland to Canada in 1949, the whole of British North America north of the United States became the federal union of Canada.

Let me now try to tell you in a few words why Confederation came about. To do this it is necessary for me to take you back to the middle of the Nineteenth Century and describe conditions in North America. You had, of course, the United States of America, a country of about thirty million inhabitants increasing rapidly in population, power and prosperity. To the north you had a number of isolated British colonies. On the Atlantic side there was Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland. In the central area there was the large province of Canada which was made up of Ontario and Quebec. Quebec and Ontario had had separate legislatures up until 1840 but in that year they were united in one legislature for reasons I will not go into here. The large prairie area was under the control of the Hudson's Bay Company while on the Pacific coast you had the small but vigorous colony of British Columbia. By 1860, the provinces of Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland had all won complete responsible government in local affairs.

There were a number of reasons why the various