

## Our Own Land

known as the Dominion of Canada. At times in the history of Canada there has been a decided antagonism between the French-Canadian and English-Canadian peoples, but happily it has always, sooner or later, given place to wise counsels of compromise and conciliation and the two races have been energetic and earnest co-workers in the development of the noble heritage which they possess on the northern half of this continent.

As we look back for the one hundred and forty years which have passed since the cession of Canada to England we can see that the political development of the provinces now constituting the Dominion, is owing to the passage of certain measures which stand as so many political milestones by the path of national progress. The Quebec Act of 1774, introduced the principle of religious toleration which relieved Catholics of disabilities that remained afterwards for many a day on the statutes of Great Britain. The right of every subject to the protection of the writ of Habeas Corpus and trial by jury; the adoption of one system of criminal law in French as in English Canada; all made for serenity and harmony. The Imperial Government guaranteed to the French-Canadians the perpetuity of their civil law and language. Our own parliament secured for us the independence of the judiciary and its complete separation from political conflicts, entire provincial control over all local revenues and expenditures, and the right of our provincial legislatures to manage their purely local affairs untrammelled by English or Dominion interference. We have also introduced the principle of responsibility to the state as represented by the people under which a Ministry can only retain office while they have the confidence of the people's representatives. Both the French and English Canadians agreed to abolish the seignioral tenure of land holding, and have established every man an owner and a

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