

Why does Mr. Pope blink those facts now? Is it not perfectly clear that Sir John wished to be well rid of "the simple administration" of the Colonial Office? Is it not perfectly clear that, with the King as our "sole and only head" we should be independent?

Among the minor episodes of Canadian constitutional history, there are two which many persons might well have denounced (and probably did denounce) as "attempts to weaken the union"—namely (1) Canadian leadership in the negotiation of her own treaties; and (2) the adoption of a distinctive Canadian flag.

In the days of our colonialism, the British government made such treaties for us as it pleased. We were not consulted. We had no voice. Does anybody want that sort of "British connection" now? It was under Sir John Macdonald's leadership that Sir Charles Tupper succeeded in putting an end to that foolishness—in taking the first long step towards diplomatic independence.

In my previous article I pointed out that the Union Jack was the jack (or flag) indicative of the union of the three kingdoms; and that it was properly flown in the United Kingdom and wherever the sovereignty of the United Kingdom extended (a). It should fly, therefore, in every colony or possession of the United Kingdom. And if Canada be still a colony, it should fly there. Canada is, however, very nearly free of its swaddling-clothes, and most naturally it has commenced to provide itself with a flag, other than the one which signifies subordination—which signifies over-lordship by some other nation. And the flag that has been adopted is extremely appropriate to our equivocal situation, namely, the red ensign with the Union Jack in the corner—indicative of colonialism, and the Canadian coat-of-arms in the fly—indicative of individual existence.

It was Sir John Macdonald's government that instituted the new flag—as my previous article proved—and did it in the face of opposition from the Admiralty, and indeed from the British Parliament. Fortunately the then Governor-General of Canada, convinced that Sir John was right, helped him by sending to the Colonial Secretary the following despatch (12th December, 1891):—

"It has been one of the objects of the Dominion, as of imperial policy to emphasize the fact that by Confederation, Canada became not a mere assemblage of Provinces, but one United Dominion, and, though no actual order has ever been issued, the Dominion Government has encouraged by precept and example the use on all public buildings throughout the Provinces of the red ensign with the Canadian badge in the fly.

(a) Mr. Pope characterizes as "pedantry" my reference to the origin, and therefore the meaning, of the Union Jack. A charge of plagiarism would have been much more reasonable, for the official description is "the imperial colour of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in which the cross of St. George is conjoint with the crosses of St. Andrew and St. Patrick on a blue field".