

The main reason why, in my judgment, it would be unwise to adopt a system of that kind is this: That if this Senate was elected in a similar manner—although for larger constituencies than those of the House of Commons—how naturally would arise the idea in this House, that we should have control of the public purse equally with the House of Commons, and that the adverse vote of the Senate should upset a Ministry as well as a vote of the House of Commons.

HON. MR. POWER—The constitution would naturally provide against that.

HON. MR. VIDAL—If we were the representatives of the people, elected directly by the people, I cannot see how the constitution could say that other representatives elected by the people for smaller constituencies should have greater power than we should have. It seems to me that we should be entitled to co-ordinate powers with the other branch of Parliament, and it would naturally lead to a conflict between the two bodies. I do not think the system could be carried out consistently with the principles of the British constitution. Now, my hon. friend does not propose that the Senate should be an elective Council after the old fashion. He proposes that the election shall be made simply by the Legislatures, not by the people of the different Provinces. It has been very clearly and distinctly shown to us that this, in effect, would be nothing more or less than the nomination by the Premier of the Province. Any person that he chose to nominate in his own assembly, where he would command a majority, would necessarily be elected. What would be the result of those appointments? I cannot see how anybody could take a different view of it. Gentlemen sent to this Chamber would be naturally selected, because they were prominent party men, and they would certainly introduce into this Chamber a partisan spirit which now prevails to so very limited a degree in this body. I am satisfied that if an unprejudiced outsider were to examine our records—to look at the votes taken on all sorts of questions—he would never be able to point out the party lines of the members. There may be occasions when old party feeling may be displayed, but such exceptions are very rare. I claim that the treatment of measures in this House has been, invari-

ably, on their merits, quite irrespective of the source from which they emanated, and so far from being in any way bound to carry out the wishes of the Government, or to blindly support their measures, I think we have shown our independence on various occasions, and I am satisfied we will do so again on any and every occasion when it is necessary or desirable. We would never reject any measure simply to show our independence, but when a measure comes before the Senate which in our judgment is not needed or is not likely to promote the best interests of the country, then it becomes our duty to act on that conviction no matter where it comes from and no matter how the leader of the House may exert his eloquence in its defence. With all his persuasive power, he has sometimes failed to carry a measure of that kind, and the House has acted, as it should always act, on its own judgment and rejected the measure however earnestly pressed on them. Surely that should indicate a degree of independence for which we should get credit. Sir John Macdonald himself, when the debate on the Confederation of the Provinces was going on, spoke with reference to the old elective council and he certainly admits that it was to some extent a failure. He said:

I hold that the principle has not been a failure in Canada, but there were some causes which we did not take into consideration at the time why we did not so fully succeed in Canada as we had expected.

That, I think, is a very candid admission that the elective system has not succeeded as they had expected it would. After ten years trial of it those wise, patriotic, earnest statesmen who had no object in view but to give us a constitution which should suit our circumstances and secure peace and prosperity in the country, agreed that the experiment should not be tried again. Sir John Macdonald also said in relation to the position and character of Senators some very interesting things. He pointed out the distinction between the proposed Senate in Canada and the House of Lords in England and showed that there was really no parallel at all between their position and ours. He showed that although called to this position we were still men of the people—that we went back to our friends, and were just on an equality with those that we met around our homes—that there was no social distinction here such as there was in England. An