

House; and there would be no justification for Canada's having any more.

One great advantage of this system would be that it would involve nothing revolutionary and would operate smoothly and gradually. When once set going, it would do away with, or at least diminish, the weaknesses of the existing system.

Almost from the inauguration of the proposed change, it would tend to lessen the timidity and increase the independence of the Senate in dealing with public affairs.

As each senatorial district would have a population nearly three times as great as that of the average House of Commons constituency, it might be reasonably expected that the members elected would be men of marked ability and high standing.

In old Canada, for some twenty years immediately preceding the union of 1867, the Members of the Legislative Council were elected by Districts, whereof there were twenty-four in Upper Canada and the same number in the Lower Province. The members elected were men of note and of more than ordinary capacity. In my humble opinion, the adoption of the nominative in preference to the elective method of appointment was a mistake.

It has been suggested that there should be an age fixed, on his attaining which the place of a Senator should become vacant. The number

of Members whose presence in the Chamber would be ended by such a provision would be small, and even where they took no very active part in the business of the House their membership would not be open to serious objection. The spectacle of a gentleman who had served the country faithfully for a score of years being driven from his sphere of usefulness would not be pleasing, even though the usefulness was not as great as it had been.

A serious objection to the holding of general elections for the Upper House, with the consequent change of its personnel, would be that the House would be liable to be swayed by party feeling or by the popular prejudice or panic of the day and would cease to be the check upon the Lower House that it is now.

Another objection is that it would put an end to the continuity and consistency of the Senate's line of action and would prevent that House exerting the conservative influence that it should.

The proposed reform is not dramatic or radical, and its advocacy would not be effective in an election campaign; but it would excite no hostility, would strengthen the popular element in Parliament, and if it wrought no great immediate change, would harmonize with the spirit of that constitution wherein "Freedom broadens slowly down".

