

CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

may call to the Cabinet other Privy Councillors who hold no portfolio. At the present time (1915) there are three of these cabinet ministers. The Solicitor-General, although a member of Parliament, is not a member of the Cabinet. The "Privy Council" is a permanent body which in practice never meets or transacts any business, but the "Cabinet" formed from among the Privy Councillors is, though a fluctuating body as regards its personnel, the real executive power of the State. It is the actual government of the day, and continues in authority as long as it is supported by a majority of the House of Commons.

The rise and fall of provincial administrations, the many important statutes passed by the provincial legislatures dealing with the amendments of their constitutions and with the numerous subjects under provincial jurisdiction and the methods adopted in different provinces to meet the varied circumstances and conditions of the people, are topics upon which much could profitably be written. Of



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these the most important would be those dealing with municipal and local taxation, education, the management of public property, roads and bridges and financial administration. All of these matters come very close to the people, affecting as they do so directly their daily life and activities. Consequently, questions regarding procedure and legislation in these matters, though generally esteemed as of mere local importance, are widely discussed and powerfully affect public opinion. There are a few subjects, such as agriculture and immigration, in which the parliament and the legislatures have concurrent jurisdiction, but the provincial laws in these matters must give way to the

federal when they happen to conflict.

In a federal system like that of Canada, which is in itself a portion of a world-wide Empire, each government must act and each legislature must undertake to pass laws only upon subjects assigned to them respectively under the union pact. To that extent the provinces must carefully scrutinize Dominion legislation in order to see that their domain is not invaded. The Dominion must take care that the provinces do not enter the federal sphere, and the Mother Country, at the seat of the Empire, is also bound in justice to Canada and to the interests of the Empire as a whole, to see that Canada does not by executive or legislative act cross the lines of Imperial responsibility. Individual members of the Canadian community and corporate bodies transacting every kind of business have a similar stake in the observance of this principle. They must be cautious in their action to observe the boundaries of jurisdiction; and these are not always easy