

material environments. There is nothing in the way of material environment which we dare not hope to improve in this country.

Sir, unfortunately it is not only our material environments which have suffered during the war. There has been another loss, the greatest of all—the loss of human life, and the impairment of mind and body to many thousands of men who have suffered during this war. That is a loss which can never be made up. It is part of the infinite mystery. It belongs to the sacrifice which has been the price of freedom through all the ages. But the loss that we have suffered in material things and the losses we have suffered in human life do not make up the sum of destruction in this war. The war has also destroyed, as my hon. friend from London has said, much that is sacred and venerable, in all our institutions, religious, political, and of every other nature. That indeed has been one of the most serious of all the effects of the war and to a very large extent accounts for the great unrest that exists in the world to-day. In faith, men "have faltered where they firmly stood." This is true alike in State and Church. Men's faith in government is shaken, and in religion, and even in themselves. What we speak of to-day as Bolshevism had its origin in a country where they have had least in the way of free religious and governmental institutions to cling to. Wherever such has been the case, there the world has suffered most. What is needed to-day to bring about a change in conditions is a restoration of the faith that has been weakened, faith in an over-ruling Providence, faith in our political institutions, faith on the part of men and women in themselves.

That brings me to the point which I should like to make in answer to the hon. gentlemen who have spoken so eloquently of the restoration of these halls of Parliament. It is not the restoration of the Parliament buildings that is needed so much as the restoration of our parliamentary system of government. Mr. Speaker, of all that we have inherited through our British connection there is no possession so highly to be prized as the British system of government. The British constitution has been the model for our own. All members of Parliament from the day of Confederation down to the present have spoken of the greatness of that constitution. Its ancient origins is something that we reverence. We reverence even more the spirit of freedom which is conserved through that constitution. To the Fathers of Confederation and

to this Parliament, it has been, as Sir Wilfrid Laurier once said on a memorable occasion, as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night to lead this nation towards greater unity and nationhood.

But, Sir, the greatness of an institution, as of an individual, lies in its spirit; and an institution, no matter whether it be a material structure such as this or whether it be a constitution, which has lost the vital spirit that has lent it greatness, may become the very opposite of what it was intended to be. Instead of being a citadel of freedom it may become the home of autocracy or, what is perhaps worse, the abode of indecision and inaction in all things. We have suffered in this country, it is true, as a result of the war, but I regret to say, in part also, as a result of the inadequacy of the Administration to meet the needs of the country. That our political institutions, in common with all the other phases of our national life, should suffer through the action of war was inevitable. What is most unfortunate is that the loss is greater than it should have been, and this by reason of the failure of the administration to deal with the affairs of the country as they should have been dealt with.

I should like to point out wherein it seems to me this Parliament and the Government have ceased in large measure to be representative of the will of the people. That, after all, is the supreme, the fundamental fact which confronts us. If I do not deal with other matters that have been touched upon by the mover and seconder of the Address, it is because I feel that the restoration of our political life, and also in large measure of our social and economic life, is dependent on Parliament and the Government being in the truest sense representative of the will of the people. And it is because, throughout this country from the Atlantic to the Pacific, people believe that the Government does not represent their will, that we hear the demand which we on this side of the House desire to voice for a new Parliament and a new Administration.

Mr. Speaker, let me draw the attention of the House to some of the essential conditions of parliamentary government, and show wherein during recent years we have wandered far from a compliance with these conditions. First of all, under any system of parliamentary government, the House of Commons, the elective chamber, should be a representative assembly. To say that an assembly is representative implies that its members have been returned under a fair franchise and on a policy which is