

ample means of redress. It must be borne in mind, moreover, that all these "unconstitutional" acts were defended by statesmen of high standing, and sustained by the opinion of at least a respectable minority of the public at large. In Canada we do not labor under the grievances so loudly complained of during the first century and a half of Parliamentary government in England. Our House of Assembly is not largely composed of the representatives of rotten boroughs, neither are large numbers of the people excluded from political influence on account of their religious faith; in short we have no demand in the Province of Quebec for an extension of the franchise. And furthermore, we have no question of a serious character to cause party division. And yet it is gravely propounded by Conservative journals that what is analogous to a change of dynasty should be resorted to as a solution of a temporary political difficulty. All this is very deplorable, but our immediate object is to ask the calm consideration by our readers of the recent attack on the Royal Prerogative by "Verax" and the London *Spectator*, and the defence of the London *Quarterly*.

We shall commence by observing that, so far as we have been able to judge, the articles on our foreign policy in the Conservative journals of Canada have been as strongly of what "Verax" styles the "Russo-phobic type" as any that have appeared in the English journals of the same color. No one can read the letters of "Verax" without being convinced that they were written by a member of what we may designate as the "Peace party," although in our deliberate judgment the last war with Russia was brought about entirely by that party, and if unfortunately we should again be forced into hostilities with the most aggressive of modern powers, it will be chiefly owing to the efforts made by the party of whose opinions "Verax" is the exponent, to lessen the influence of our government in the Councils of the great European States.

The occasion of the letters of "Verax" was the publication of the 3rd volume of the *Life of the Prince Consort*, by Theodore Martin, and the object is to warn the subjects of Queen Victoria against what the author terms the "personal rule" of Her Majesty. The letters and minutes of the Queen and the Prince Consort and of their old and attached servant Baron Stockmar are most severely criticized by "Verax," who, if we may judge by some passages in his letters, has gone to the very verge of disloyalty. Here

is a passage from the writer whom Canadian conservatives delight to honor, and who is their latest constitutional authority: "The Crown we only know as the ceremonial device on the great seal by which the nation's resolves are attested, and the moment we are forced to know it in any other capacity danger commences for one party, though hardly for both."

Is this, we ask, the view which Canadian conservatives take of the constitutional position of the Queen of England? We are told by the *Quarterly* that "at a meeting of radicals at Willis's rooms, to advocate the opening of the Dardanelles, one of the speakers complained of the undue influence that was being exercised by the Court, and was doubtless somewhat surprised to find himself called to order by the chairman and his audience giving three cheers for the Queen."

The last of the letters of "Verax" is devoted to an examination of what Mr. Martin calls a "vigorous constitutional essay" from the pen of Baron Stockmar which was published, in 1876, in the 2nd volume of the *Life of the Prince Consort*, but which "Verax" left unnoticed until 1878, and which he now designates as "solemn trash," although he is of opinion that the Queen by "sanctioning its publication, seems to endorse its conclusions." Throughout the letters Baron Stockmar is the scapegoat for the Queen and the Prince Consort, and we are reminded of Sir Mungo Malagrowth in Walter Scott's "Fortunes of Nigel," who was attached to the Court originally as whipping boy, and who had to suffer most severely for the boyish faults of His Majesty King James 1st. Even "Verax" admits that "Baron Stockmar was in many respects a remarkable man, well-versed in the public affairs of Europe," but whom he sneeringly designates "the veteran medico-statesman." The fact that Baron Stockmar had been educated for the medical profession only proves that he had had better opportunities than most of the class to which he belonged, viz., officers of Royal households. He came to England with Prince Leopold, husband of the Princess Charlotte of Wales, and afterwards King of the Belgians, in the year 1816, having entered his service as private physician. "He became," says Martin, "his private secretary and comptroller of his household, residing almost exclusively in England, where he acquired a thorough knowledge of the country, its people and constitution, and bringing to the study of these the sympathy of strong liberal opinions, together with powers of observation and philosophical deduction of a very high

order." He was brought into intimate contact with the chiefs of the two great political parties in England, "and by these his unusual abilities and his great single-mindedness and sturdy integrity were held in high estimation." Lord Palmerston, no friendly critic, paid him this remarkable testimony: "I have come in my life across only one absolutely disinterested man—Stockmar." After long and faithful service to King Leopold it is not surprising that Baron Stockmar enjoyed a large share of the confidence of his niece, Queen Victoria, and, after her marriage, of the Prince Consort, whom he had known from childhood, and regarding whose education he had been specially consulted by King Leopold. We find that, rejecting Berlin and Vienna as undesirable places, Brussels was selected because "the Prince would be far more likely to profit by the study of politics in the free and stirring arena of a constitutional kingdom than in one where the whole machinery of government was propelled from a monarchical centre."

Such was the man who is denounced by "Verax" as the champion of "personal rule," although in the letter of "solemn trash," which is so severely condemned, Baron Stockmar declares, "I love and honor the English constitution from conviction, for I think that, under judicious handling, it is capable of realizing a degree of legal civil liberty which leaves a man scope to think and act as a man. Out of its bosom singly and solely has sprung America's free constitution in all its present power and importance, in its incalculable influence upon the social condition of the whole human race; and, in my eyes, the English constitution is the foundation corner and cope stone of all the political civilization of the human race, present and to come."

Baron Stockmar, holding these views of our constitution, protested against the theory of "Verax," now endorsed to our amazement by Canadian Conservatives, that the King "is nothing but a mandarin figure which has to nod its head in assent, or shake it in denial, as his minister pleases," or, as Lord Elgin most happily expressed himself, "the neut of mock sovereignty."

Whatever may have been the extent of Baron Stockmar's influence with the Queen and the Prince Consort, there is no ground for supposing that Her Majesty's subjects have been dissatisfied with her mode of discharging her regal functions. The occasion of the celebrated letter of Baron Stockmar so strongly condemned by "Verax," was the violent abuse of the Prince Consort towards the end of 1853. The