

preferential rates, upon bases of self and separate interest; an Empire in which there is no common army and no common navy, in which subscriptions and contributions to war are not only unregulated but are of purely voluntary character; an Empire, in short, in which there is a sovereign who reigns but may not govern, a supreme parliament that must not exercise its functions, an Imperial War Office and Admiralty without power over the most important dependencies, and subordinate states that do very much as they please.

Having studied all this, and having ascertained that our position is without precedent, we commence to see that the further development of our political history is a matter for most anxious and careful consideration. We have reached commercial independence; we have almost attained parliamentary independence; our union with the rest of the Empire through the British crown remains intact; and the problem is to formulate new relations, for the old are clearly passing away.

As the future is always best studied in the experience, not only of ourselves but of others, let some of the best of our members tell us of other constitutions, past and present. Let one take up the general subject with Dicey and Seeley and Pollock; let another study Lowell on Parties and Governments in Continental Europe; another Bryce, on the Holy Roman Empire; another the "Federalist" and Bryce, on the American Commonwealth; another Lewis, Jenkyns, Greswell, and Hurlburt on Dependencies; another Freeman, Parkin and Grant, on Imperial Federation, another—but perhaps we have enough for just now; these writers and others upon the same subject will suffice for the present.

And in all our discussions let us have the prime requisite of advantageous study, an open mind. Let all who address us be received not only with toleration and patience, but with that respect due to those whom we invite to speak. Let us hear not merely, or even principally, from those with whom most of us might agree, but chiefly, I should say, from those men who have ideas of their own, who possess individuality resulting from study and reflection. Let the Canadian Club