

tion which has been introduced into England within the last century (p. 259), could never have been made effective by the efforts of the Crown and its advisers alone ; for it has cost vast sums of money, which have annually to be voted by Parliament, and it has involved compulsory attendance at school, which could not be imposed except by Act of Parliament.

### THE BRITISH EMPIRE NOT AN AUTOCRACY

Nevertheless, this sketch of the powers of the Crown, unless corrected, may leave upon the mind of the reader the totally false impression that the British Empire is an autocracy, under an hereditary military ruler, on whose powers there are few legal restrictions, and whose personal likes and dislikes rule the lives of his subjects. Of course the latter part of the impression would be directly contrary to the truth ; but it was necessary to emphasize the former, to explain what is meant by the 'sovereignty' of the Crown, which is an essential feature of the unity of the British Empire. Having, however, laid sufficient emphasis on this aspect of the Crown, we proceed now to the equally important aspect which is known as its 'constitutional' character. What exactly do we mean by saying that the British monarchy is a 'constitutional' monarchy ?