

taken it. The sovereign is the personification of the power and the glory of the state, and stands apart from and above all the members of the community of which she is the head; and so to the ordinary person it is an event in his life to have been admitted to an interview with the sovereign.

English society has, in our day, undergone many important changes. English wealth has enormously increased, and became very widely diffused during the life of Queen Victoria. The result of this change in the pecuniary circumstances of so vast a number of the population, makes it impossible that wealth can any longer satisfy those cravings for distinction which are natural to the heart of man. People in every age and condition, and under all forms of government, struggle for marks of distinction. They are ever striving to rise from one social grade to another that is still higher, and which broadens that circle with which they are for the time being associated. This constant aspiration is itself a powerful element of progress, and without it no great and permanent progress in the present condition of the world, and with the present aspirations of men, could continue. And so Her Majesty's influence upon the aspirations of men, to move more closely to the eminence where she stood, induced them to conform to those moral obligations upon which a Christian society reposes. Thus, you have, under the British constitutional system, with a great and good sovereign at the head, influences operating in favour of promoting what is just, and what is humane, what is charitable, and what is pure, that cannot operate where there is wanting a great social head, such as our constitutional system provides. Under the English social system, the force of example is very great. Public opinion is listened to with respect, and for the most part obeyed without question; but this is so, because the sovereign head used the great power which sovereign trust bestowed, in the right way. Under the English constitution, example teaches. It is a great force in the person of the sovereign, and during the whole period of Her Majesty's reign, it was made the greater by discountenancing wrong and upholding right, by being a foe to vice and a friend to virtue. And so,

Hon. Mr. MILLS.

during the sixty-four years of Her Majesty's rule, the court of Queen Victoria was itself a great factor in English history that operated in favour of what was good.

Under the English parliamentary system, the government itself is brought into close contact with the vital forces of society. It is inseparably interwoven with them. As society, itself, is improved, the government is made better, and some things which in one age were passed over with indifference at a later period become objects of condemnation; and so the right is respected, and men adhere more closely to the right path, in which good feeling and sound morals require they should tread. The work of administration does not rest with the sovereign, but with the ministers. There are great and important social functions which the sovereign discharges, and which are so closely interwoven with the business of government, and unite so closely public conduct and private worth, that they exercise an immense influence outside of law, and it is one of the glories of our system of government, that there is room for such influence to operate in support of the right, without, in the smallest degree, interfering with the ordinary duties that pertain to those in authority.

The rule of Queen Victoria is at an end. The story of her reign is closed for ever. There is nothing further that can be added. She has performed her duties as the sovereign of the greatest empire the world has known, in a way that is not open to criticism, and that has never been approached by any of those who preceded her in office. She rests from her labours which have been royally performed. The duties that Providence, in the government of the world, imposed upon her, have been discharged, and there can be no doubt of this, that her influence has been always put forward on the side of what was at once just and merciful, and that he who takes up the sceptre that has fallen from her hands, when her day ended, and sober evening came, will be enabled to perform his duties with greater success, and with greater ease, and with a more noble aim, by reason of what she did, and, still more, by reason of what she was. I move:

That an humble Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor General in the following words:—