

are defined and limited by the British North America Act. Next we come to the Central or Federal Government, which has jurisdiction over all matters of national import. The Constitution is essentially limited. In the first place, the powers of the general government are restricted, inasmuch as it can pass no Acts which are in conflict with Imperial rights and interests, or infringe on the clearly-defined jurisdiction of the local governments. These latter, on the other hand, are restrained to legislation on such subjects as are expressly set forth in the Constitutional Act. As must be the case with every written constitution, conflicts of jurisdiction arise from time to time in consequence of the doubtful construction of certain parts of the British North America Act; but these doubts have been gradually set at rest by the decisions of the tribunals of the Dominion, and of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council of England as the Court of last resort for the whole Empire. The highest Court of Canada is the Supreme Court, in which the majority of such controversies are decided, as appeals to the Privy Council are limited in practice, and only necessary under exceptionally important circumstances. The people have, very justly, great confidence in their courts; for it is a matter of pride with Canada that her judiciary has been on the whole composed of men of integrity and learning.

Canada now occupies a position without a parallel in the past history of the world. Although still a dependency, she has assumed the proportions of a nation, and exercises many of the attributes of sovereignty. Whilst the head of the Executive authority is still the Queen of Great Britain, who has delegated her powers to a Governor-General, whilst an appeal still lies to the Privy Council from Canadian Courts, whilst Canada still occupies a position of dependence with respect to treaties and other matters of a directly Imperial character, she models her commercial policy without reference to the Parent State, is consulted and represented whenever her commercial interests are affected by treaties with Foreign Powers, appoints and dismisses Lieutenant-Governors, establishes new provinces in her territories, supports a large and efficient militia force, on which she depends for domestic peace and security, and builds at her own expense public works of Imperial value. All this she has achieved within less than a quarter of a century; for it cannot be denied that it is the Federal Union which has enabled the provinces to assume a position of so much importance among communities. Such facts prove that her people have hitherto been animated by a national spirit which must carry them still further on the path of national development.

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