

1864, at which seventy-two resolutions, which afterwards formed the basis of the British North America Act, were adopted and referred to the respective legislatures for their concurrence, which was finally given. The British North America Act received the Royal Assent on March 29, 1867, and came into force on July 1 of that year.

Constitution of Canada.—In the preamble to the British North America Act it is stated that the provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick “have expressed their desire to be federally united into one Dominion, with a Constitution similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom.” This declaration throws a flood of light upon our form of government. Our constitution is not an imitation of that of the United States, it is the British Constitution federalized. Like the British and unlike the American Constitution, it is not a written constitution. The many unwritten conventions of the British Constitution are also recognized in our own; what we have in the British North America Act is a written delimitation of the respective powers of the Dominion and Provincial Governments, and an enactment of the terms of the Confederation Agreement. The British North America Act simply divides the sovereign powers of the State between the provincial and the central authorities.

The British North America Act declares that the executive government of Canada shall continue to be vested in the sovereign of the United Kingdom (sec. 9), represented for federal purposes by the Governor-General, just as for provincial purposes by the Lieutenant-Governor. The Governor-General is advised by the King’s Privy Council of Canada, a committee of which constitutes the ministry of the day.

The Dominion Parliament consists of the King, the Senate and the House of Commons. It must meet at least once a year, so that twelve months do not elapse between the last meeting in one session and the first meeting in the next. Senators, 96 in number, who are appointed for life by the Governor-General in Council, must be 30 years of age, British subjects, residents of the province for which they are appointed, and possess \$4,000 over and above their liabilities. Members of the House of Commons (235 in 1921, but subject to increase as a result of the census of that year), are elected by the people for the duration of the Parliament, which may not be longer than five years. The Speaker of the Senate is chosen by the Governor-General in Council, the Speaker of the House of Commons by the members of that House. In the Senate, 15 constitute a quorum, in the House of Commons, 20.

Dominion Finance.—Among the most important provisions of the British North America Act are those relating to the appropriation of public money and the raising of taxes for Dominion purposes. The House of Commons has the sole right of initiating grants of public money and of directing and limiting appropriations, yet the House of Commons must not (sec. 54) adopt or pass any vote, bill, resolution or address for the payment of any part of the public funds for any