

tion of the House of Commons, we must see to it that the desire for the elimination of hereditary titles, or at least the feeling against the perpetuation of hereditary titles, has its necessary legislative action in this House.

Are the people right in their desire? I say they are. I say that hereditary titles are, first of all, undesirable socially; that they are undesirable politically, and that their perpetuation or increase in this country is a breach of faith with the men at the front. Why are they undesirable from the social standpoint? It is difficult for me to say anything new on this subject, because it has been treated in such an exhaustive and masterly way by the hon. member (Mr. Nickle), but let me say that hereditary titles lead to the caste system. I shall give an illustration. A friend of mine was once speaking about a very prominent banker in Montreal, the son of a baker who had gone into a bank in Scotland. He told me that if that boy had been born in England he never would have got into a bank, because the son of a baker in England, through the caste system, could not have been received in a bank. In Scotland, due very largely to the influence of the democratic Presbyterian Church, there is a more democratic feeling and the boy was admitted to a bank. He rose to the highest position in the Canadian banking world.

The caste system leads to snobbishness, and snobbishness leads to the caste system. Snobbishness is not one of the lesser evils; it is one of the greater evils. A young lady takes a trip to another land and she comes back after having acquired an accent that she forgets in a few years. This may be a matter of small moment, but it is more serious than that. Snobbishness often means extravagance. Snobbishness means contempt for and disrespect of parents. It means very often delay in marriage until the young folks can start where the old folks left off, and delay in marriage produces all sorts of social evils. But, I need not labour the point.

Is it not politically undesirable? I do not think we want to strengthen the House of Lords in England. I believe the people in England are not very fond of an hereditary House of Lords. They have been talking for years themselves of mending or ending the House of Lords. The members of that august body themselves have had plans under consideration for their own reform. We do not want to increase that power or to transfer power to the House of Lords and that is a sound idea on the part

of the Canadian people. Why? The members of the British aristocracy have done valiant service in this war. They have been as brave as the Scottish shepherds, as brave as the Dundee trawlers, as brave as the boys from the plains of Saskatchewan, as brave as our own lads from the counting houses and banks, but no braver, and we have the right to look at the question whether the House of Lords has been an influence making for progress in the Old Land or whether it has been against progress.

In 1906 the Liberal party in England, after having been in opposition for some years, came back into power and started a great era of reform—old age pensions, the Licensing Act, the Education Act, and reforms of that sort? What was the history of those measures? When those Acts, to give better living conditions to the poor people of Great Britain, came into the House of Lords they were defeated. When it was desired that a better education should be given to the children of British workingmen, the Education Act was defeated in the House of Lords. When the people wished to control the liquor traffic in the Old Land, when they wished to have local option, did you not hear the honourable gentleman who addressed this House before me state that a man was to receive a title on condition that he withdrew his support from the Licensing Bill? The Licensing Bill was thrown out by the House of Lords.

In order to effect great social reforms and to provide ships of war, Lloyd George brought in his great Budget of 1909, and that Budget came up in the House of Lords. It was thrown out by the House of Lords. They dared to oppose the constitution of Great Britain which had said for hundreds of years that the House of Lords must not reject a Bill dealing with money. They had a great election in January, 1910, at which time the British people reaffirmed their determination to deal with financial matters through the House of Commons alone. What I wish to impress upon the House this afternoon is that the House of Lords, in thus dealing with the Budget in 1909, and in dealing with these other reforms that I have just mentioned, was running true to form.

In spite of notable exceptions to the general rule, in spite of the individuals who have given great talents and great wealth to the furtherance of social progress, I make the declaration that every step in the direction of progress taken during the