

which I think is the correct one. He also goes on to say :

Responsible government makes the Premier and his ministers responsible for the constitution of the committees and for the opinions and decisions that may emanate from them. A government that would constantly endeavour to shift its responsibilities on committees, even of its own selection, would soon disappear from the treasury benches.

The right hon. Prime Minister has taken the position in this House in regard to the invasion of the municipal rights of the people of Ontario that what had been done had been done by committees of the House and that the government were not responsible. I disagree with him there and I quote this authority to show that he is responsible as are the Liberal party in Toronto where the municipal rights of the people are being equally invaded by the local legislature. In both cases these governments are responsible and must assume the responsibility. Going on to another page I find that Sir John Bourinot very properly points out certain weaknesses that exist in our government, some cure for which ought to be found. He says :

The (Canadian) system has assuredly its drawbacks like all other systems of government that have been devised and worked out by the brain of man. Any one who has closely watched the evolution of this system for years past must admit that there is a dangerous tendency in the Dominion to give the executive—I mean the ministry as a body—too superior a control over the legislative authority. When a ministry has in its government the appointment not only of the heads of the executive government in the provinces, that is to say, of the lieutenant governors, who can be dismissed by the same power at any moment, but also of the members of the upper house of parliament itself, besides the judiciary and numerous collectorships and other valuable offices, it is quite obvious that the element of human ambition and selfishness has abundant room for operation on the floor of the legislature, and a bold and skillful cabinet is also able to wield a machinery very potent under a system of party government. The House of Commons may be made by skilful party management a mere recording or registering body of an able and determined cabinet. I see less liability to such silent though potent influences in a system which makes the president and the house of representatives to a large degree independent of each other, and leaves his important nominations to office under the control of the Senate, a body which has no analogy whatever with the relatively weak branch of the Canadian parliament essentially weak, while its membership depends on the government itself.

There is a clear declaration by our leading constitutional authority as to the weakness of parliament as we have it in this country, and as to the weakness of carrying on the public affairs of this country, when the First Minister and the party in power resort, as they have resorted,—and I am not discriminating between the two parties—to the appointment of members of the House to the Senate and to the use

of other influences by which the majority can weaken this House and increase the strength of the cabinet. I believe that the House is gradually giving its powers away to the cabinet in this country, a thing that it should not do. There is not sufficient independence in this House. There is not sufficient independence of the leaders, perhaps, on either side. There ought to be more independence, more respect for the powers of the House and less control by the government as pointed out by Dr. Bourinot. A dangerous condition of things has arisen in this country. The Senate has now a large majority appointed by the government. The government have lost no opportunity of interfering with the independence of this House. All these things are dangerous to the Canadian constitution and ought to have been avoided, and more especially they ought to have been avoided by men who profess to be Liberals and to live up to the old doctrine of responsible government. They are trying to get away from that doctrine. In the province of Ontario they are trying to put the responsibility on committees of the legislature, they are trying to evade responsibility and they are in this way allowing the municipal rights of the people to be taken away from them. An important question that is before the people to-day is the question of the rights of the people as against corporations, and if the Liberals in Ottawa do not intend to protect the rights of the people it will be disastrous to the best interests of the country. All we can see as the outcome of Liberal legislation at Toronto and also in this House is the distribution of the resources of the country among the rich corporations. Everything is given to them ; the people can get nothing. The people come to parliament and say that they want lower railway rates and that they want authority for the municipalities to undertake the management of certain public utilities. They cannot get the rights which they ask for while more money is being taken out of the treasury and handed over to private corporations. One hundred and fifty million dollars is to be given this session to the Grand Trunk Railway for a scheme presumably to solve the transportation problem but which does not solve it at all. The money is handed over, the corporations become more powerful and it is such corporations as these which have caused the degradation in public life on the other side of the line. It is not the tariff and the trusts that the Prime Minister says. It is the great corporations created by legislation to which are handed over the resources of the country.

And yet, no effort is being made in Canada to check that condition of affairs. We are rapidly passing to the same condition as that which obtains in the United States ; corporations control the legislature, they control the governments, they get everything they ask ; the people get nothing. More and