

of some outside influences? It is as a Britisher that I appeal to my hon. friend; that I say to him that the war is over; that the time for extraordinary measures has passed; that we must resume parliamentary Government—democratic Government. The country has suffered immensely during the war; has endured sacrifices of blood and of money. It is the expectation of the country, therefore, that the era which is now opening up may be a truly democratic era. I hope that, having heard the strong protests not only from this side of the House, but from the other side as well—protests from independent members of the House—the Government will yield, or that they will think twice before insisting that this commission be created.

Once more I say that I do not at all criticize the members of this commission. I knew Mr. Gundy by reputation only; it was of the highest. I know personally Sir Hormisdas Laporte; there is no better citizen in Canada. But it is against the principle—the vicious, the autocratic principle—that I raise my voice this evening.

I said a moment ago that I had no English blood coursing through my veins. But I have the inherent logic of the French people; therefore, having regard to the protest which I have offered against this legislation, I must conclude logically. I therefore move, seconded by Mr. J. H. Sinclair:

That this Bill be not now read the second time, but this day six months.

Hon. MARTIN BURRELL (Secretary of State): The hon. gentleman (Mr. Lemieux) has taken a great deal of the time of the House this evening in discussing this matter. He commenced his remarks by imitating the methods of his friend to his left, the leader of the Opposition (Mr. McKenzie) by quoting Scripture.

Mr. LEMIEUX: It is contagious.

Mr. BURRELL: I suggest to him that when the leader of the Opposition quotes Scripture—and he does so very frequently—he is a little more apposite than my hon. friend. My hon. friend quoted "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom".

He went on to argue the point later by explaining that while he really said "the Lord," he meant "Parliament." I can only say that if Parliament is to be judged in its personnel and ability by the length and irrelevance of a speech such as we have just heard, then I think to make "Parliament" and "the Lord" exchangeable terms is very unflattering to the Deity. That is

[Mr. Lemieux.]

all I have to say about that. My hon. friend discoursed on many subjects that had very little to do with the measure before the House; indeed, I was almost raising a point of order until I began, towards the end of his speech, to get a glimmering idea that what he was really apprehensive of was that the constitution was going to be entirely smashed by a commission which is created to do the business of Government and Parliament in a little more businesslike manner.

The hon. member laboured the point a great deal, and several other members opposite have also laboured the same point during the last few weeks of the horrible autocracy that they allege has been existing in this Government for the last three or four years, the usurpation of the rights and powers of the people, the autocratic methods employed by government by Order in Council, and he and those who have spoken along the same lines seem persistently to forget either deliberately or unconsciously that there has been no such thing as an autocratic Government, because Parliament has put into the hands of the Government certain powers which the Government exercises, and having exercised them is responsible to this Parliament for what it has done. My hon. friend has used some very extraordinary arguments in support of the position which he has now expressed in the shape of a motion. Before he commenced that kind of argument, he complained that during the war the Government had had a very free hand in the expenditure of public money, but, he said, as we have now come to times of peace, the Government must exercise a closer control of its expenditures; there must be greater economy; there must be a reduction and an economy, the old watchword that is coupled with the name of Alexander Mackenzie whose example, I may say, my hon. friend and some of his friends did not always follow. He referred to the Minister of Railways' extravagance of expenditure, and I do not like to allow his reference to pass, because last night I listened to the Minister of Railways, and if the hon. member for Maisonneuve (Mr. Lemieux) will pardon me, I must say I think his reference was very unfair, I would almost say grossly unfair, if that is parliamentary, to the minister who is not at present in the House. I took down his words while he was speaking, and he stated that the Minister of Railways, in regard to the Welland canal and the Trent canal had stated that the work that was