

Canada proper (*i. e.*, the present Provinces of Ontario and Quebec) was divided into two Provinces with representative institutions. These Provinces, now to be known as Upper and Lower Canada, remained with separate Legislatures until 1841, when they were united in a Legislative Union under the name of Canada. In that year also Responsible Government was conceded to Canada, which was the first British dependency wherein this important measure of Colonial administrative reform was introduced; but the principle was not definitely established until 1847. In the following year Responsible Government was introduced in Nova Scotia and also in New Brunswick. It was not, however, established in Prince Edward Island until 1851. The several British North American colonies remained in this position until the 27th May, 1867, when, under the British North America Act of that year (30 Vic., cap. 3, Imperial Statutes), popularly known as the Act of Confederation, the Provinces of Canada (*i. e.*, Ontario and Quebec), Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, were federally united as a Dominion under the name of Canada. Since then the Provinces of Manitoba, British Columbia and Prince Edward Island, with the unorganized territories of the North West, have been incorporated in the Union, leaving, at the present time, but one Colony of the British North American group (Newfoundland) to be admitted therein to complete the great design of Canadian Confederation. The total estimated area of the Dominion is 3,610,257 square miles; the total estimated population about five millions.

II.—CONSTITUTION.

The system of Government established in Canada under the Act above cited, and which system was unknown in Great Britain or her Colonies until so introduced and applied, is a Federal Union, having a General or Central Government controlling all matters essential to the general development, the permanency and the unity of the whole Dominion, and a number of Local or Provincial Governments, having the control and management of certain matters naturally and conveniently falling within their defined jurisdiction, while each Government is administered in accordance with the British system of Parliamentary Institutions. By this Act the Imperial Parliament practically gave to the Dominion Parliament the largest possible rights which can be exercised by a Colonial dependency of legislating on all matters of importance to the Union generally. The position Canada consequently occupies is that of a semi-independent power. The powers vested in the Parliament of Canada are set forth in the 91st section of the Confederation Act, which provides that the Queen, with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons, may "make laws for the peace, order and good Government of Canada, in relation to all matters not coming within the classes of subjects by this Act assigned exclusively to the Legislatures of the Provinces;" and for greater certainty it is declared that "the exclusive legislative authority of the Parliament of Canada extends to all matters coming within the classes of subjects next hereinafter enumerated," that is to say:—

1. The public debt and property.
2. The regulation of trade and commerce.
3. The raising of money by any mode or system of taxation.
4. The borrowing of money on the public credit.
5. Postal service.
6. Census and statistics.
7. Militia, military and naval service and defence.
8. The fixing of and providing for the salaries and allowances of civil and other officers of the Government of Canada.
9. Beacons, buoys, light-houses and Sable Island.
10. Navigation and shipping.
11. Quarantine and the establishment and maintenance of Marine Hospitals.
12. Sea-coast and inland fisheries.
13. Ferries between a Province and any British or foreign country or between two Provinces.