

that it was quite possible that the Senate itself was not the necessity to the public which it imagined itself to be. Now, I do not know what impression the Senate has received during the addresses which have been delivered, or what the opinion of the country may be as to the utility of the Senate, but no doubt it will sufficiently develop during the recess when the public have had time to consider all the various points which have been put forward in the course of the debate. I feel, however, that whatever doubt may have existed in my own mind still remains. I have not been cured of any doubt which I may have had on that point, because it has not been clearly shown, it seems to me, that there is an absolute necessity for the Senate; and while I would not say that it has been shown that there is no necessity for the Senate, I still feel that the doubt remains. My hon. friend himself pointed out that the government—which is perhaps true—cannot be responsible to both branches of the legislature. Therefore, there must be a limit to the powers of the Senate, and the utility of the Senate must be reduced correspondingly. It seems to me that it is a debatable question whether in a country which has responsible government there should be two branches of parliament at all. The government of the country is responsible to the people through the House which is elected by the people; and how it is possible for any other House to override the will of that House, or how it is possible for any other body to come in and constantly perform useful independent work in a parliament so constituted, is certainly a doubtful question. The House which is not responsible must in the end be irremediably weak, and must constantly give way. That seems to be a fact which cannot be controverted, and that view was also taken, though not prominently put forward by the hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce. I shall probably refer to his attitude on that point later on. But some person discussing the whole matter might raise the question whether responsible government really exists in this country at all in the way in which we formerly understood it. There is no doubt that the government is responsible to parliament, and parliament is responsible to the

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people; but in the observations which I have made over quite a number of years I have found that the responsibility of the government is really to the country—that the parliament of the country is ceasing to hold the government responsible to them, and that the responsibility is going directly to the people themselves. In other words, I cannot remember,—although my memory may fall me in that—any case since confederation when there was an adverse vote in the House to dismiss the government. Some hon. gentlemen may remember some such instance, but I do not. Some hon. gentleman reminds me that in 1873 there would have been if the government had not resigned.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—The hon. gentleman is quite correct so far as 1873 is concerned.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—But it was the vote of want of confidence which led to the resignation of the government.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—There was no vote.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—There was a resolution, but it was not pressed to a vote.

Hon. Mr. ELLIS—In the local legislatures now, a defeat of the government by a vote in the House is a very rare thing. I was a member of the local legislature of New Brunswick in 1883 when the government was dismissed by a vote, but it was a legislature fresh from the people, and there was no debate whatever. The leader of the opposition simply moved that the government had not the confidence of the House or of the country in view of the result of the election, and the government was defeated on that. While I do not say in all that period there has been no adverse vote, yet I say it has fallen into disuse, and the American system of which hon. gentlemen are so fearful is coming into use in this country; the people themselves decide the question of who shall govern. I merely state this as being along the lines of the observations I made with regard to one House and the responsibility of the government. But there is no doubt whatever that the idea of two Chambers is strong in the general mind of the people. That it is strong in this House is quite evident. I think