

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—I might say also it was quite satisfactory.

Hon. Mr. ELLIS—As regards the Senate and the House of Commons, there might I think be an improvement in the parliamentary practice. All legislation, in view of the large amount of work we have to do, should be resumed in the next session of parliament where it is left this session. There is no doubt the Senate itself, as regards its strength before the country, is weakened by the fact that the moment a senator gets an important position in the cabinet he leaves the Senate and goes to the House of Commons. I would remedy that by allowing the senators to sit in the House of Commons, which is the French system—there is a good deal to be learned in France—and I would allow the commoners to sit in this Chamber. I think it is a common right in France. At any rate I would allow the members to sit in both Houses, so that when their policy was to be explained, they would have a right to speak in parliament, no matter what branch they belonged to.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Would the hon. gentleman give them a vote also?

Hon. Mr. ELLIS—No, I should not do that. My hon. friend sat in the Lower House, and he knows that whenever an important minister sat in the Senate there was a constant expression of dissatisfaction, and it was urged that the minister ought to be here to explain himself, and do this, that, and the other thing, and the Lower House was never satisfied with the explanation, no matter how good it was, if the minister was not there to make it himself. I am of the opinion—and I merely state this as my own opinion—that the second Chambers everywhere will, in the course of time, disappear; that notwithstanding the value of the second Chamber as a critical body, criticising the acts of the House below, the popular feeling which is at work in the United States endeavouring to have the senators elected; the popular feeling which exists in England to-day attacking the House of Lords—and the attacks upon the House of Lords in England are far greater and stronger than is supposed in this country, and that popular feeling is working in Canada to-day. Any man who reads the Eng-

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lish reviews will find that there is a constant attack on the House of Lords because it is not doing its duty, as the duty of public men is understood to-day by the English people. I observed the other day, in some paper an article in which practices in the United States were being discussed where some of these rich men sat in the Senate of the United States, and the rejoinder was made, I think by an English paper: 'Well, what does the Duke of Westminster sit in parliament for except to look after his large estates?' So that, in time, as the people get to the democratic idea that there is only one united body of people to be cared for, all the labour and revision necessary for doing that will necessarily fall into the hands of one branch of parliament. I will trouble the House with a short extract from an observation of John Stuart Mill in his book on representative government. Mr. Mill favoured a second House, and suggested such a House as that to which the hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce referred. But he remarked:

The really moderating power in a democratic constitution must act in and through the democratic House.

That there should be in every policy a centre of resistance to the predominant power in the constitution—and in a democratic constitution therefore a nucleus of resistance to the democracy—I have already maintained; and I regard it as a fundamental maxim of government. If any people who possess a democratic representation are from their historical antecedents more willing to tolerate such a centre of resistance in the form of a second chamber or House of Lords than in any other shape, this constitutes a strong reason for having it in that shape. But it does not appear to me the best shape in itself, nor by any means the most efficacious for its object. If there are two houses, one considered to represent the people, the other to represent only a class, or not to be representative at all, I cannot think that where democracy is the ruling power in society, the second House would have any real ability to resist even the aberrations of the first. It might be suffered to exist, in an effective check on even here. If it exercised an independent will, it would be required to do so in the same general spirit as the other House; to be equally democratic with it, and to content itself with correcting the accidental oversights of the more popular branch of the legislature or competing with it in popular measures.

It seems to me that the weakness of the Senate is in its creation. It has no mandate from the people. Mr. Dilke said more than fifteen years ago—but I am sorry he does not argue the question at all—in discussing second Chambers: