

THE DOMINION AND THE EMPIRE.

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(Concluded.)

I look, I say, on the Imperial rights of Great Britain, and the privileges which the colonists ought to enjoy under these rights, as being just the most reconcileable things in the world.

EDMUND BURKE.

But as for the colonies, we purpose, through Heaven's blessing, to retain them awhile yet! Shame on us for unworthy sons of brave fathers if we do not.

THOMAS CARLYLE.

A passage quoted in the last article on the above subject showed that Mr. Todd fully recognizes—as, indeed, he does again and again—that the Crown must always act through advisers, approved of Parliament. And as Mr. Sheldon Amos says, in his recent work on the English Constitution from 1830 to 1880, “When once the principle of the responsibility of the Ministers of the Crown to Parliament has been firmly established, there is scarcely any opening left for the irresponsible action of the Sovereign in entire independence of the help or agency of persons who may be made accountable to Parliament.” What opening there is seems to lie in the direction of what Mr. Amos calls, in another part of the same book, “cautious, self-restrained, and purely tentative suggestiveness,” and in another place, “influence of the mere formal consultative sort.” Nor, indeed, does Mr. Todd appear to claim much more than this, although there are certain passages in his first chapter on “the Sovereign, in relation to parliamentary government,” which may seem to assert for the Sovereign a right to exercise that “subtle, undefined, and therefore unlimited influence, constantly playing on the deliberate counsels of those who are bound to give an intelligible explanation of every step taken to Parliament and the country,” which Mr. Sheldon Amos declares would be a factor

for which no theory of the English Constitution in its present form can possibly find a place. Mr. Todd, however, quotes with approbation (p. 21) words of Mr. Gladstone, to the effect that the constitutional influence of the Sovereign is a moral, not a coercive influence, and operates through the will and reason of the Ministry, not over or against them.

We have, however, to do mainly with the functions of the governor of a British colony, which, owing to his dual position before alluded to, must needs be practically greater than those of the Sovereign in the Mother Country. (See Todd, p. 458.) In briefly considering these, it will be impossible to separate the subject from that of the relation of the imperial Government to the colonies generally. It is proposed, therefore, to touch briefly on some of the more important points in this connection alluded to in Mr. Todd's work.

Sir Alexander Bannerman, writing as Governor of Newfoundland in 1861, declares that the new system of responsible government, which was conceded in 1855, instead of lessening, increases a governor's responsibility (Todd, p. 449). It would appear, however, that with reference to the local concerns of a colony, the governor can directly do no more than exercise the same sort of influence that the Sovereign may constitutionally exercise in England. The position of a governor in this respect seems admirably expressed by Sir G. Bowen in a despatch written when Governor of Queensland in 1860 (Todd, p. 66-67):

“There cannot, in my opinion, be a greater mistake than the view which some public writers in England appear to hold; namely, that the governor of a colony, under the system of responsible government, should be, in a certain sense, a *roi fainéant*. So far as my observation extends, nothing can be more opposed than this theory to the wishes of the Anglo-Australians themselves. The governor of each of the colonies in this group is expected not only to act as the head of society;