

contended, it might possibly be conceded to this extent. Lastly, we might have members elected by the people or Local Legislatures. There were objections to this scheme which had been very naturally urged. Most gentlemen in the House would agree that it would be a desirable thing to lessen rather than to increase the number of Senators. Under the scheme he had mentioned it was possible that an increase of members might be necessary, and if that were the result it would be a grave objection to its acceptance. There remained then this scheme—that of election by the Local Legislatures, a scheme to which his hon. friend from Bothwell had pledged himself, and which appeared to him (Mr. Moss) most likely under our actual circumstances to work satisfactorily. It had the great advantage of being strictly in accordance with the Federal theory upon which our system was based. No man who had listened to the arguments of his hon. friend would dispute that the theory upon which our Constitution was framed was that the Provinces should exercise certain legislative, judicial and executive rights. No one who had heard him would dispute that it was part of our system of federation that the Senate should be constituted so as to afford to the Provinces a guarantee against the infringement of their rights by the central authority. If that idea were carried into practice, it must be by allowing the various Local Legislatures to send to the Senate men whom they chose to represent their Provinces. However able a Premier of the Dominion might be, however watchful he might be, he was not and could not be so well fitted to select for the Senate men who could fairly and properly represent the various Provinces as the Legislatures of those Provinces. He (Mr. Moss) was well aware of the objections made to this system. He had frequently heard it said that the moment this power was given to Local Legislatures it was in effect given over into the hands of the Premier of that Province, who would name his man, and the majority supporting him would rise up at his bidding and vote. It was said there would be no freedom of choice under that system any more than there was under the present—that the power of nominating would merely be transferred

from the hands of the Premier of the Dominion into the hands of the Premiers of the Provinces. It was said, again, by those who were ready to give credit to the Legislatures for some independence of action, but still opposed transferring to them the power of electing the Federal Senators, that they would be so influenced by party and sectional feelings that it would be impossible to rely upon good men being chosen, that the majority would return men of their own political stripe, without regard to their ability or experience. There was force in the objection, and it had been pressed upon him on several occasions since last he had the honor of addressing the House. Some gentlemen regarded it as a fatal objection, but he took another view of it entirely. He held there was a simple and easy expedient for removing that difficulty—an expedient known to every member of the House, and one that had been resorted to upon a very memorable occasion in the history of Canada—an expedient which would ensure the minority of the Legislature a fair representation in the Senate. That expedient was the one resorted to in this House on the occasion of choosing a committee to investigate certain grave charges against Ministers of the Crown, and but for it no one could expect that the hon. member for South Bruce and the hon. member for Napierville should have been chosen as two out of the five who composed that committee. This mode was perfectly adaptable to the choice of Senators by the Local Legislature. Suppose, as an example, that New Brunswick had to send five Senators, and the Local Legislature had the choice, the majority upon this principle might send three and the minority two. It would thus be seen that there was no foundation for the argument that the election would be in the hands of the majority.

Mr. BOWELL.—Suppose that only one Senator were to be chosen.

Mr. MOSS said he knew that in that event they could only have an election by the majority, but that would only occur in the case of a vacancy by death or resignation. However, he would just as soon, considering all the circumstances, leave the choice to the majority of the Local Legislature in any of the Provinces as to the gentleman who might happen to be Premier of the Dominion. The