ment between the Governor General and the resigning gentlemen; a difference of views which had for some time led to certain practical embarrassments in the conduct of the Government, but of the existence of which they, the ex-Ministers, had but lately become quite aware. This speech over, the Councillor who had not resigned read in his place, observing that they appeared to him to explain the circumstances of the case far better than the statement just made, two documents; the one a note from Mr. Lafontaine to the Governor General, in substance identical with Mr. Baldwin's speech; the other the Governor General's reply to Mr. Lafontaine, detailing the facts of the resignation, and protesting in strong terms against the explanation which the ex-Councillors were about to give, as mis-stating the whole affair, and especially misrepresenting His Excellency's views. Here, for the time, the matter ended; for the House, with a very proper sense of the nature of a parliamentary explanation, would not suffer further rejoinder. But in the Upper House, where the explanations did not take place till the day after, another of the ex-Ministers, Mr. Sullivan, not only commented at length, and with much freedom, on the Governor's letter, but added to the statements it contained, and to those made by Messrs. Lafontaine and Baldwin, several other assertions as to matters of fact, then for the first time connected with the resignation. In the debates that followed in the Lower House, the ex-Councillors who spoke, seemed to vie with each other in making new disclosures; and stories were told, one after another, of the course taken about all sorts of appointments by the Governor and his predecessor, as though the gentlemen who told them had really forgotten, that when they took office, they took the Executive Councillor's oath of secrecy, as to all that should ever come under their notice in that capacity.

Much has been said of the unconstitutionality of the production before Parliament of the Governor's letter to Mr. Lafontaine. Of course, no one acquainted with English parliamentary usage can pretend to say that it would be thought constitutional in England, to put forward the Sovereign's name so prominently in a controversy on a great constitutional question. But it is a mistake to suppose that a letter from the Sovereign, stating the Sovereign's opinion on a political question, cannot, under any circumstances, constitutionally form part of a parliamentary explanation. No longer since than in 1839, such a letter, addressed by Her present Majesty to Sir Robert Peel, was actually read in the House of Commons; and no one thought of complaining that its production was in any way irregular. Lord Melbourne's Ministry, it will be remembered, resigned office on the 7thof May in that year, in consequence of a vote in the House of Commons on the Jamaica Government Bill. The next day the Queen charged Sir Robert Peel to form a new Government; and, on the day after, Sir Robert Peel laid before Her Majesty the names of the Ministers who were to form his Cabinet. The list was approved, and the new Premier proceeded at once to advise Her Majesty, that in his opinion it would be necessary, on grounds of state policy, to remove certain of the Ladies of Her Majesty's Household. The Queen demurred to this advice, and the day following addressed to Sir Robert the following letter:—

"BUCKINGHAM PALACE, May 10, 1839.

"The Queen having considered the proposal made to her yesterday by Sir Robert Peel, to remove the ladies of her bedchamber, cannot consent to adopt a course which she conceives to be contrary to usage, and which is repugnant to her feelings."

This letter, embodying—in a few words, it it true, but still embodying—the Queen's personal reasons for disagreeing with her advisers on a point involving a constitutional principle, was read without cavil in the British House of Commons; not as a rejoinder to Sir Robert, I admit, but by him and as part of his opening explanation. Having in his hands the written expression of her Majesty's opinion on the point in controversy, that statesman, no mean authority on a question of constitutional usage, felt it his duty to state to the country that opinion in no other words than those which the Queen herself had seen fit to use.

If from British we turn to Canadian precedent, the case becomes far stronger. Only last year the memorable letter of Sir Charles Bagot to Mr. Lafontaine, a letter embodying in it quite as direct an appeal to Parliament and the country as Sir Charles Metcalfe's does, was read in the House of Assembly, under circumstances so similar as to make the precedent absolutely perfect; and at that time four of the nine Ministers who have just retired from office—Messrs. Sullivan, Dunn, Killaly, and Hincks—were of the number of Sir Charles Bagot's responsible advisers. The orators of their party are now loud in condemning the production of the Metcalfe letter, and Messrs. Sullivan and Hincks have contrived to be among the loudest and most indignant of them. Alas! that the rapid changes of Canadian politics should make some Canadian politicians' memories thus lamentably treacherous!

I am not to be understood, however, to maintain that the ordinary production of letters of this description is desirable, or would on constitutional grounds admit of defence or apology. I admit that such free use of the Vice-regal name is irregular, and ought not to have been made. But, on the other hand, it ought not to be rendered necessary. Mr. Lafontaine's note told Sir Charles Metcalfe that he and his colleagues were about to state positively in Parliament that he (Sir Charles) held certain unpopular and most mischievous opinions on a great constitutional question. It was the outline of a special pleader's argument in proof of this proposition. Appointments, it stated, had been made against or without the advice of the Council, and the Governor had determined