

the Acts of Congress, and the President. Their decisions nullify or modify the laws passed by Congress or the Acts of the Executive. Allusion has been made by Mr. Blake to the difference between a written Constitution and a non-written Constitution. It confirmed the general impression of the non-elasticity of written Constitutions. The Constitution of the United States has not been altered or amended in a hundred years, except as to the freedmen after the Civil War. It is the only written or unwritten Constitution among civilized nations which has this distinction. It is the only Charter of Government which in conception, spirit and execution is wholly the work of lawyers. Its general principles, as interpreted from time to time by the Supreme Court, have kept our country in touch with progress and development. They have been found elastic enough to meet all the requirements and necessities of the people of the United States, in their growth from four millions, when it was adopted, to eighty millions at the close of the nineteenth century, and for the acquisition and government of territories many times larger than our country was at the beginning of the Republic. If the lawyers of the English speaking race or the lawyers of all countries wish to find the greatest monument that exists of what lawyers can do, let them point to the United States of America. All that makes it the pride of its own citizens and gives it power in the world, makes it most progressive in its development, marvellous in its growth and at the same time conservative in its protection of property, of individual rights, and civil and religious liberty is due to the genius of the lawyers who framed its Constitution, and the Supreme Court, whose decisions apply the principles of that wonderful instrument to every requirement of modern life. Just one word more, and that has occurred to me from what has been said on the subject of the Common Law and its influence on the English-speaking race, and what is to prevent us from flying at each other's throats. When literary people meet together they say it is our common language and literature which promotes peace, but after all it is the lawyers more than anybody else who have provided the means by arbitration by which war shall be avoided, and disputes.