

Government by their votes in the House of Lords. Before the second reading of the Reform Bill of 1832 no fewer than sixteen new peers had been created, to correct in some measure the notorious disproportion between the two parties in the House of Lords, and King William IV. gave his consent in writing to Earl Grey for the creation of such a number of peers as would be sufficient to ensure the passing of that measure, but his personal influence with the peers was successfully exerted to induce them to desist from further opposition.

Lord Brougham, who was Lord Chancellor in Earl Grey's Reform Cabinet, a generation later, in 1863, placed on record his feelings and his deep anxiety as a constitutional lawyer in reference to this step, in which he was, of course, participating to the full with the Prime Minister. His reflections are of singular interest, but, in reading his apprehensions of the consequences of the creation of peers to carry the Reform Bill, we must remember that the idea of placing a bar, by statute or otherwise, to the veto of the House of Lords on general legislation was not then even the subject of contemplation, however academic. "In recent times," wrote Lord Brougham in 1863, "the Government of which I formed a part, backed by a large majority of the Commons and the people out of doors, carried the Reform Bill through the Lords by the power which His late Majesty had conferred upon us of an unlimited creation of peers at any stage of the measure. . . . Nothing could be more thoughtless than the view which they took of this important question. They never reflected for a moment upon the chance of their soon differing with Lord Grey and myself—a thing which, however, speedily happened; never considered what must be the inevitable consequence of a difference between ourselves and the Commons; never took the trouble to ask what must happen if the peers thus become our partisans should be found at variance with King, Lords and people; never stopped to foresee that, in order to defeat our oligarchy, a new and still larger creation must be required": (Brougham's *British Constitution*, pp. 268-269).—*Law Times*.