

and illimitable. In the forefront of the colonies, each advance in liberty of government had been marked by a corresponding increase in material wealth, intellectual development and moral elevation. Every extension of the area of government received from the motherland had been returned a hundredfold in love and loyalty and gratitude. Nothing had been denied them, and now they approached their mother full of a new project—the confederation of the British North American Provinces. Here, they said, is the perfection of political wisdom, the ultima Thule of attachment and fidelity to our mother. In the success of this confederation lies the future of the British Empire. If ever the sceptre shall pass out of the British Isles, here is the home where refuge remains. Grant us the powers we request. See with the foresight, the prescience of true statesmanship, the value to the British Empire of the gratitude of a free people. Your confidence in us has never been misplaced; trust us yet again with this greater boon, the unrestricted right to govern ourselves. To avoid all possible chance of the interests of the Empire being jeopardized, retain the power of disallowance, “which, it is submitted, is sufficient to secure every reasonable requirement for the security of imperial interests” (c) but, in other respects, leave us free.

The response to this appeal was a declaration of the unbounded confidence of the motherland in her young colony, and a gift to the people of that colony of the free and unrestricted right to govern themselves. In accordance with the express wish and desire of the Canadian people, the power of disallowance found place in the charter. The haggling tone of the Colonial Laws Validity Act, founded, as it was, on the false idea that “the colonies were to be preserved only for the benefit of the producers in the British Islands, and that the inhabitants of those colonies had no rights of self-government or otherwise, which were inconsistent with the interests of British producers” (d), disappeared in shame before the generous spirit now prompting the Imperial Parliament (e). Canada, the new impulse said, is no longer a child to be guided and gov-

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(c) Per Sir John Thompson—Hodgins, p. 1311. Sir J. G. Bourinot says: “The general power preserved by the Imperial Government of disallowing any measure within two years from its receipt is considered as a sufficient check, as a rule, upon colonial legislation.”

(d) Sir J.S.D.T.—Hodgins p. 1299.

(e) See argument of Hon. Edward Blake, *Thomas v. Fielding*, 5 Cart. 503.