

The men at Quebec had no desire to say to the new Parliament that there were certain definite things which it might not do. This the framers of the constitution of the United States had done. They provided that Congress might not restrict freedom of speech or of the press, or establish or prohibit the exercise of any religion, or confiscate private property without just compensation, or quarter soldiers in private houses, or even require excessive bail. The Parliament of Canada was to have no such restrictions, but was to be free to do what it liked within its general powers. It might do what the British Parliament has done, sentence a man to death without trial. The provinces, too, were given very wide powers. They can establish and endow any religion they like and they can confiscate property without compensation. Above all they can alter their own constitutions by a simple bill without calling a convention. The "omnipotence of Parliament" has some real part in the Canadian system.

This is, however, not the place or time for describing the details of the work done at Quebec. The members of the Conference were content to work hastily and to leave vague a good many things. This was for the valid reason that they were not creating a new system but merely extending an old one. They were all British citizens with ancient