

# EDUCATION FOR RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT

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THE intelligent commemoration of any centenary requires a careful study of the circumstances at the time of the event to be commemorated and the principles involved, so that its significance may be grasped and its lessons learned for future guidance. It is as a contribution to such a study that the "political catechism" which follows is reprinted here: for it was issued by the Reformers of Nova Scotia on the eve of the great election of August 5, 1847, which was to determine for all time whether or not Nova Scotians were to have Responsible Government; and it gives in summary form a description of the institutions and principles for which the Reformers had been contending with varying degrees of discernment for almost two decades.

It is both a political platform and a primer of political science: for Howe and the other democratic Reformers who were striving to obtain a constitution for Nova Scotia broad-based upon the people's will, strove to consolidate a party that would be able not only to win an election and fix the constitution but also to take office and govern the province more intelligently than the irresponsible Council had done.

For nineteen years, first in the press and later in the assembly, Howe had labored incessantly to educate himself and his fellow-countrymen in both the privileges and the responsibilities of British subjects. He had fought and won the battle for freedom of the press; had advocated a province-wide common school system; had supported every legitimate reform that had been demanded prior to the demand for reform of the constitution itself; and, during the past ten years, had taken the lead in the demand for Responsible Government and a career open to talent: so that "Every boy of good sense and talents should have fair play to rise in the councils of his country and take that part in them for which he was fitted by nature and industry." Though not necessarily compiled by Howe, this "political catechism" is colored by his experiences and incorporates the rudiments of knowledge that he had given his fellow-countrymen through his editorials and speeches, the knowledge of first principles that all Nova Scotians should have in order to exercise the franchise intelligently and to vindicate his faith in democracy.

The publication of this primer is itself conclusive proof of the sincerity of the Reformers' belief in education and in the natural intelligence of Nova Scotians—a belief, which contrasted strongly with the attitude of the Tory Council and the official clique in Halifax; but a belief, which Howe had held consistently from the beginning. In 1828, when he took his seat in the gallery of the Assembly, he noted that those who were actuated by a sincere desire to promote the general interests were without fixed principles or defined views of government, and he set out to create through the Press, "a healthy tone of public feeling, based on sound political knowledge, pervading not a class or a coterie, but the great body of the people." In the election campaign of 1836, he rejoiced that his efforts were bearing fruit and that henceforth every candidate had to state his principles and call attention to some matter of importance, rather than his more personal claims, on which the electors had to decide. In speaking on the twelve Resolutions in 1837, he thanked God that the "alumni of the fields, the workshops and the printing-offices" were springing up all over the province to compete with the talented graduates of Windsor, who had hitherto tried to monopolize education and public office. In 1841, when heckled by Dewolf for advocating free schools based upon assessment in advance of the "well-understood wishes of the people," he replied that that phrase meant "the well-understood wishes of the intelligent; not the wishes of those who may not be informed on the subject to be arranged."

Other instances could be multiplied from Howe and others, but all go to show that the democratic Reformers believed in both the need and the capacity of the common people for education.

In using the phrase, democratic Reformers, attention is called to a fact, often forgotten, that the long struggle for colonial self-government was a two-fold movement: for local self-government against the Imperial government; and for Responsible Government against the Family Compact.

In several phases of the former movement a number of families, whose members later formed the Family Compact and official clique, had taken an active part; and it was only after they had obtained control of the local government that they became ardent imperialists, or sought to protect their monopoly of power and patronage by exalting the Royal prerogative. Hence, in the second stage of the movement for

local self-government the democratic Reformers were pitted against the men, or their descendants, who had won the first part of the struggle and claimed monopoly of loyalty, intelligence and capacity for government also. It was in response to this challenge that some of Howe's best letters to Nova Scotians were written, and that this political catechism was first issued.

### A BRIEF POLITICAL CATECHISM OF LIBERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Q. What is a Catechism?

A. A mode of Enquiry and Explanation, by Question and Answer.

2. Q. What are the objects?

A. To state and to explain. To remove misapprehension of views,—to promote uniformity, and to furnish easy definitions.

#### POLITICS

3. Q. What do you understand by the term Politics?

A. That Science, or branch of knowledge, which treats of the Government of Communities, Provinces, States and Empires.

4. Q. Is the reasonable study of Politics desirable?

A. Yes, the sphere of Politics is of vast extent, and has influence on the daily well-being of every man. Bad systems of Politics have caused decline or ruin to nations;—good systems have tended to national strength and happiness. Politics are founded on Public opinion;—opinions should be formed by the exercise of an enlightened judgment,—and this is obtained by study.

5. Q. What would be some of the consequences of the neglect of Politics?

A. The discouragement of those who labour for the public good, the encouragement of the designing who aim unduly for power and wealth,—and the introduction of many tendencies towards tyranny, injustice and general degradation. The European nation which has attended to Politics most assiduously and rationally, for the longest period, is most distinguished for freedom, strength and wise institutions.

#### LIBERAL

6. Q. What do you mean by the term *Liberal*, as distinguishing one political creed from other opinions?

A. I mean that theory, which, speaking generally, maintains the rights of the aggregate of the people, in opposition to any peculiar claims—by which one Class would be placed as masters,—and others, to any degree, as political serfs, or bondsmen.

7. Q. Have those political distinctions marked Society elsewhere?

A. A struggle was maintained between them for centuries, in England;—the triumph of Liberalism, through a series of contests has plainly been, the triumph of the Constitution,—of the People's welfare and honour,—of the Monarch's safety and renown.

8. Q. Is the struggle continued?

A. In these days persons are disinclined to avow the advocacy of arbitrary principles,—but the tendencies of many acts and arguments are in that direction.

9. Q. What are the Civil and Religious tendencies of Liberalism?

A. The conferring of equal political privileges, irrespective of any consideration, except the good of each man, and the good of all. The maintenance of the natural right of man, to worship the Almighty according to the convictions of conscience, and the choice of judgment. This promotes public satisfaction, sincerity, and good morals.

The natural tendency of artificial society, when not duly checked, is in the direction of accumulating power in the hands of a few, and taking it from the many. History has many proofs of this, and of the wickedness and cruelty of arbitrary power. The safety of all classes, under Divine Providence, is in the *Liberty, intelligence and virtue of the people generally*; and these qualities should be *plainly defined, fastidiously abided by, and established by wise institutions.*

#### PUBLIC LIBERTY

10. Q. What is meant by British Liberty?

A. That freedom of person, property, and opinion, which is consistent with common rights and public benefit. It is the natural right of man, as regards his fellow man. It has been secured by *solemn national acts in Great Britain.*

11. Q. What British Institutions more particularly represent or support the principle?

A. The Legislative Branches,—the Courts of Law,—the various Churches,—the Press,—the Schools.

12. Q. State some opposites to British Liberty.

A. Political Slavery,—disfranchisement without adequate cause,—undue disqualifications,—partial administration of justice,—licentiousness and censorship respecting expression of thought.

13. Q. State some violations of personal freedom.

A. Political Slavery of every grade, by which a man, in the relations of society, is involuntarily made subservient to the will of another;—arrests and imprisonments without Law, or contrary to Law;—and, generally, all restrictions on freedom of action, which are not required by justice, and the good order of communities.

14. Q. State some violations of freedom of property.

A. Legalized monopolies, except those plainly requisite for the public service;—taxation without due representation, by which men are, unreasonably, denied a voice in voting away their own money;—taxation on an unfair basis;—the using of property to the direct detriment of others;—bribery;—traffic inimical to public and private prosperity, &c.

15. Q. State some violations of freedom of opinion.

A. The legal exaltation of one sect to the degradation or detriment of others;—vexatious interference with expression of opinion, spoken or written;—slander;—abusive language;—promulgation of opinions of a demoralizing or impious tendency.

## COURTS OF LAW

16. Q. What is the legal profession?

A. Legal, signifies belonging to the Law. The Legislature provides statutes, rules, or laws, by which society is governed. Part of the people prosecute the study of those laws, as a means of business. They profess to explain the laws, to give advice founded on them, and to vindicate the legal rights of others, for payment: those persons compose the legal profession.

17. Q. What are the tendencies of the profession?

A. Perhaps, generally, towards a habit of governing the conduct according to prescribed rule;—and, also, towards an aptitude for adopting a right or wrong basis of argument, according to engagement. Some of the best friends and worst enemies of liberty have been found in the profession.

18. Q. What are Courts of Law?

A. Tribunals for authoritative legal decisions. The government selects members of the legal profession, to preside at legal enquiries. These officers are called Judges. They are made independent, and irremovable, except for gross violations of duty. The Legislature fixes certain periods for legal enquiries. At the appointed time and in the appointed place, the Judge appears; he hears cases, pronounces decision, and the decision is established accordingly, by appointed officers. The institutions for those formalities for trials, are called Courts of Law. Court, generally, signifies the presence of some dignitary or officer, with the forms and authority incidental to the rank or office.

19. Q. Is the Institution of much consequence?

A. Yes,—the liberty, property and life, of citizens, sometimes depend on legal proceedings.

20. Q. Does the office of Judge require much integrity?

A. Yes. The verdict of a Jury is generally requisite in legal trials,—but the Judge's opinion and conduct have often much weight in various ways, during such investigations. His manner of conducting trials may vary according to temper and uprightness. His decisions include scope for the exercise of individual judgment. If the Judge be able and pure, suitors for justice have faith in his Court,—men look up to him as to an impartial, authoritative, arbitrator who will redress grievance and shield from wrong. Thus good order, peace and propriety, are materially served. If a Judge be supposed inefficient or partial, dissatisfaction, and various evils result.

21. Q. State the more prominent qualifications of a Judge.

A. He is an expounder and a decider. He should, therefore, understand the varied principles, the maxims, rules and cases, of the profession, of which he is a chief;—and he should judge righteously, as if each case were the only concern of his life, and that his character, in the eyes of heaven and earth, depended on his conduct in each.

22. Q. Is the office of Judge connected with politics,—with matters of general government?

A. No.—Legislatures wisely remove Judges from such causes of partiality, or suspicion of partiality. They are paid for devoting themselves to the duties of their high office, and are, by their own con-

sent, set apart accordingly. Under such circumstances, the interference of a Judge in political disputes, appears injudicious, and not in accordance with his understood compact with the state. He may so intermeddle and remain just;—but his paternal character, for inflexible impartiality, will suffer in the public estimation.

23. Q. What is due from the Public to the Judges?

A. Much respect,—in consequence of the position they occupy, and its effect on social order,—as well as in consequence of their general character for ability and virtue. The office, however, is an institution for freemen,—not an object of slavish worship;—if it be sullied by deviations or apparent deviations from wisdom and propriety, freedom of opinion should be allowed,—and denial, or explanation, or remedy should follow. To argue that enquiry or courteous complaint, damaged the officers or the institution, would be to pay a poor compliment to either;—might amount to a trifling with the rights of the public,—and to a tendency towards a degrading and dangerous legal despotism. The people's interests, the public order and peace, require purity and respect and freedom, concerning the judicial character.

### JURIES

24. Q. What is a Jury?

A. It is a branch of a Court of Law, composed of twelve persons, taken fairly, from a list of properly qualified laymen. It hears the evidence of witnesses, the arguments of Lawyers, the explanation and summing up of Judges, and then decides for or against the party whose case is under consideration. Subsequently, the Judge gives judgment or declaration, according to the verdict of the Jury, the letter of the Law, and such scope as may be allowed his own discretion.

25. Q. What should Juries consider?

A. The importance and dignity of that branch of a tribunal which they compose, and the integrity it should exhibit. Juries are Judges of fact,—of evidence,—and have the important veto, under oath, by which a party is exonerated, or is made subject to penalties of legal enactments. They are not to surrender their consciences to Lawyers or Judges, else they violate their duties, and the intentions of the constitution, and may work injustice;—they are not to set up hostilities to Lawyers and Judges for the same reasons. They should determine by the evidence, according to the dictates of common sense, and uprightness, and definitions of Law,—assisted, it may be, by the explanations of professional expounders.

### THE PRESS

26. Q. The Press was mentioned as one of the supporters of Public Liberty; what is the Press?

A. A very influential mode of expressing and dispensing opinions, by means of printing.

27. Q. What are its good influences?

A. The multiplication and distribution of materials of knowledge;—the dissemination of good principles; the exposure and check and prevention of public abuses;—the exhibition and testing of opinions,

on matters of public interest; and, generally, the advancing and guarding of public intelligence, sound politics, and good morals.

28. Q. What may be its evil effects?

A. If it become corrupt, wholly or partially, it may deal in evil principles, in slander, falsehood, encouragement of abuses, and may exhibit, generally, the reverse of its legitimate influences.

29. Q. What is the remedy?

A. Resort to Law, which is beset with difficulties and objections, except in extreme cases; and the wholesome action of public opinion, according to which a Press must regulate its conduct,—except it take such high and unobjectionable ground, as will place it above the common influences of opinion.

30. Q. How should a fairly conducted Press be estimated?

A. As a most important and essential element of civilization,—which has worked wonders for society, and may accomplish more;—as an institution whose failings must be charitably considered, whose freedom must be sedulously guarded,—and whose improvement, as a great moral instrument, should be the solemn care of all concerned.

31. Q. Which are the enemies of a free Press?

A. Licentiousness of expression, by which it weakens its moral force, and its hold on public sympathies,—desertion of public duty, by which its value is destroyed,—and legal prosecutions for the legitimate exercise of its powers.

## EDUCATION

32. Q. What is Education?

A. It signifies a growth in knowledge, and in capability.

33. Q. Which are the means of Education?

A. The various schools,—the lecture tables,—the pulpits,—and the daily intercourse with nature and society, by which men make educational progress during life.

34. Q. State the effects to be reasonably expected from education.

A. Improvement in knowledge, power, morals, and religion,—and, consequently, improvement in citizenship, in self-respect, and respect for the various duties of society.

35. Q. Has the State, or Government, any obligations respecting education?

A. Yes, the people form the State. The people's knowledge and virtue constitute the chief riches of a State;—popular ignorance is a public disgrace, and source of weakness and danger. Consequently, the representatives of the energies of a people, the government, should secure the advantages of rudimental education for the people generally.

36. Q. State the Scholastic institutions of education.

A. Common Schools, Academies, and Colleges.

37. Q. State the objects, severally, of those institutions.

A. Common Schools are supposed to be devoted to those matters in which all men have a common interest, and with which they should have a common acquaintance. These are the rudimental branches of all knowledge,—reading, writing, science of language, science of computation, foundation of morals. Academies join to these studies,

others of a more ornamental character;—and Colleges are supposed to include as many of the ornamental and scientific branches, as opportunities place within reach.

38. Q. State the public duty respecting these institutions respectively.

A. Clearly, to direct first and best energies for the provision of Common Schools. To assist in sustaining some Academies. To have, at least, one College, for a people, that various studies may not fall into disuse, that learning may not retrograde,—and that a depository and tribunal respecting general education may exist.

39. Q. State a relative view of these institutions, respecting the people generally?

A. Without the knowledge particularly imparted in Academies and Colleges, public intelligence and prosperity might advance;—without that of Common Schools a nation would decline;—he who has the latter may attain to the former, for the rudiments open the path to all improvement. They who can read and write and compute, may be said to have entered a path, to which there is no visible termination, and along which they may travel interminably. Academies and Colleges, make travelling, beyond a certain point, and to parts of communities, more easy and attractive.

#### PUBLIC OFFICERS

40. Q. What are public officers?

A. Men engaged to perform public services, and paid out of the public Revenue, or by fees of office.

41. Q. Which are the chief Provincial services?

A. Administration of Justice—charge of Executive correspondence, &c.—charge of Public correspondence,—superintendence of Crown Lands,—keeping and distribution of Public Money,—collection of Revenue. The Heads or Chiefs of these departments, are, the Judges, the Secretary,—the Deputy Post Master General,—the Commissioner of Crown Lands,—the Treasurer, the Collectors.

42. Q. What distinction may be made respecting those officers, as regards emoluments?

A. The Judicial require the highest abilities of a profession, in which talents and industry are generally amply rewarded; they should therefore have such reasonable emoluments, as, joined with the dignity and repose they include, would generally command the highest qualifications. The other offices require such respectability of department, and such abilities, as are usually commanded by the best commercial subordinate positions. The emoluments accordingly, should be enough for respectable maintenance, but need not include provision for luxurious display, or class rivalry. A highest rate of £500 currency, has been urged for such offices,—for Nova Scotia;—but to this objections have been made, and a maximum of £700 has been named, on the ground, that it would be wise for the state to hold out some higher prizes for laymen of ability.



## PENSIONS

43. Q. What are Pensions?

A. Annual allowances;—as gratuities, or as compensations.

44. Q. What Pensions, of consequence, are paid from the public Revenue in Nova Scotia?

A. Arrangements respecting City Government, caused loss of place and emoluments to two stipendiary Magistrates;—arrangements respecting Courts of Law, caused loss of place and emoluments to three Judges of an Inferior Court,—these gentlemen receive compensation.

45. Q. When are Pensions reasonable?

A. When parties, not in consequence of personal faults, are deprived of public office, which they accepted under permanent arrangements, and for which they surrendered other prospects. Such compensations appear particularly reasonable, when the claim is good, and the arrangement includes both payment of pension and saving of public money. Long incumbency, and large emoluments, pre-suppose accumulation, which would make comparatively small pensions sufficient.

## ECONOMY

46. Q. What do you understand by public Economy?

A. That judicious arrangement by which enough, and not more, is paid for efficient public service.

47. Q. What are the advantages of such arrangement?

A. By adequate outlay, proper stability and efficiency are obtained; by judicious saving, public burthens are lightened,—means are possessed for other services,—corrupt squandering, and absurd anomalies, are set aside—or prevented;—and a State is caused to exhibit the wisdom of a private individual, who joins liberality to prudence.

## GOVERNMENT

48. Q. You have mentioned Government, and some of the institutions of Government,—what is Government?

A. The controul to which the people generally submit, and which a few of the people exercise, for the enactment and execution of laws,—the preservation of social peace and order,—the defence from evil,—and the forwarding of public prosperity,—in the most direct manner.

49. Q. What is the origin and aim of Government?

A. The only reasonable origin and aim, is the good of the people generally.

50. Q. What form of Government does Provincial Liberalism adopt?

A. That of Great Britain. It is supposed to consist of a House of Representatives, freely and fairly chosen, so as to reflect the aggregate of Society; a House of Peers, or Legislative Council, selected from the sages of Society; and Sovereign's Representative, advised by a Ministry or Executive Council, responsible for the acts of the personage advised.

## UPPER BRANCH

51. Q. What is the political action of the Upper, or Executive Branch, in a Colony?

A. The maintenance and execution of the Laws as passed by the three branches; the distribution of honours, emoluments, and rewards, for the good of the state;—a final voice in the enactment of laws;—the general direction of public works, and national advance, by means of a ministry, acting according to the expressed wishes, or the undoubted interests, of the people.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

52. Q. What is a Legislative Council?

A. A branch of the Legislature, whose Legislative action is supposed similar to that of the British House of Lords. Its members are chosen by the Executive, under ministerial responsibility. They should be removable on very serious grounds only,—such as unmistakable packing for mere party purposes joined to unreasoning obstinacy, which would endanger public harmony and legislative efficiency;—public exigency, exhibited by unequivocal public expression,—and other personal objections, specially provided. In short, as nothing human is perfect, the branch, though permanent and immovable in general theory, should have yielding, impressible characteristics, to prevent unseemly disastrous collision: political experience in England illustrates the position.—There, the constitutional resorts of the House of Commons, and the various modes of pressing public opinion on the Peers, are more powerful, than corresponding checks in a Colony, yet the Sovereign may mould the upper House, on occasions of great exigency. British Institutions form the model of Colonial.

53. Q. What is the Legislative action of the second Branch?

A. It may originate laws, except for the granting of money; it has a voice in all general propositions, originated in the Assembly, except those respecting provision and supply of money; it may refuse a Bill, sent by the Assembly, having money clauses, concerning provision and supply, but may not amend such clauses. Money arrangements are reserved for the Assembly, because the people, by their representatives, assisted by ministerial suggestion, are supposed the proper judges of what they should contribute from their property, to the state, and how this should be appropriated. The right is a valued guarantee of liberty. The second Branch should exercise salutary revision of general legislative action, and so prevent the passage of unwise and immature laws. It should exhibit a wholesome, impartial supervision, removed from haste and party warmth;—but it should not appear as a bar to the legitimate political advance of the people. The latter would be a disastrous perversion of the proper influences of that branch;—its legitimate action may be variously and frequently beneficial.

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

54. Q. What is the House of Assembly?

A. An important political institution, which forms one of the three branches of Legislative Government.

55. Q. What do you mean by Legislative and Administrative?

A. *Legislative*, relates to the making of laws,—*Administrative*, to the execution of laws, and of public business generally.

56. Q. State some action of the House of Assembly.

A. In the Colonies, this branch represents the British House of Commons. It consists of a body of men, chosen by the people, to represent them, and act for them, in public concerns. It has therefore been called the People's House. It originates laws;—participates in the passage of laws;—arranges taxation, by which public services may be maintained;—controls the public money;—influences the ministry, by vote;—and organizes all important civil matters, which seem to require the general action of the people. The institution has grown up in Great Britain, by slow degrees, and under vast difficulties; its leading characteristics have been generally adopted in all constitutionally governed countries. It is a chief bulwark of British freedom. As the representative of the people, its constitutional power is great; undue exercise of power is checked by opposition within itself,—by the action of the other branches,—and by appeals to the Constituency. It has more than mere delegated authority;—and may act, not merely as directed, but, in moral and other questions of undoubted tendency, as the people should act for themselves.

### CIVIL RIGHTS

57. Q. You mentioned "Civil matters," what is understood by the term Civil?

A. That which relates to Civilized Society, as regards the daily order, well-being and advance, of communities of citizens. The term is used to distinguish from Military and Religious affairs.

58. Q. Why are not Military and Religious arrangements included in the general objects of a House of Assembly?

A. Military arrangements for the Colony are provided by the British Parliament; special affairs of Religion are confided to the various Churches, or religious associations.

59. Q. Has the House of Assembly no action on Religious questions?

A. It is supposed to represent all classes and creeds, and therefore not to take special action for any one Church. It should give general support to the Christian Religion, by discouragement of impiety and irreligion, and endeavours towards the maintenance and advance of Christian morality. Domination, in such matters, tends to intolerance;—religious freedom has been achieved by a series of struggles with such dominancy;—the only safe course for each, is justice to all, and with reference to the general well-being.

### THE FRANCHISE

60. Q. What is the meaning of Franchise?

A. It signifies freedom or privilege. The term is generally confined to freedom of voting for representatives.

61. Q. In what does the Franchise consist, at present, in Nova Scotia?

A. The House of Assembly is elected by the suffrages or votes

of persons who possess a certain property called freehold. This consists in the possession of land or house, which yields forty shillings value yearly, to the possessor.

62. Q. Should Freeholders be the only persons who should exert a voice in legislation?

A. No.—they have the privilege at present, because freehold property, being fixed, was supposed a good basis for representation;—and because its possession was extensive, and gave the franchise to many.

63. Q. State some objections to the limitation.

A. While it admits some, not independent, either as regards property or intelligence,—it excludes many independent, conscientious, and judicious members of Society.

64. Q. What should be guarded against, in extension of the franchise?

A. The admission of persons immediately dependent on the wills of others,—or morally unfit for the privilege.

65. Q. What would seem a reasonable basis for representation?

A. The freehold, as at present,—together with payment of Poor and County Rates, or Provincial Taxes, and a certain term of residence.

66. Q. State some reasons.

A. In this manner all who had a fixed distinct position in society, —and who were not rendered morally incapable, would have the right of freemen. With the requirement of contribution, would go the privilege of suffrage;—and the House would be, more in accordance with its theory, the representative of the people than at present.

## TAXATION

67. Q. What is taxation?

A. Contribution, made compulsory, from Citizens, to public services.

68. Q. What are the modes of taxation?

A. Direct and indirect. The latter is arranged by laying duties on articles of consumption, so that all who buy those articles pay something to the state. It is of very unequal pressure. The former is arranged by exacting from citizens, individually, certain fixed payments. It is not popular.

69. Q. When taxation is direct, what should be its basis?

A. Ability to contribute. Those who are decidedly unable to pay, are not required. The contribution commences with ability; and according to common sense and common fairness, should increase accordingly. All sources of ability should enter into estimates of assessment; a mistaken estimate, subject to proper appeal, might be readily rectified. If one man, having only £20 a year net income, is taxed as much as another who has £200—a case of frequent occurrence, a violation of the theory of taxation, and of the rights and duties of property, is occasioned.

## MINISTRY—RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT

70. Q. What is meant by Responsible Government?

A. A Government similar to that of Great Britain, and suited to British freemen. The model is the British Constitution;—the right is in the British character, and in all who have the means of adopting the British Constitution. Close assimilation is desirable; humility of means need be no bar to perfection of theory. Government in the Colonies is limited to internal affairs;—the Governor, as the representative of the British Government, has, in extraordinary cases, the right to assume responsibility, and to appeal to that government;—the resulting enquiry should be immediate and satisfactory.

71. Q. State some particulars.

A. Irresponsible means not accountable. Responsible signifies accountable, or under controul. By Responsible Government is meant, the controul of the Commons, or House of Assembly, by which a ministry can be influenced, and the Administration of affairs altered, according to the legitimately expressed wishes of the people.

72. Q. What is a Ministry?

A. A body of men chosen by the Sovereign, or chief ruler,—whose duties may be thus stated: to advise the Sovereign, or Sovereign's Representative, in public affairs;—to propose and carry forward public measures, according to the Sovereign's will;—to assume responsibility, instead of the Sovereign, to the people, for all public acts emanating from the Branch. Several of the body are chosen from the Commons, and thus, form a valuable medium of enquiry and explanation, between the House and the Sovereign.

73. Q. State the privileges of such a body,—and the checks held on its acts and existence.

A. It is supposed to share in the power and influence of the Chief ruler, by the dispensation of patronage, and otherwise. If it disagreed with the Chief, it may retire from responsibility, by resigning honour and place, and merging in the commonality. Opportunity is thus given for expression of the people, or for a new choice by the Sovereign.—The Sovereign is expected to harmonize the Branches of the Legislature, and execute their enactments,—the Ministry is chosen accordingly, as a body possessing the confidence of the people. A vote of the popular branch, declaring the desirableness of the termination of a ministry, causes, as a legitimate expression of popular opinion, a retirement of the body, and a new choice, or an appeal to the people.

74. Q. Should the vote of the Commons be imperative respecting a change of ministry, except in cases where strong grounds exist, that the popular branch do not faithfully represent the people, and that the difficulties of an appeal should be encountered?

A. It is the simple and British mode of preventing any clashing between the Sovereign and the people. It forms the elastic medium which prevents collision and confusion. *It blends the freedom of the people with the dignity of the Sovereign, to their mutual advantage.*—It is as a regulating wheel of the machinery of the constitution. Without it, the Sovereign might be implicated, and brought into annoyance and danger;—or the opinion of the people might be treated with despotic neglect. It forms a guarantee against excesses which have afflicted communities in periods prior to such arrangements

for public peace,—and when the strong wills of men, without adequate check, came into collision, or devastated without controul.

75. Q. Should the ministerial right of retirement be broadly admitted?

A. Without the right, the position of such a body might include degradation and wrong;—and a ministry could not relieve the Sovereign from responsibility, if its own actions were coerced;—if it did not freely adopt, and freely defend the acts of the Sovereign.

### CHIEFS OF DEPARTMENTS

76. Q. How are Ministerial services to be required?

A. In England, lucrative offices are assigned to members of the ministry,—or, in other words, the chiefs of those offices, become the ministry.

In most communities some fit persons may be readily chosen, who would serve, for honor and power, without pecuniary emolument. In the Colonies, the higher official situations, which blend leisure with respectable emolument, would form a reasonable means of remunerating several of the ministry.

This would be called a Ministry by Heads of Departments, and would be in accordance with the practice in England and Canada, and with views expressed in 1843, by the Nova Scotia Government, for Nova Scotia.

77. Q. State some arguments for the system.

A. The offices alluded to are those which may be readily filled by men of average attainments and abilities,—they therefore could be well supplied from the Provincial Ministry. They generally afford leisure to the principals, the emoluments being attached to trust and rank more than to the labour of the departments; therefore, additional services respecting executive advice might be rendered. Such arrangements would prevent the opposition of officers of Government, to persons and measures of government;—an anomaly not unknown. It would provide remuneration for those who gave valuable services. Would tend to official caution, because the position of officers at the Council board, and in one of the legislative branches, in presence of a vigilant opposition, would give frequent opportunities for direct enquiry and explanation. It would place a few prizes in the field of political ambition;—and such allurements have been considered wise, as regards other branches of public service. It would enable persons of ability, but not of affluence, to serve as Executive Councillors. It would prevent Chiefs of Departments from settling down as mere incumbents of office,—and would cause zealous services by the emulation and ambition, that would attach to Governmental character. Salaries of office would guarantee that members would not retire on light grounds,—the action of opposition, and, of the Legislature, would prevent improper abiding by place and office.

78. Q. Would probable changes of Government cause difficulty in obtaining fit Heads of Departments, under the proposed system?

A. Persons adequate for chairs of the Executive Council, would be adequate for the Departments; if they accepted the former, they

would generally the latter also. Routine business would proceed regularly, by effective subordinates, as in England and Canada.

79. Q. State some general effects of such a system of Responsible Government.

A. Consistent and effective action of ministries holding similar opinions. Proper ambition and self respect of the people. General accordance with what has been found wise in Great Britain. A sustaiment of the dignity, freedom, and harmony of the Representative and Executive Branches.

### ELECTIONS

80. Q. What should be desired respecting the exercise of the Elective Franchise.

A. Free and faithful choice is an imperative obligation. The freedom to elect Representatives is a sacred trust, reposed in private citizens for the public good. Apathy, want of consideration, recklessness, in this case, constitute offences against society, and are unworthy of freemen.

81. Q. What offence at elections is particularly repugnant to the Constitution?

A. Bribery,—which signifies a gift, or consideration, for the surrender of opinion and conscience!

82. Q. Is the manner of Bribery uniform?

A. No. Sometimes the mutual offence, offence in the briber and the bribed, is in the shape of money;—it is sometimes a promise;—sometimes the withholding, or removal of a threat,—and sometimes, in the distribution of intoxicating drinks, that free choice may be prevented by physical and moral degradation!

83. Q. What should be the result of direct bribery?

A. At least, loss of franchise to the degraded voter;—loss of qualification to the degrading Candidate;—fine, or other penalty to the instrument.

84. Q. How should the Franchise be exercised?

A. Without improper influence of fear or favour,—*according to the principles at issue*,—and with fairness and courtesy towards those who differ in opinion.—For this course presiding officers at elections should make due provision.

85. Q. What are the great objects at a general election?

A. The selection of a House of Assembly which will best represent the people;—best maintain and advance British freedom;—best conduce to economy, in accordance with the circumstances of the country;—and best promote that responsibility of Government, which is consistent with reason, public satisfaction, and public prosperity,—and without which British freedom might, in many important particulars, become a mockery instead of a valuable and valued reality.

### POPULAR DUTIES

86. Q. What should be impressed on the public mind respecting the exercise of political rights.

A. The accordance to others of the right of opinion demanded for themselves. The recollection that argument does not require

abusive dictation,—and that rules of morality, and religion should govern political actions. A readiness to surrender some natural rights, for the strict maintenance of public order, and the general well-being.

87. Q. What political duty is chiefly inculcated by this Catechism?

A. That, for the good of individuals, families, and communities, broad and firmly formed foundations for public liberties, should be arranged, and maintained in a spirit of persevering wisdom and charity.

88. Q. What is taught by a glance at the world's present aspect?

A. That vast advances in useful art, in peaceful and humane applications of science, have been accomplished, for civilized men,—and that corresponding advances, in established liberty and mental growth, should be desired and promoted.

89. Q. State some of the views that true Liberality urges as popular as duties.

A. That *great principles*, rather than interests, or accidents, should be borne in mind, as worthy of concentrated endeavour;—that great principles may be forwarded *while distinct and distinctive opinions* on other subjects, variously influence bodies of men;—and that, while patriotism attaches particularly to one part of the world, the true free man desires also *the common advance of his kind*; the freedom and general exaltation of men, everywhere. *Human advance*, is the motto;—the views which come under all circumstances to this test are good, and in accordance with the philosophic rule, "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you."

#### SUMMARY

90. Q. What do you learn, generally, from what you have expressed?

A. That politics, or the science of government, should moderately interest every British freeman;—that ignorance on the subject causes mistake and hostility, while removal of such ignorance, would tend to correct action and charitable temper. That Nova Scotia Liberalism signifies British freedom. That Liberty is a sacred heritage, and that its constituent parts should be carefully maintained. That a good Press, to the mind, like air to the body is the general medium of sound political life and action. That Education should have a basis formed of the simple rudiments of learning, and extensive as the population. That Responsible Government is British, and in accordance with common sense and Colonial prosperity; and that Elections are solemn expressions of opinion on political principles, and should be conducted in a manner worthy of intelligent freemen. The comprehending maxim is: Liberty, Intelligence, and Integrity, clearly understood, and well established on wise institutions, are the elements of political power and happiness.