

are the freest people, the members of whose government are most truly, as they ought to be, the servants and not the masters of the public; and whose constitutional forms are most adapted to effectuate, and least adapted to trick and thwart the public will.

Many here will no doubt remember an amusing passage in a speech of Lord Dufferin at a dinner at the Toronto Club in 1874, when describing a recent visit he had paid to Chicago and Detroit, he said:—"More than once I was addressed with the playful suggestion that Canada should unite her fortunes with those of the Great Republic. To these invitations I invariably replied by acquainting them that in Canada we were essentially a democratic people; that nothing would content us unless the popular will could exercise an immediate and complete control over the Executive of the country; that the Ministers who conducted the Government were but a committee of Parliament which was itself an emanation from the constituencies, and that no Canadian would be able to breathe freely if he thought that the persons administering the affairs of his country were removed beyond the supervision and contact of our own legislative assemblies."

Here we have a reference to the potent fact that in Canada we possess a system of responsible parliamentary government as distinguished from the presidential and congressional government of the United States. This is one of the most important of the Canadian forms of freedom, though I do not propose to dwell long upon it, partly because I think it is a matter with which people are more generally familiar than with some I have to mention. The American system of separating the Executive from the Legislature is, as Sir Henry Maine points out,* very like the system favoured by King George III. The modern British system was not developed until some time after the American Revolution. The Americans, however, fettered themselves by a written constitution almost impossible to amend; we benefitted by the general current of British constitutional development. Under the American system the President and the Secretaries of State cannot be members either of the House of Representatives or of the Senate; they are under no direct responsibility to Congress of any kind; nor can they take any direct part in initiating or debating any measure. Under our British system the Ministers of the Crown not only may but must have seats in one or other House of Parliament, and are directly responsible to the popular House. Cabinet Ministers form a committee of the legislature chosen by the majority for the time being. They are accountable to the legislature and must resign office as soon as they lose its confidence, or else dissolve Parliament and accept whatever verdict the country may give.

* "Popular Government," pp. 207, 212, 227.