

tically appoints and dismisses the Ministry, and the Crown registers the wishes of Parliament. Called thus into existence by the Crown, the Ministry becomes the "keeper of the king's conscience," and assumes all responsibility of government. What the Crown does is really done by the Ministry; no choice is left between taking its advice and their dismissal; and this cannot well take place unless another body of men is prepared to assume the responsibility of the Crown's action.

I have purposely lengthened the observations on this point, because the Cabinet is in our Constitution so unique and essential a feature, and its functions are so imperfectly understood, that time is well spent in studying its characteristics.

Now let us turn to the other form of Government—the *Presidential system*. History would seem to indicate that this system was the outcome of a desire to balance one set of forces by an opposing set. Our neighbours in framing their Constitution seem to have sought to prevent too much power being exercised by any one person or institution. Checks are imposed on the Executive by the Legislature; on the Legislature by the Executive; on the Legislature and Executive by the people, and on the people by the Constitution; lastly, the Judiciary is a very powerful check upon both Legislature and Executive. Under the Presidential system more power is given the President than is given the Crown by the Cabinet system. Elected by the people for a fixed period of years, his authority, within the limits of the Constitution, is uncontrolled during his term of office. He exercises in some measure the power of a Prime Minister; yet he is not removable by a vote of Congress, unless for serious offences, and then after a formal trial. History shows that it is practically impossible to remove a President during his term

of office. But he cannot initiate any legislation—all he can do is suggest and recommend a line of policy, and leave it to his friends to carry this policy, if possible, into effect.

Although unable to legislate, he can prevent Bills from becoming law by exercising his right of *veto*; and his veto cannot be got over except by a two-thirds vote of Congress. Thus his power of checking hasty legislation is great; his initiatory power very small. The President possesses a Ministry, known as the Secretaries of various important State Departments. But these Secretaries are in no sense of the term the equivalents in power and responsibility of the members of a British Cabinet. They are nominated by the President, the nominations coming before the Senate for approval. The nominations generally are accepted; the approval of the Senate is very much a matter of course. After their appointment the Secretaries are not much more than Heads of Departments, and they are not responsible to Congress; their responsibility is to the President. They act under his guidance and advice; although an influential man like Mr. Blaine doubtless has an important influence on the Presidential policy. The President's Cabinet is then not a real Cabinet—its members cannot be removed by the Congress, and they take no part in Congressional deliberations. If the President and his Cabinet wish to carry out a line of policy, foreign or domestic, the legislation necessary must be carried through the two branches of Congress by their political friends in these Houses. It is easy to see how difficult legislation becomes under such circumstances, when parties are nearly equally divided. The late President, Mr. Cleveland, could speak from bitter experience of the way a Bill, furthered and fostered by the President and his Cabinet, was strangled