

upon which some Prince Edward Island question—the formation of a steamship company or something of the kind—when all the representatives of Prince Edward Island were against this measure, their friends in the Senate nobly came to their assistance and defeated the Bill. I do not know how far that illustration is of value, because the next night my hon. friend himself voted against a measure which the British Columbia senators desired, and the whole of the representation from British Columbia in the House of Commons desired. It did not seem to me that there was very much in an argument illustrated in that manner by the hon. gentleman himself. No doubt, however, there may be times when it is to the interests of a province to be represented in the Senate as such. That must be the reason why the senators are divided up according to provinces; but I observe that upon all questions which come before this body, senators divide according to their feelings, according to their party affiliations, or according to the views they may take upon the case in question. I can conceive of no question coming forward in the Senate itself in which the members of the Senate would desire to do what was unfair or unjust to a province. The member from Smith's Falls, with great vigour, told us that the imperial parliament would not think for a moment of breaking up the existing system inasmuch as there had been a solemn guarantee that the Senate was constituted as it is for the protection of the minority in some of the provinces. I think I am quite safe in saying from a review of the course of English history, that if the parliament of Canada sought to change the constitution of the Senate, the English parliament would listen to the request, and that the views which my hon. friend holds with regard to the rebuff which we would receive, are entirely unfounded. If the British government has learned one thing better than another it has learned that the best way to treat the colonies is to allow them to develop according to their own ideas. I imagine further that if the parliament of Canada decided a change was necessary it would not make that change in such a way as to adversely affect any particular province. It would have to be with the consent of the Senate and Commons

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of Canada and, under such circumstances, it is most probable that the imperial parliament would agree to it. The people are generally able to get what they really want, and if they wanted a change in this respect very badly they would be as likely to get it as anything else. I have before me a memo. of two or three ideas which I entertain as regards the constitution of the Senate. First I think that the Senate might be divided into three groups, one to be elected by members of the House of Commons, one by a joint vote of the House of Commons and the Senate, and one by the municipal councils and the local house. The hon. gentleman from Prince Edward Island (Hon. Mr. Robertson), in his remarks last night, made the observation, and several other gentlemen have made a somewhat similar suggestion, that there are too many elections. My hon. friend opposite me from Rockland (Hon. Mr. Edwards) at some time in his life believed—he does not say that he has got rid of the idea yet—that the public business could be done better by three commissioners. That might be the opinion of a man who is very strongly conservative in his mind, and who does not know it. To transfer to three commissioners the legislative authority of the people and the right to control and govern the people, would be simply to have three kings in a country where perhaps one is quite enough. It would do away with the whole idea of the authority and power of the people, and would lead, as it has done in the city of Washington—where the commission idea is carried out to the fullest extent—to a system which is not as good as the elective system, as existing in incorporated towns either in this country or on the other side of the line. I, therefore, favour election by the people. I do not think that we can do away with the necessity for elections; I do not think it is desirable to do so. The hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce put forward the view that the House of Commons, the elected representatives of the people, after two or three years lost touch with the people to a certain extent, and that the Senate might do the work of checking legislation until the time for another general election came round. I do not know whether the hon. gentleman seriously consider-