

personal vote to himself. My hon. friend says because Mr. Borden has consented to accept an allowance voted to him by statute that he is becoming a beneficiary to the government of the day, and that Sir Wm. Meredith would not put himself in such a position, but if Mr. Borden is in that position, so also is Sir Wm. Meredith, to-day, because he receives his salary as a judge from the government precisely as Mr. Borden does. Mr. Borden is no more dependent on the government of the day, and no more a beneficiary of the government than the judges are. My hon. friend says that it was an innovation. That statement is not exactly correct. Many years ago this parliament in its wisdom granted an increased allowance to the first minister, different from the allowance to any other cabinet minister. The first minister here as in England holds his position under certain conventions of the constitution and in Canada a sum of money is voted by statute as a salary to the prime minister in addition to what he receives as head of a department, precisely the same principle therefore has been adopted in giving a salary to the leader of the opposition that has prevailed in giving an extra allowance to the leader of the government. I can see no difference between the two cases. Before I leave that point I may say that for a long period of years both governments have voted an amount of money for clerical assistance for the leader of the opposition. That is recognizing him in the same way. It is exactly the same principle although in a different degree, but were we to agree that it is an innovation, does that settle it? To my mind it does not by any means. If the world had refused to adopt any good principle because it was an innovation, we would still be Druidical worshippers and we would be governed in this country without a parliament, and

The good old way, the simple plan,  
That he shall take who has the power,  
And he shall hold who can.

would prevail in the relations of man to man.

It is by means of innovations that we have attained our present system of constitutional government; by innovations we have reached the high ideals of Christianity which prevails amongst us; by innovations we have reached the high plane of civilization which characterizes the fore-

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON.

most nations of the world. We are not going to discard any good principle because it is an innovation, and I maintain that the voting of a salary to the leader of the opposition is a good principle and that it should be supported and sustained by the people of the country, as I believe it will be so supported and sustained when it comes to be thoroughly understood. I had the pleasure of meeting the representatives of the party to which I belong, some four hundred of them, in conference in January last, in Prince Edward Island, and this question was brought up. I am able to tell you, and my statement will be supported by one of my colleagues in this House who was present at the meeting, that it only took about twenty minutes to dispose of this matter. The gentleman who brought up the question in an advance way left the meeting without recording his vote and the resolution on the subject, approving the action which was taken, was adopted with enthusiasm. And I believe such will be the verdict of the country at large when they come to understand it.

With regard to the increase of pay of the members of parliament, and in regard to all measures of a like nature which were brought down last year, I have no hesitation in saying that I hold the government very blameable. There is something to recommend itself in every one of these propositions, but I say without fear of being successfully controverted, that these measures should not have been brought down so late and brought down in a bunch as if it was a system of log rolling that was being inaugurated. These measures should have been gone over deliberately, carefully and in detail early in the session, so that the press, and members of parliament would have ample time to consider their provisions, and if that were done there would be less dissatisfaction in the country than there is to-day. The government is responsible for that dissatisfaction by having brought down so many important measures at so late a period. For years we have pleaded for increases in the salaries of the judges in many parts of this country. I know that there was a crying demand for an increase, and I have no hesitation in saying also that the members of parliament should be adequately paid. Although I would not have ob-