

of the effects of the Bill upon their constituencies. It passes comprehension that such a system should be continued. It may be said that we follow precedent, but what do we need to care about precedent? In God's name, let us get on with the business of the country, and do that business as it should be done, regardless of party. Under the French system, when a Bill is introduced the members vote for it according to their best judgment. It may be introduced by the Government, it might be introduced by any particular member, or any particular party in the *Chambre des Communes*. The measure is discussed on its merits, and even if introduced by the Government, if the majority of the Chamber think it should not become law, the majority vote against it and it falls. The existence of the Government is hinged upon a vote of confidence, or a vote of want of confidence. The Government might introduce what they thought an important measure, and be defeated root and branch, the members exercising their God-given intelligence. Why, if the majority of that House think that that Government, generally speaking, is the best Government for France, somebody submits a vote of confidence in it, and if the motion carries the Government remains in office. There, it is on the Government's general policy, and on the Government's service for the State, that its existence hinges. In our country it is entirely different. Surely, we could break away from precedent and adopt the French system, which I feel sure would be a good thing for the Dominion of Canada.

Now the British system of party government—and it is a fine tribute to the old British race—developed over a thousand years, evolved out of great hardship, great worries and great troubles, but the party system has been deliberately adopted by all free peoples over the earth. So much for the British system. If we follow the British ideals and use parties for the purpose of accomplishing great reforms, then we are following along the right line. Let us glance at the agitation for the abolition of the Corn laws fifty or sixty years ago. John Bright, Richard Cobden, and other able men, whose hearts beat in unison and sympathy for the people, realized that protection was an evil in the land. Hundreds, and thousands, nay, tens of thousands, were almost starving for the want of something to eat, and these great men—men whose hearts beat for the people—saw that in order to work a reform, it was desirable, nay necessary, to get rid of protection. They began their agitation in the House. They secured re-

[Mr. Richardson.]

cruits in the House and out of it, and they worked along for years propagating their theories and pointing out to the people of Great Britain a remedy for the evils that existed, until finally they succeeded in persuading the people and organizing a party in the House of Commons that resulted in the abolition of the Corn laws. That was a great triumph, a great achievement for party! That is what party should be used for, and that should be its only purpose. To merely call ourselves parties, and divide into two factions will never help the country, and, as I pointed out several times, it has resulted in almost destroying our public life. We want to get away from factions, we want to form an idea of what the country's interests are, we want to devote ourselves to the service of the country and carry out what the country needs. In a word, let us serve the country and not serve party.

I want to refer briefly to the speech of the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Carvell). I have already alluded to the task which he has in hand at the present time. He has spoken with great frankness, and there has been very little criticism of his statements. Occasionally you hear the speech referred to as a pessimistic statement, but I say all honour to the responsible minister of the Crown who tells Parliament, and through Parliament the people of the country, exactly what the position of affairs is. He tells us that we will probably be faced with a deficit—after providing for pensions, for the carrying on of the affairs of the country, and paying the interest on the war debt—of one hundred millions dollars,—and yet the clamour for public works, and the clamour for expenditures goes on apace. Members of this House, and the people of this country, are faced with a serious situation. It is not fair, Sir, to badger our ministers for lavish expenditures, perhaps unreasonable expenditures, without considering from what source the money is to come. The Dominion has great natural resources, but the prospect of realizing on them is rather limited as we see them at present. Will the Dominion be able to meet that vast expenditure? There is no use blaming the Government. The Government did not bring on the war, and only incidentally incurred the necessary expenditure. The country clamoured for the sending of our soldiers to the front; we all held up our hands for it, and are grateful for the deeds of heroism that our soldiers have achieved and for the glory they have reflected on this Dominion. But the Government are not specially re-