

have the laws of the Dominion. For what our city or other local municipality asks from us or does for us, how our schools are conducted, how property is kept or sold, and a vast number of such matters as most intimately concern us, all depend upon the laws, good or bad, which our province makes.

NOTE.—The “constitution” is the name given to the whole body or collection of rules in accordance with which the government of a country is conducted. In Great Britain these rules are not anywhere written out together in one document. They are gathered from what British governments have done in the past even back to distant ages, and have come to be pretty well understood. If there is doubt as to what to do in a particular case, or if there really is no rule, a certain decision is adopted by the government as to the matter. This decision may lead up to a new rule for the future, and is called a “precedent.” In the United States, however, a great number of the rules of government are written out in a formal document, and are changed rarely and with difficulty. So we speak of Great Britain as having an “unwritten” constitution, and of the United States as having largely a “written” constitution. Canada has a written constitution in the “British North America Act,” which was passed by the parliament of Great Britain at our request in 1867, so that the various separate provinces of those days might be formed into a union or “confederation,” and be able to work together with a federal government over them all. But there are a multitude of points which our written constitution does not cover, and so we follow and establish precedents as well, and also go back to the precedents set by the governments of Great Britain.