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A COMPARISON.

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THE Canadian people occupy the somewhat unpleasant and anomalous position of being neither wholly dependent nor independent. Theoretically we are dependent on the Mother Country; practically, as regards legislation, we are almost independent. Nevertheless the fact that we are not wholly released from the protection and fostering care of the mother nation, has a very serious and important effect on our customs, laws and literature. We are no longer children, yet we have not the privileges and responsibilities of manhood. We are like grown-up sons living at home—free from parental discipline, without the care and anxieties of family life. Besides the effect on our national character and ways of thought of this uncertain and unstable political status, there must be added the silent and powerful influence of a neighbour—great in territory and population, speaking the same language, professing the same creed, and very largely governed by the same laws. Yet while the similarity be-

tween British and American laws, customs, and forms of government is very marked, there are many points of difference, which to the casual observer escape attention. As Canadians we are presumed to be controlled by British influences, and to live under a British form of government, and to have adopted the British Constitution as a model. How far this is true it is the purpose of this paper to show in an imperfect fashion, and shall endeavour to sketch the principal points of difference between the English and American Constitution, and to show the position the Canadian Constitution occupies with regard to these differing yet analogous systems.

1. The first point to be noticed is that the British Constitution is said to be an *unwritten* one; the American a *written* one. That is to say, the British Constitution is not a formal document defining the duties, powers and rights of the Government and the people, while the United States Constitution is such a formal written statement of duties, rights and powers.