

but my observation, and I have given some attention to the work done by those hon. gentlemen points in an entirely different direction. It was said by a gentleman who, when appointed to the Senate found himself among gentlemen very much his senior in years, that he expected to be with those who lived two or three generations ago, but to his surprise he found himself with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when he took his seat in that Chamber. There was an objection taken by the hon. member for St. John last year which I think it will be well to notice—viz. ;—that Parliament had no right to alter the constitution without the consent of the Local Legislatures. Now, sir, I think we are not to forget that we have in our British North America Act two sets of constitutions. We have the constitution of the Federal Government and the constitutions of the various Local Legislatures. I do not think it would be a proper thing for this House to amend the constitution of any of the Provinces. I think these constitutions are under the purview of the several Local Governments, but at the same time we are the best judges of our constitution here. I think so long as we do not diminish the powers of the Local Legislatures we may, without consulting them, undertake to change the instrument under which we are here legislating. I propose this resolution now, and when the House is in Committee, I will propose a series of resolutions with regard to carrying it into effect. With reference to the schemes I have before enunciated in this House, I think the best way to elect our Senate is to elect them in the Local Legislatures. I believe by increasing their powers and influence you will hold out greater inducements to able men to go into these Local Legislatures. It certainly cannot be to the interest of this country to diminish the importance of those Legislatures or to make them less attractive to men of standing and ability. We are exercising the powers of Government over a very large extent of territory, and there is no visible emblem of our authority in the remote parts of our country. If there is dissatisfaction on the part of any Local Government or Legislature, if the people of any Province become discontented with the policy pursued by the National Government and Parliament, the Local Legis-

lature and Local Government become the rallying point towards which the disaffected portion of the population gathers. It is of very great consequence, exercising as we do a governmental authority over a vast extent of territory, that we should give to the Local Governments and Legislatures an interest in the maintenance of national authority. You do this to a very considerable extent when you confer upon those Local Governments the power of electing one branch of the Legislature. The English system of government has been defined by a modern writer as an unworkable form of government, made workable by a constant threat of revolution. No important measure has been submitted to the House of Commons that has not been rejected by the House of Lords and continued to be rejected until the public mind became so excited that further rejection was dangerous. Now, I think that every one will admit that is a defect, and I think no one will maintain that a defect of that sort is desirable to copy in this country. We have that defect under our present system in an aggravated form. We have a second Chamber that has no possible connection with the people of this country, that is in no way responsible to the people of this country, and that may, at the same time, set itself up in opposition to the Government and House of Commons without any possibility of bringing it into harmony with the other branch of the Legislature. I shall not further trespass upon the attention of this House. I ask the support of the House to this proposition with a view to removing a useless and rotten institution from our system, and with a view to establishing one more in harmony with the genius of our constitution and more in keeping with the spirit of the age.

Mr. PALMER desired to state certain preliminary objections to this resolution, which he thought should first be settled before adopting or rejecting the resolution. He did not think it expedient to condemn a portion of this legislature until a mode was discovered for effecting what was desired. This resolution proposed to ask the Imperial Parliament to pass an Act to wipe out the Senate and in lieu of that, to make the Senate elective by the Local Legislatures. As a member representing a county in one of the smaller Provinces, he objected to this proposition. It would