

stitution. But for all practical purposes, this appears to me incomparably the best system of civil polity for the people who live under it. But, then the complaint is, that we have not had the Constitution in its fulness. To this I reply, that we have all which, under present circumstances, can be expected--that we have more of it than many desire, and, may I just add, more than some persons deserve.

Were it asked wherein consists the excellence of our Constitution? I should answer briefly, that it consists in the obvious truths--that, *first*, a large portion of its elements are drawn, either directly or indirectly, from revealed religion. That, *secondly*, its fundamental principles are in perfect accordance with the soundest views of human nature. *Thirdly*, the improvement which it has received from a long tract of ages.---*Fourthly*, the admirable division of power, by which at once the most perfect liberty is secured, and the most complete responsibility. It is, indeed, take it as a whole, the image of the soul of a great and wise people--a people jealous of their liberty--a people watchful against the encroachments of the Supreme power; yet no less careful that the democratic influence should be kept within proper bounds. And should nothing remain of the Empire, in some distant age, but its Constitution, that would be monument enough--that would stand an intellectual pyramid, to tell the world that a free and a wise people once flourished in Britain.

We are best able to judge of human institutions from their effects. Whatever institutions contribute directly to the virtue, prosperity, and true greatness of a people must be good. Let us look for a moment at the British Constitution under this light. Not to speak of the military achievements of our country, or to affirm that her armies have at all times fought on the side of right; yet surely truth warrants, what patriotism prompts us to declare, that more than once has Britain stood on the Marathon of the world, and fought for the liberties of the human race. Nor ought it to be overlooked, that when she has made conquests, these have, in all cases, been accessions to the domains of intelligence, liberty, and virtue. Even in India, where, perhaps, more has happened, than in any other part, to humble and grieve us, the people have long since found, that, although individuals may, for a time, misdirect, and abuse British power, its natural tendency, when it comes forth in the national mind, is not to destroy, but to bless those under it. *There* a hundred dynasties had arisen and fallen, and each had scourged the helpless tribes of Hindostan with reckless oppression. It was reserved for Great Britain--noble distinction--to give repose and protection to the afflicted nations of India. And for the first time