

W E Hearn QC: The Constitution of England under Queen Victoria is indeed the very constitution under which the Confessor ruled and which the Conqueror swore to obey. There is between the two states the same resemblance that there is between the infant and the man, between the seedling and the full grown tree. But it is not more certain that the stateliest oak that now graces the green fields of England was once an acorn, or that the bearded and ambitious warrior in the full vigour of his strength once lay a helpless infant mewling in his nurse's arms, than it is that this wondrous Constitution, so old yet stretching forward (if Heaven pleases) to such indefinite futurity, is the selfsame organism of which we may trace the rudiments in the laws of Ina.

Sir John Fortescue: a people beyng headless is not worthy to be called a bodie

Samuel Taylor Coleridge: [Canning] flashed such a light around the constitution that it was difficult to see the ruins of the fabric through it

The Groundwork of British History History (20th century school

textbook): the Constitution develops most when the Crown is for any reason ineffective

W E Gladstone: Every man who is not presumably incapacitated by some consideration of personal unfitness or of political danger is morally entitled to come within the pale of the Constitution

Sir Thomas Smith: as for gentlemen they be made good cheap in England

G M: Trevelyan: Our constitution was the child of Feudalism married to the Common Law.

The Earl Warrenne, on being summoned with a writ of *quo*

warranto: [brandishing a rusty sword]

Here my lords, here is my warrant! My ancestors came with William the Bastard and conquered their lands with the sword, and I shall defend them with the sword against anyone who tries to usurp them.

A V Dicey: [T]he appeal of precedent is in the law courts merely a useful fiction by which judicial decision conceals its transformation into judicial legislation; and a fiction is none the less a fiction because it has emerged from the Courts into the field of politics or of history.

Here, then, the astuteness of lawyers has imposed upon the simplicity of historians. Formalism and antiquarianism, have, so to speak, joined hands; they have united to mislead students in search for the law of the constitution.

Coke CJ: The Lawes of England are of much more antiquity, then they are reported to be, and more then any of the constitutions or lawes Imperiall of the Romaine Emperours.

Edmund Burke: the People cannot suffer a great deal whilst there is a Contest between different Parts of the Constitution.

James I & VI : [the] absolute Prerogative of the Crown is no Subject for the tongue of a Lawyer

Sir Courtney Ilbert, to Mr Asquith,

1909: 'There are occasions when respect for the constitution must override respect for the law