

passed the minister of the day welcomed it, Mr. Speaker, because he found that his powers were too ample and, like your humble servant, he was afraid of his human frailty. So that in the Public Works Act there is a check against the frailty of the minister or of any of his chief officials.

But, as I stated a moment ago, I believe that after all the best protection for a minister of the Crown is the fear of the Lord, and the fear of the Lord in the present instance is the fear of the Parliament of Canada. If every minister of the Crown exercises his ministerial responsibility, he cannot lightly pass that responsibility over to an irresponsible body—and I maintain that this commission is an irresponsible body, and I also maintain that we should preserve the ancient usages of Parliament, which protect our rights.

One of the dearest principles of our Government is that of ministerial responsibility. If my hon. friend the President of the Privy Council was not so bashful I would read one of his most interesting speeches, where he expounded this feature of our constitution. We must not abdicate our functions as a Parliament. My hon. friend will pardon me if I have to speak of lucre, but it is my only way of expressing what I have in mind. Every minister of the Crown who is paid by the toiling masses must be responsible before Parliament for every one of his actions. I shall not quote my hon. friend—I reserve that for another occasion—but he will accept Todd's authority, I suppose.

In conferring 'responsible Government' upon her colonies, it was the design of Great Britain to convey to them as far as possible a counterpart of her own institutions. By this system, it was intended that the vital elements of stability, impartiality, and an enlightened supervision over all public affairs should be secured, as in the mother country, by the well-ordered supremacy of a constitutional governor, responsible only to the Crown; whilst the freedom and intelligence of the people should be duly represented in the powers entrusted to an administration co-operating with the Crown in all acts of government, but likewise responsible to Parliament for the exercise of their authority.

The administration or cabinet, as has been justly remarked by Mr. Gladstone, "stands between the sovereign and the parliament, and is bound to be loyal to both."

It may not separate itself from the Crown lest it should degenerate into a ministerial oligarchy, swallowing up those rights of the monarchy in the body politic which are the eminent safeguards of political liberty and of national honour.

I admit that during the war, when we were living in extraordinary times, extraor-

inary measures might have been permissible. But now that we have, in a sense, come back to pre-war times; now that the affairs of Canada are to be administered according to the best principles of British Government and the British constitution, ministers of the Crown must not shift their responsibilities to extraneous bodies. They must take the responsibility of every one of their acts. If the powers vested in the departments of the Government are not strong enough, not protective enough, let us amend the laws. I shall give my support to the Government if they will amend some of the statutory powers conferred upon

9 p.m. the departments, but I do strenuously object to any gentleman who is not elected by the people, who is not responsible to Parliament, managing the affairs of the country outside of the departments and outside of the Government. I do not wish to create an oligarchy. I do not, to paraphrase the language of Mr. Gladstone, wish that the administration should not stand between the sovereign and the Parliament and not be loyal to both. I am using the negative; Mr. Gladstone speaks in the affirmative:—

It may not separate itself from the Crown lest it should degenerate into a ministerial oligarchy, swallowing up those rights of the monarchy in the body politic which are the eminent safeguards of political liberty and of national honour.

I want the Government of Canada to be responsible for the expenditures of the current fiscal year. When I criticise any undue expenditure, any extravagant or possibly corrupt bargain, I do not want to be told by my friends opposite: "These hands are clean; we are not responsible. A commission created by Parliament, voted for by you and by me, has thought it proper to make that expenditure, that corrupt bargain." I want to see before me in the House the Administration which has been selected as the supreme council, the supreme committee of the elected representatives in Parliament. I want to see that Administration before me so as to be able to scrutinize its acts; to condemn its misdemeanours and to denounce its corruption, if there be corruption. I am not British born; I have no English blood in my veins, but I have the highest regard for British precedents and the greatest admiration for the British constitution. Did England, since the war, or before the war, create commissions in order that the responsibilities of ministers of the Crown should be shifted from their shoulders to the shoulders