

Council composed of men fairly matured—the minimum age being thirty years. They must be men of modest substance at least. Their duties and honours are to continue during life. They are not to be displaced by the fluctuations of public opinion or the rise and fall of political parties. They are in a certain sense a Court of Appeal, standing between the Agitator and the Constitution, independent of the one and sworn to protect the other. They are joint advisers of His Majesty, with the House of Commons in all matters of legislation, and inherit the example and traditions of the corresponding Chamber in the British Parliament to be followed or avoided as their conscience and the public interests permit.

The House of Commons is the other branch of Parliament. The name suggests a Parliament as founded in England over six hundred years ago. There is much in a name. A Legislature, or a Legislative Assembly, or a House of Representatives, or a Congress, are all good enough in their way, but I prefer the name "Parliament" and "House of Commons." I agree with Principal Tulloch, who said, "Thought must advance, and none need try to check it. But while we advance, let us revere the past, and as we enter the gates of a new era, let us look back with admiration, and, so far as we can, with love, if not regret, to the great figures who stood at the illuminated portals of the old." And where shall we find a Parliament whose portals are more luminous than the portals of the British House of Commons, where, greater figures than Chatham, or Burke, or Pitt, or Peel, or Gladstone, who stood within those portals as the representatives of all that was greatest in statesmanship and most convincing and enthralling in oratory. The Canadian House of Commons has great traditions behind it. Shall it be worthy of the name it bears?

Fifth Resolution. "Parliament shall meet annually." Still another view of this model which they are copying. No Long Parliament for Canada—no usurping of its functions by a Star Chamber, or ordinances or Orders-in-Council, promulgated by the King and his advisers, but an Annual Assize of the whole people for the redress of grievances and the maintenance of the State. But Parliament is to be to meet at such time each year as the advisers of His Majesty's representative may determine, and not at a time fixed by the Constitution, as in the United States. The note here again is liberty of action, elasticity of movement—just like the model. And then Parliament may be dissolved if it is thought best to consult the people on any matter of national importance, or if His Majesty's Privy Councillors have lost the confidence of the people's representatives. Still like the model; still we repeat "Government by and for and through the people."

But again, the Conference declares there shall be a Council "to aid and advise in the Government of Canada, to be styled the Queen's Privy Council for Canada." Here we have another principle of the