

HISTORY OF CANADA.

meeting at Charlottetown in September to consider the matter. Thither a delegation from the legislature of Canada repaired to invite the attention of the Maritime delegates to a larger scheme. It was agreed to adjourn the Convention to Quebec, there to meet on the 10th October. From the deliberations which then took place sprang the Dominion of Canada as it exists to-day ; for although the federation as formed by the British North America Act only embraced the provinces of Ontario and Quebec (Upper and Lower Canada), New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, provision was made for taking in the remaining provinces and portions of British North America, as opportunity might offer. The immediate effect of Confederation was to relax the tension between Upper and Lower Canada, and, by providing a wider stage of action, to give a new and enlarged political life to all the provinces thus brought into union.

The political history of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in the period preceding Confederation ran parallel in many respects with that of Upper and Lower Canada. As already mentioned New Brunswick became a separate province in 1784. Its first Legislative Assembly, consisting of twenty-six members, met at Fredericton in January, 1785. It was to be expected that the Home authorities, dealing with sparse populations scattered over the vast extents of territory acquired by British arms, should have provided for them institutions and methods of administration to some extent of a paternal character. It was natural that the point of view should in the first place be the imperial one ; and as institutions root themselves in time and by force of custom two conflicting tendencies came into operation at the same time, the tendency of the strictly colonial system to consolidate itself and to form vested interests, and the tendency of increasing population to demand for the people a fuller measure of political initiative and a well defined responsibility of the Government to public opinion. The main difference between the Maritime provinces and the Canadas in this respect was that, while in the latter violent means were employed in order to bring about reforms, in the former constitutional methods were strictly adhered to. In Nova Scotia the cause of reform found its strongest champion in Joseph Howe ; in New Brunswick the lead was taken by such men as E. B. Chandler and L. A. Wilmot. For all the provinces the full recognition and establishment of the principle of responsible government may be assigned to the years 1848 and 1849.

The principle of representation according to population was put into operation by the British North America Act, so far as the constitution of the elective chamber, henceforward to be called the "House of Commons," was concerned. In the old Canadian Legislature each section of the province returned sixty-five members. The new province of Quebec retained this measure of representation, and the other provinces were allowed representation in the same proportion as sixty-five bore to the population of the province of Quebec. In the Upper House, or Senate, equality of representation was established as between Ontario and Quebec, twenty-four seats being given to each, while New Brunswick and Nova Scotia were allowed twelve each. The debts of the several provinces were equitably provided for, and a payment at so much per head of population was made for provincial expenses out of the federal