

leader of the House of Commons had become the real king," and that they deliberately rejected the device of a parliamentary ministry.

To return to Canada, the Constitution of the Canadian colonies under the Act of 1791, could in truth be called a transcript of the British Constitution in little more than outward form of governmental machinery, for the Canadians by no means enjoyed under it the free administration of their own affairs. Not only did the appointment of the members of the Legislative Council rest with the Governor, but, the mercantile system still continuing, the British Parliament reserved to itself⁽ⁿ⁾ the right of establishing regulations, and imposing, levying and collecting duties for the regulation of navigation and commerce to be carried on between the two provinces or between either of them and any other part of the British dominions or any foreign country. The policy of conferring upon colonists the liberty of dealing with their own internal affairs was by no means the lesson which Imperial statesmen at first deduced from the result of the American War of the Revolution. On the contrary, Mr. Creswell, in his recent and in many respects excellent little work on the British colonies^(o), gives a distinct place in the constitutional history of British colonies to the period when after losing the American colonies by tampering too much with the self-government conceded to the settlers, the English colonial administrators, thinking too much internal liberty a dangerous thing, sought to check colonization and impound liberty altogether, taking no service from the colonies, but assuming all expenses of their defence; while Sir Erskine May, in like manner, in his Constitutional History of England, states that "from the period of the American war, the Home Government, awakening to the importance of colonial administration, displayed greater activity and a more ostensible disposition to interfere in the affairs of the colonies"^(p). And when in a despatch of

(n) Imp. 31 Geo. III., c. 31, s. 46.

(o) Pp. 131-2.

(p) 4th ed. Vol. 3, p. 360.