

SENATE REFORM STRONGLY URGED

South York Member Led Fight Against Continuance of Undemocratic Methods.

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able to crystallize into legislation the views of the public on the great questions of the day.

An Opportune Time. "Inasmuch as both parties in this country are on record from the platform in favor of senate reform, I say that now is the psychological moment for us to keep ourselves in good standing with the people we represent. I have advocated senate reform from the platform and have heard the same from the lips of the other party. I have read the platforms of both parties in this country setting out that they were in favor of senate reform, and therefore I say that this is the psychological moment for us to make good the pledges and statements that have been made by both parties in favor of senate reform."

Revision of Constitution. Speaking on the introduction of the bill, Mr. Laurier said: "We have heard from the right hon. gentlemen representing the Conservative party and the Liberal party in this country on the matter of the revision of the constitution in so far as the senate of Canada is concerned. To my mind, however, they have not expressed the views of the plain people of this country, the democratic spirit of this country, in regard to the senate. I believe that it is the opinion of the country that it is the opinion of the country to consider, as it does in its resolution, the constitution of the senate, that they should consider more than the question of the number of members. They should consider the actual constitution of the house and the manner in which the members are selected. Especially in the matter of regard to this section containing the resolution which says: 'In case of such addition being at any time made, the governor-general shall not summon any person to this senate.'"

An Undemocratic Body. "The people in this country are of opinion that the senate should not be summoned, but like the commons, should be a body responsible to the people in some way, and that its members should not be summoned to it by the governor-general and his council. In other words, the senate should be responsible to the people, their terms of office should be limited and the chamber should be more democratic. It is neither, it is not democratic and it is not responsible. These men are appointed for life; they are irresponsible and absolutely out of harmony with the democratic institutions of the country and with the British constitution generally as it is today."

Reform in Britain. "The greatest progressive move under the British constitutional rule today is the Parliament Act, which was recently passed in England. What is the object of the Parliament Act? It was to do away with undue influence, and to do away with that irresponsible body known as the house of lords. The Parliament Act took away the veto power from that irresponsible body. It has limited its power that if the house, voicing their views through the people of commons in three succeeding sessions, declare in favor of a measure, that measure becomes law, irrespective of the veto of the lords. What the mother country has done, we in this democratic country ought to do, and we do not propose to consider Canada a body which is irresponsible, which is not democratic, and which is appointed for life and appointed by whoever happens to be the governor in council for the time being."

Fight Against Privilege. "The great question in England today—and all England is ringing with the struggle there—is not so much home rule, it is not the coercion of Ulster, but the great principle whether the people shall rule or whether the voice of the people shall be strangled by an irresponsible body like the house of lords. Therefore, the people in England have this greater and wider issue even than home rule, I do not want to see any coercion of Ulster, but I do want to see the people of England win out on the principle of responsible parliamentary rule, and at the same time have it maintained. It is sometimes said that we are coercing Ulster. That is not the great issue in Great Britain. It is the maintenance of the Parliament Act, the maintenance of democratic rule, and the principle of having everybody who has any voice in the control of legislation responsible to somebody, or if they are not responsible, their acts should be incapable of being overridden by those who are not responsible to the people. They have accomplished that in England today, and the hereditary house of lords has been deprived of its veto on the public opinion of England as expressed by the house of commons."

No Word of Protest. "We in Canada, after forty-six years experience of the B. N. A. Act, are going to further aggravate this condition of affairs, and not one word of protest is being made. I have declared in this house on several occasions, and that time has on several occasions come, when there should be constitutional revision in this country in the direction of improving the B. N. A. Act, and above all, giving us the democratic responsible government. But no protest is being heard in that respect, although we have had experience in this house on different occasions when we had thought the popular will has been overridden by the senate."

Parliament Overridden. "I believe in a double chamber system if we have both chambers responsible like we are ourselves, I am inclined to believe, and I do believe, the people of Canada are in favor of abolition of the senate." Mr. Speaker: "I am afraid the hon. gentleman is traveling far afield from the resolution before the house." Mr. W. F. Maclean: "But Mr. Speaker, in the resolution before us we raise the whole question of the constitution of the senate. I quoted the words, namely, that we are maintaining the appointive system. I absolutely disagree with that, and I wish to take an illustration from current history. I may refer to a question which the senate already has dealt with contrary to the wish of the people. The question of the defence of the British Empire, and which is the great ques-

tion to all of us. The British Empire of today was threatened by attack by a great empire which has an autocratic war lord in control of it, who can make war whenever he wants to. "In England we have brought about democratic rule, so that no autocratic chamber can override the popular judgment. Germany will get a similar form of government. There will be less autocratic government in Germany, less of the war lord, the common people of Germany will gain greater influence and we will have made another step in the direction of the peace of Europe. I object to the continuation in this country of an irresponsible body holding office for life, having an equality of say with the people. It is not democratic, it is not American, it is not Canadian, it is not British, it is not progressive, and the people will stop it in a very short time if there is not a change."

Would Hold Convention. Mr. Laurier: "What change would you propose?" Mr. W. F. Maclean: "I would have a constitutional convention and would meet representatives of the provinces. I would consider this question. There was a convention at Charlotte Town some years ago. We could have the same thing again and we could easily find a way. Constitutional revision is not an impossible thing. We have such confidence in the imperial parliament in submitting this address here today, that we know they will do what we ask."

Progressive Spirit in U. S. Mr. Laurier: "What would you propose to do with this convention?" Mr. Maclean: "I would propose a revision of the constitution on this specific point, a discussion of the revision of the constitution in the direction of abolishing what is contained in the act—the appointment of the members of the senate by the governor, the council, and the governor having power to summon the senate instead of the people of this country, as is going on in the United States."

Public Must Rule. Mr. Laurier: "Hear, hear." Mr. Maclean: "Public opinion must rule in this country. In my opinion the people of this country want to have an absolute say in the constitution of our senate. The right hon. leader of the opposition, in criticizing this last clause, said that he did not like it because it dealt with the representation of this house, and for the first time in its history this house of commons, responsible to the people of Canada, is by this clause to be committed to an irresponsible senate. We have gloried here today this idea of an irresponsible senate, and it is now proposed that we should cut our cloth by that. I do not like it and it is my determination unless I hear further from the people of this country, to oppose every increase in senate representation until that body becomes responsible to the people of this country and I believe that is what the people of this country think today."

Favors Second Chamber. "I am in favor of a second chamber if it is responsible to the people. There is great work for a senate to do in this country; there are a great number of questions they could deal with, but it is because they are not in touch with public opinion they do not do as much

responsible government to the fullest extent even yet, and never will have so long as there is an irresponsible appointment for life senators on the staff of the government. Mr. Sam Sharpe: "I desire to endorse in its entirety the remarks of the hon. member for South York. In my opinion he is expressing the sentiments of a great majority of the people of this country. Senate reform has always been a live question with the party out of office, but not so live when the party gets into power. "In 1892 senate reform was part of the Liberal platform, and I think they prepared a resolution whereby a joint committee should be appointed to consider the method by which the senate should be reformed and made responsible to public opinion. In my opinion both parties are pledged up to the hilt to reform the senate in some way or other."

Farmers' Bank Case. "We have an example only a few days ago in connection with the Farmers' Bank, showing that the senate does not represent public opinion in this country. All respect to the senate, supposed to be responsible to public opinion, voted against this government from fresh from the country. The government, supposed to represent public opinion in this country, brought down a measure to provide relief for the depositors of the Farmers' Bank. When the bill got to the senate these four new appointees discharged their functions in a manner not at all satisfactory to the people of this country or to the government in power. In my opinion, this country is looking for some method of senate reform rather than increasing the number of senators, which will only add to the difficulty of reforming the senate. I desire to go on record that the senate should be abolished in its entirety, or be amended so as to make it responsible to public opinion. It has demonstrated time and again that it is the bulwark of privilege and the big interests, and not a democratic institution. All democratic reforms are getting away from the predominant influence of the privileged classes. The mother of parliaments has amended the house of lords so that it cannot threaten the will of the people."

Defenders of Privilege. Mr. Clark: "How does the hon. gentleman make out that the senate is out of harmony with public opinion? On the several questions which have brought this government to its way of thinking. Mr. Sam Sharpe: "I never knew the senate responsible to public opinion. Mr. Clark: "I can give my hon. friend an example. In one instance they may have shown evidence of sanity, but in nearly every case they have shown that they are not responsible to public opinion. They have shown continually that they are the bulwark of the privileged classes. Both parties are to blame in respect to the appointments to the senate. Appointments are made simply to suit certain interests and certain sections of the country. I venture to say that 95 per cent of the men appointed to the senate couldn't be elected if they appealed to the electors for public support. This time both parties are a unit. Our own party was committed to senate reform and it is time the question was taken up. Senate reform is a live question today than it ever was before and I trust the government will seriously address itself to the question of senate reform."

Preux for Reform. Mr. Froulx, who seconded Mr. Maclean's amendment, said the senate should be an elective body. Both parties had been thinking for a long time that there should be a reform in the constitution, but nothing had been done so far. He thought that appointments to the senate should be only for about eight or ten years. There had been proposed an age limit, like the county court judgeship. He pointed out that in Australia and South Africa the senators were elective bodies. He considered that the avoidance of deadlocks could not occur in elective bodies was an excellent argument in favor of his contention. Oliver Opposed. Hon. Frank Oliver opposed the pro-

posal to make the senate an elective chamber. He said it would be a long time yet before the last word had been heard regarding the best method of representative government. He opposed an elective senate because he considered it was not the best method of getting effective legislation. If it was to be elective, it would be far better to have only one chamber. When senators were appointed they had been absolutely independent of any outside influence. He considered this a good argument against the age limit. "The fact that it was not elective, and that the men were appointed for life gave the senate that spirit of independence which was its chief value. Not Probable, Said Premier. Premier Borden said it was not a practicable motion at the present time. It would not be wise, he said, to ask the imperial parliament to work out

a change in the Canadian senate for the Canadian people. The senate constitution had been much criticized but so also has been the manner of election to the commons. The United States and Australia had an elective senate and the result had been that the senate often proved a more powerful body than the lower house. It was probable, however, he assured the house that in a few years a proposal would be placed before the house to reform the upper chamber, but for Canada the time to solve the problem was not yet reached, and in the meantime it was only proper that the western provinces should have their proper representation in the senate. Laurier Sympathetic. Sir Wilfrid Laurier while sympathetic towards the amendment of Mr. Maclean, also agreed that it was too late in the session to take up such a question. He said there was some force in the remarks made by the opposition, but that the constitution had not met with the same degree of success as other parts of the confederation. Both parties were committed to senate reform, which would be suitable to the majority either on one side or the other. It would be vain to ask the imperial parliament to be wiser than ourselves. Sir Wilfrid said it had not been the intention of the framers of the constitution that senate appointments should be made merely on party lines, so as to result in political differences between the two bodies of parliament. If it were possible to obtain a system which would prevent appointments being made exclusively on party lines they would probably get what was wanted. Favors Age Limit. Mr. Turgeon of Gloucester declared himself in favor of keeping the senate in its present form because he considered it provided the best protection possible for minorities. Asked his opinion as to the age limit Mr. Maclean said that while he had every respect for age, he objected strongly to the fact that there was no age limit to the senate. He thought that power in any case should be given to limit the age of the senators. Sir Wilfrid expressed entire acquiescence with the view of Mr. Maclean with regard to the age limit.

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FOSTER LIKELY TO GET NOMINATION Riverdale Riding Conservatives Will Hold Convention on Monday.

RUSSELL ALSO NAMED Political Prophets, However, Think Former Independent Will Withdraw.

Following the action of the Central Conservative Association in officially casting off Charles J. Doughty, the Conservatives of the Riverdale riding will hold their second convention on Monday night when they will select another candidate to represent them in the coming elections. A prominent Conservative of the Midway stated that the names of Joseph Russell and ex-controller Thomas Foster will be placed before the convention but that in all likelihood Mr. Foster would be given the nomination without a vote.



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The Nipissing Mines report can on hand amounting to \$865,315, bullion in transit \$250,140, ore and bullion on hand \$250,410. There is a rumor that the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company will issue a balance of its stock as a bonus to the shareholders. W. D. Mathews, president, says he has not heard of it. An issue of \$4,250,000 Canadian Northern one-year bills is being negotiated in London.

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BODY OF MRS. DODD ARRIVES IN TORONTO. Exactly five weeks from the day she was married, the body of Mrs. Capt. Edward Dodd, sub-editor of The War Cry, who, with her husband, went down with the Empress of Ireland, was brought to Toronto last night. She was 27 years of age. Identification was made by Mrs. Dodd's maiden name, "Houston," on her night attire. The funeral will take place this afternoon from Miles' undertaking establishment to Mount Pleasant Cemetery. Interment will be made in the Salvation Army plot, where the bodies of the other victims were buried last Saturday.

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