

echo of the House. If the Senate is discharging the functions as originally intended, then it will do the duty which it was intended to do under our constitution. Now, if the Senate offers any opposition to the Bills of the House of Commons it is considered to be partisan. What was considered to be the duty of the Senate, with the founders of Confederation? I may be excused, Liberal as I am, if I accept the opinion of Sir John A. Macdonald, or Sir Alex. Campbell, or that of George Brown, but particularly of those two great Conservatives, and if I prefer their judgment as to what the Senate should be rather than the judgment of Mr. White or the right hon. Mr. Borden. Sir John Macdonald, speaking in the Legislative Assembly in 1865, when the Quebec resolutions were before the House, said:

There would be no use in an upper House if it did not exercise, when it thought proper, the right of opposing or amending or postponing the legislation of the Lower House.

That is what Sir John Macdonald thought of the Senate. It might delay, it might postpone, or amend.

It would be of no value whatever, if it were a mere chamber for registering the decrees of the lower House.

But what is wanted, now, is a Chamber that will register those decrees. Sir John Macdonald thought such a Chamber would be of no use. Whose opinion and judgment will hon. gentlemen accept? I stand, at this time, by the man called the 'Grand Old Man,' the 'Chieftain,' who seemed to have some appreciation of what was constitutional, and of what was constitutional practice. But in modern times men rise, come upon the stage, flit behind the footlights astonished at their own greatness, perhaps, who are disposed to legislate for us under modern conditions, and who have no appreciation of the functions of this Senate. Sir John went on to say of the Senate:—

—It must be an independent House, having a free action of its own, for it is only valuable as being a regulating body, calmly considering the legislation initiated by the popular branch, and preventing any hasty or ill-considered legislation which may have come from that body, but which will never set itself in opposition to the deliberate and understood wishes of the people.

We were to be independent, Sir John Macdonald thought. I am glad that he left that great legacy to this House. It is worth a great deal to the hon. members of this House to know that one of the Fathers of Confederation, and one whose right hand

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was ready and strong in drafting that constitution, thought the Senate should be independent. He says it should never set itself in opposition to the deliberate and understood wishes of the people. What are the understood wishes of the people on the Naval policy? We do not know. Hon. gentlemen are afraid to ask their opinion; or if not afraid, they do not do it anyway, and we must attribute their attitude to fear rather than to courage.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN—The majority was against it.

Hon. Sir GEORGE ROSS—Then let us see what Sir Alexander Campbell said, and he was for a long time Leader of the Senate:—

He did not think that a legislative Upper Chamber should bow to every breeze and constantly yield to every demand, and be content merely to reflect the temper and sentiment of the other branch.

Not content to reflect the temper and sentiment of so great a man as the Minister of Finance?

On the contrary, he held that when it had evidence sufficient to satisfy itself that the proposed measure was unjust, it was bound to resist, and public opinion, which generally came out right in the end, would sustain it in such an attitude.

We are ready to let public opinion sustain us. So said Sir Alexander Campbell, one of the founders of Confederation, one to whom every member of the House of Commons may well take off his hat, as Minister of Justice, as a great lawyer, as Lieutenant Governor in the province of Ontario, and as one whom we all delighted to honour. And what did Hon. George Brown say?—not a bad authority in some quarters; he used these words:—

The desire was to render the upper House a thoroughly independent body.

He was not afraid of public opinion; he was a Liberal; he was not afraid, whether the Senate was Tory or Reform, if it were an independent body:—

One that would be in the best position to canvass dispassionately the measures of this House, and stand up for the public interest in opposition to hasty or partisan legislation.

I do not know whether the Naval Bill was hasty; in fact my chief complaint against it, so far, is that it is not hasty enough. Mr. Borden proposed that the thing should be done speedily. Perhaps Mr. Brown would have censured the Government of the day for not proceeding with greater activity. Now, Mr. Wilmot, who was a distin-