

vibrates with public sentiment, but still preserves its continuity. The American is not so. Britain has had an unbroken progressive political history for the last 200 years, while in the last 30 years America has had a civil war, two Presidents assassinated, one impeached, and one stealing into office. America had the land and was bound to develop, and it was in spite of her system and by no means on account of it that she stands in the fore rank of the nations of to-day. Mr. Horsey's address was received with long and continued applause, as well for the eloquent manner in which it was delivered as for the strong and telling arguments adduced.

Mr. G. Waldron was next called upon to support the affirmation. He made a few jocular remarks about the supporters of the negative being from the greatest University on the continent, while he and his colleague represented the most important University in the Dominion. The subject of debate he considered one of the most momentous questions of the century. Neither system can be perfect, but that is most perfect which contains the principles of Federation. In the U. S. there is the great centre of government at Washington and the local legislatures of each separate state after the same model. This is a highly advantageous condition of things. The men from a particular locality can better legislate for the constituencies than can a large body of men who pass laws for the whole country. He then dealt with the governmental functions, the executive, legislative and judicial, and contrasted them as seen working in the two systems. He held that the British system was defective in that all power was centered in the Commons. In America on the other hand each different department had its own duties to perform without regard to the others. The President is superior to the monarch because he has the veto power, while the supreme court has its excellency in not being subject to anything else in the state. The British system of not paying members of Parliament he condemned as being exclusive and preventing any but the rich from being elected. The system of remunerating members in America opened the field to all. He summed up by saying that the five great excellencies of the U. S. constitution are the equality of all men in the state and the local government system.

Then followed Mr. W. J. Patterson, of Queen's, who first replied at some length to the arguments advanced by the supporters of the affirmative. Continuing the argument for the negative he said:

"So far we have confined our attention to an examination and comparison of the actual developments and inner working of the two constitutions. That comparison we have found much to the advantage of the British. Let us now examine the capabilities and historical basis of each. The British is as old as the British people. It has grown with the people. Its foundation is laid deep and strong in the life of the nation. Its bulwarks are the great principles of civil and religious liberty. Its great charters serve as a barrier to prevent a return to the abuses of the

past and afford a firm base for a solid superstructure; while its perfect elasticity, its powers of assimilation and its unlimited potentiality of evolution assure its future glory. It has stood the test of more than a thousand years and still stands, the bulwark of British liberty, yes, we may even say, of the world's liberty. Not so with the American constitution. Wise and complete as its provisions may have appeared to those who framed it, nevertheless, the unlimited expansion and varied ramifications of national life were sure to result in a set of circumstances for which the constitution would afford no provision. Time and again has this been the case. Time and again has the Supreme Court of the United States declared the acts of Congress *ultra vires*. This danger is inherent in written constitutions, and is recognized and acknowledged by the best thinkers in America. In existence but a century, the inelasticity of the American constitution has already produced a rebellion, while, during two centuries, under the most aggravating and distressing foreign embarrassment, the British nation has enjoyed uninterrupted domestic peace.

"Again, what is the testimony of the nations in regard to the two constitutions? Existing side by side during the past hundred years to which have the nations looked for their models? It is a significant fact, that of all the nations of Europe who have during that time remodelled their constitutions not one has copied the American. All have adopted the essential elements of the British. To sum up: The American constitution is a mechanism, devoid of vital energy, elasticity and power of assimilation. The child of revolution it can be materially changed only by the application of external force, thus obeying arbitrary laws. The British is an organism; possessed of vital energy, it develops by evolution, thus obeying nature's laws."

Mr. Gibson made a very brief reply and then the chairman proceeded to deliver his own views on the two systems. He considered the British system the most democratic system of government in existence, and the American the most conservative. The American he showed was but the development of the British. He contrasted the House of Lords and the Senate and said that the latter was the most able body of men that gathered together on the face of the earth. Then, remarking on the able and eloquent manner in which each side had conducted its case, he resumed his seat in a contented manner without deciding the debate, while a murmur of dissatisfaction arose from the audience. A vote of thanks to the Professor for his presence at the debate was moved by Mr. Gibson and seconded by Mr. Horsey. The latter in speaking of the motion said that he and his colleagues had come up from Queen's on the understanding that the debate was to be decided on the merits of the arguments advanced, and then called upon the chairman to decide the debate. This was roundly applauded by the audience with cries of "decision!" "decision!" Mr. Smith again arose and made another short speech, the drift of