

of Rights. Cromwell said, kings reign with the consent of their subjects, and thereafter the Crown ceased to be an emblem of arbitrary power. William III gave us responsible government, the Act of Settlement and a fuller sovereignty of the Lords and Commons, and under the Houses of Hanover and Brunswick, but notably under our beloved Queen, we entered upon the halcyon days, where, in the words of Burke, "Government by the people, for the people and through the people" is as world wide as the sway of the British Empire.

That was their model, with the cautious proviso 'to be adopted as far as circumstances would permit' (for they were dealing with a people to whom personal liberty was very dear), and circumstances would not permit of feudalism, for that had been already abolished by the passing of the Seignorial Tenure Act and the Law of Primogeniture. The days of a State Church for Canada had also passed away by the repeal of the Clergy Reserves Act, and so on this score they were equally free. Well might they pause as they considered the model which they were about to copy. Statesmen since the days of the Robert Cecil of Queen Elizabeth to the Robert Cecil of Queen Victoria, well nigh three hundred years, had assisted in strengthening and perfecting that sacred model. The Clarendons and Mansfields and Blackstones and Broughams during the centuries had bestowed upon it the best of their judicial wisdom. Poets from Shakespeare to Tennyson had crowned it with the laurels of their highest genius. Divines had invoked the choicest benedictions of Heaven for its protection. Soldiers and sailors had shed their blood that no ruthless hand should be laid upon it. It surely was a sacred thing. Is it possible that a copy could be made of it "adapted" to Canada's conditions?

The task was not an easy one. All previous Constitutions for Canada were failures. Neither the Quebec Act of 1774, the Constitutional Act of 1791 nor the Union Act of 1841, although drafted by statesmen of highest merit, had satisfied the aspirations of the Canadian people. Could they succeed where Pitt and Lord Russell had failed? It was a bold task, but if they copied the model how could they fail. And so they declared: "That the Executive Government and authority of and over Canada shall continue and be vested in the Queen". Sound British doctrine certainly, to begin with. The Conference is doing well. The Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland is henceforth to be our Queen, the head of our Executive Government, the fountain of honour, in the words of Bagehot "The signet ring of our Constitution" the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, if we have one, incapable by the Constitution of doing any wrong, bound by her Coronation oath to do justice to all her subjects high and low, not to oppress them by undue taxation or interfere with their religious