

measures of the government. If we are going to depart from that, then we must accept the other form of government. To my mind, there is no happy medium such as is proposed by hon. gentlemen in this resolution. We have always prided ourselves in this country on the fact that our people could have their views put into force more quickly than could be done in the United States. If the sentiment of the country changes one year after an election, the members of parliament can vote out the government, and the people can at once elect a parliament from which will be selected a government, the views of which will be in harmony with the views of the people.

There is, in the world, no system by which the views of the people can so quickly be put into action in a parliamentary sense as the old British system. I agree with the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Maclean) that if we are going to depart from that system, the only other practical alternative is to have a fixed parliamentary term. Then, no matter whether government measures are defeated or not, that government stays in power until its term expires. I am not in favour of that; I believe in the old British system under which nobody has suffered, but under which as the years go by, improvements have constantly been taking place which have proved beneficial to the people. You ask me: How are the people of Canada under our system of government enabled to get their views represented so quickly in a parliamentary election? Only in one way, and that is when parliament ceases to believe in the government in power and its policy, and by a majority vote puts that government out. We cannot well say that it is practical for a government to maintain the respect even of parliament, much less of the country, if every three or four days, government policies should be voted down in the House. It would be government in name but not government at all in reality. It would be merely a combination of men, acting within their rights, getting together each day, or on stated occasions, or whenever they felt like it, springing some motion to which everybody in the world might agree on some other occasion, and placing the government in a minority. I appeal to hon. gentlemen who are in favour of this motion—if they were in the government, would they like to attempt to carry on government under such circumstances? Members of the government would be advisers of His Majesty, the King, but they would have to wait until somebody advised them what to say. I see

no real, practical value in this resolution, although, of course, every member has a right to move any resolution he likes. I do not think I am a Tory.

Mr. FORKE: That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. GRAHAM: I would not like to be one; I would not like to be considered one; but what has been good enough for the Mother of Parliaments is good enough for the Dominion of Canada, and unless we propose to adhere to what is obviously sane and sound parliamentary practice that when a government loses the confidence of parliament, it should resign, then we must go to the other form of government and accept that form which prevails in the United States, and by which a government does not have to resign, but has a fixed term.

Does this give parliament greater freedom? Does it follow the line of Tennyson which was quoted, I think, by two or three members about "broadening down from precedent to precedent?" I think this restricts parliament, restricts the government in a wrong sense, adversely, in this way. You place a government, that wants to be in such a position and that is not overly sensitive to its self-respect, in a position where it could hang on day after day, week after week, where it could say: "That is not a vote of want of confidence; we do not intend to resign until you absolutely kick us out." Under present circumstances, when parliament gives a majority on any serious question against the government, the government, no matter how we may argue, is expected to do something—either to ask for a dissolution of parliament or to resign. If you give a government the right to hang on day after day, week after week, and month after month, as this resolution would do, until some person gets up and says: "Well now, this is our resolution, and if we carry this, you are to go out"—I think that would be a most humiliating spectacle. There is nothing progressive in this resolution; what is new in it is of a rather retrograde character.

I want to make it clear again that I believe in the old British parliamentary system. The practice of the Mother of Parliaments upon which our constitution is based is good enough for us. We followed it for some years, and while I believe in things new I do not believe in adopting them merely because they are new, unless they are an improvement on the old. I stand for the old principle, and I believe there is only one alternative. If we abandon that principle let us adopt the term system, so that a govern-