

tion which they were then establishing, by other sections they took away the necessity for that House of Lords, or Senate, in this country as an obstacle to hasty legislation between the King and the people. By the constitution we are under, the British North America Act, every Bill that passes this House and passes the Senate to-day—and it would be the same if we had no Senate in this country under the amended constitution I am suggesting—such Bill, though it has passed both Houses of this parliament, can have no effect if the King in Council in Great Britain sees fit to disallow it within two years. So there would be no wrench in our constitution if that was done. This is provided for in our constitution by sections 55, 56 and 57 of the British North America Act, that, whether we have a Senate or have not, if there is any hasty legislation passed by this parliament, either by both Chambers, or by this House of Commons alone if the Senate were abolished, if that legislation involved any serious question of the rights of the people, those rights would not be interfered with to any extent worth speaking of, because those who felt aggrieved might go before the King in Great Britain and ask him to veto that legislation. So it is not true to say that our Senate stands in the place of the House of Lords in Great Britain; because the House of Lords in Great Britain is the only guard between the commoners and the King; and if in Great Britain a Bill is passed and becomes law, if both the Commons and the House of Lords assent to it, it seems to me that the King would have to abdicate unless he also gave his assent to that legislation. But in this country, if the Senate were removed, and the House of Commons alone passes legislation to which His Excellency the Governor General gives his sanction, he has only that limited power of attorney, so to speak, given him from Great Britain he does not stand in the place of the King, he only consents to that Bill for the King, and after he has consented, by these sections I have quoted, that legislation does not become operative in Canada if the home government for any reason sees fit to disallow it within two years. So you have the King represented here by the limited authority to the Governor General, who has not the absolute authority of the King in Great Britain. And so to-day we have two checks on any hasty legislation in this country, the one in the Senate of Canada, and after they have consented, the other authority in Great Britain composed of the King's cabinet in council. Therefore, when hon. gentlemen hesitate to vote for the total abolition of the Senate in Canada because they feel there should be some institution interposed between what might be radical legislation and finality, and when they oppose this motion for that reason they oppose it

Mr. LANCASTER.

without a correct knowledge of the facts. If we did pass legislation which might be thought to be too radical, or to require to be submitted to a cooling process, or which interfered with rights which were not properly looked after in this House, if those rights were interfered with to any extent, an appeal could be taken to Great Britain and within two years that legislation would be amended, or disallowed, and that without any wrench to the constitution. I am not advocating that that should be tried; I am simply stating what has been the constitution and the practice since 1867. There has always been that protection, and for that reason we do not need the Senate to do less effectively what can be done in the way that I have just indicated.

Let me speak for a minute as to the condition of the people of this country educationally as compared with that of 1867. I may say that with the comparatively low state of education that existed among the masses in 1867 as compared with that which exists now, there might have been some necessity of having learned, college-bred or educated people to control what might be done by some ignorant people who had been elected to parliament. But, what is the condition that we find to-day? Is there not a vast difference to-day? Is not the difference almost indescribable in regard to the state of education as between what it was in 1867 and what it is to-day? Have not the educated people of our country taken good care to see that men are not elected to this House unless they are fully competent to deal with public matters in all their different aspects? Let any hon. gentleman bring a Bill into this House to-morrow that is going to interfere with any corporation's rights on one side as against the rights of the ordinary common people on the other; you will have any number of gentlemen in this House ready to defend the rights of any corporation affected by legislation introduced here and to insist that the Bill must go to a select committee so that their rights may be dealt with and carefully protected. Are they not carefully protected in every piece of legislation that comes before this House. I am not saying that hon. gentlemen are not doing right in taking this course. It is their duty to do it. I would do it myself if some one else was not doing it. We do see to it that all interests, whether they be those of the poorest and humblest or those of the richest, most aristocratic and most powerful, as far as wealth can make them powerful, are fully protected by the legislation that comes before this House. I do not think that any cabinet would last for a year that did not, before they brought down government legislation, consider how it would affect different classes of people. So I say that in the beginning of the twentieth century there