

the work of this parliament. I can see no logical reason why the work done in this Chamber by the members of this House elected by the people, should be revised—nor can I see what is to be gained by having it revised—by the members of the other Chamber who are not elected by or responsible to the people. The members of the other Chamber are not superior—and I am quite ready to admit that they are not in any way inferior—to the members of this House by birth, education, information, experience or in any other way. I would object, and strongly object, to any reform of the Senate. As the hon. member for Lincoln and Niagara (Mr. Lancaster) has said, many reforms have been suggested. I would look upon a Senate such as we should have were we to adopt any of the methods of reform I have heard proposed as not equal in value to the Senate we have to-day. I would be opposed to the Senate reformed in any way I have heard suggested, and I am opposed to the continuation of the Senate as we have it. It is true that, from time to time, the Senate has made many changes—most of them minor changes—in legislation passed by this House. But to say that they have changed legislation is not to show that they have improved it; it is a matter of opinion whether these changes have been improvements or the reverse. It may be that sometimes they have improved legislation, it may be that sometimes the changes made by them have been a detriment. I contend that when the same political party has a majority in the House of Commons and also a majority in the Senate, the Senate is not likely to prove a very great check upon the work of the Commons. On the other hand, if either political party has a majority in the Commons while the opposition party has a majority in the Senate, the Senate may often times, from partisan feeling—because the members of that House are and must be possessed of partisan feeling as are the members of the Commons—become a nuisance and a mischief. Without taking time to repeat arguments that I have stated in this House twice already, I merely state in conclusion that, if this matter comes to a vote, I will vote in favour of the resolution.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER (Prime Minister). I have no doubt whatever, having had the pleasure of listening for the second time to my hon. friend from Lincoln and Niagara (Mr. Lancaster) upon this question, that he is very much in earnest and very sincere in the view which he has advocated. I cannot believe, however, that they are the views of the party to which he belongs, for if there is one thing more certain than another, it is that throughout the constitutional history of Canada the Conservative

party has always stood for a second chamber. There is no merit in this, I think; it is merely the maintenance of the tradition of the British constitution that it would be inadvisable to have legislation confined to a single chamber. I would invite the attention of my hon. friend to one most striking fact, and that is that the British constitution has spread throughout the world. It has been adopted, not only by the most highly civilized countries of Europe, but it is now being adopted by the nations of the orient as well. I do not say that these nations have adopted the British constitution in its entirety, but in two characteristic features, the first being ministerial responsibility—adopted even by the French republic—and the other a second Chamber. Does the hon. gentleman believe, in view of this universal testimony rendered to the excellence of the British constitution, that we who pride ourselves on being the banner colony of Britain should go back upon this principle of constitutional government? Does he believe, when the experience of centuries in the wisest country in the world, the wisest in its constitution—has taught the desirability of a second chamber, that a second chamber was absolutely necessary to the adoption of wise and satisfactory legislation, that it would be wise for us in Canada to suppress the second Chamber? It may be that the present action of the Senate is not satisfactory to my hon. friend (Mr. Lancaster). I can remember when the action of the Senate as it existed twenty years ago was not very satisfactory to me, for instance. My scruples are not the same to-day as they were then, and it may be that the time will come when my hon. friend will change his views on this point, and, the composition of the Senate being different, his objection may be removed. But he says that, as no satisfactory reform of the Senate is suggested, there is a general opinion that the condition of the Senate at the present time is not satisfactory and that all heartily desire a change. I agree that there has been a strong suggestion, made at different times and in different quarters, that we should have a reform of the Senate. But those who suggest not a reform of the Senate but its abolition are far less numerous. Canada is not the only country where exception may be taken to the action of a second Chamber. At the present time an election is going on in England upon action taken by the second Chamber. Without expressing an opinion—which, I think, would be very inopportune to say the least—it is clear that the action of the House of Lords is blamed by many, perhaps by the majority of the people of Great Britain, in fact that is the point before them. But whether the Unionists succeed or whether the present government succeed, there is no doubt