

the Conservative party were in power the Liberal press and the Liberal public men stirred up a very strong feeling of opposition to the Senate, mainly on account of its acquiescence in the measures of the government of the day and of its very strong party complexion.

What I am endeavouring to do by reading the extracts is to show that the conditions complained of now existed before. But while the hon. gentleman from Smith's Falls was satisfied with existing conditions, it must be remembered the Reform party declared against the condition of the Senate in 1893. I think my hon. friend was at that conference. I think we were all of the opinion in those days that a change in the Senate was advisable. I had selected some other remarks made by the hon. gentleman from Marshfield, showing strongly that in his mind there is a consciousness that the Senate itself during its whole period discharged its duty as it should and, while with considerable ingenuity and ability he endeavoured to make it appear we are worse now than before, yet I think the fair reading of the hon. gentleman's remarks would be that the Senate has not responded to the idea with which it was created, and that the general system of nominating senators has failed. That, I think, can be fairly drawn from his remarks. I desire to make one further reference. My hon. friend from North Wellington, in the course of his observations as against electing members of the Senate, pointed out that in the United States, in some state in which he had been visiting there had been an election every day of the month, or quite a period of time with regard to the election of senators; that day by day under the law passed by the Senate in order to get state legislators to elect senators, there was a constant ballot with no result. That seems to be a very vicious system. But the same state of things prevail in this country, not in the system but in the fact that the Senate vacancies are not filled when they occur. It has been the case of this government, as of other governments, that the vacancies are not filled up as they should be the moment they occurred, and that is calculated to create an impression in the public mind that the Senate is not really needed, not as fully adapted to the public welfare as the senators themselves think it should be. I would strongly urge on the government

Hon. Mr. ELLIS.

that, while the present system remains, there should not be thrown at us the same thing that the hon. member from Wellington brought up, that the senatorial vacancies in the United States remained unfilled by reason of their vicious system, when the same system exists here to-day. I think further with regard to the senators who compose the House at present—and I do not like to say it just in that way—but the senators who sit a long time in parliament, and when the government has been some time in power and is quite strong, the senators themselves on the opposition as well as on the government side, not having any mandate from the people, not being responsible, not having to answer to any person for their sins in omission or commission, fall into a routine habit and there grows in the Senate a system by which the legislative business is done, not with a disregard to the public business, but there is not the effort on the part of the Senate to square itself with the public mind or make itself an intellectual force in the country. The Senate gives careful attention, as far as I have seen, to all the Bills that come before it in the committee. The work done there, I quite agree, is well and faithfully done, but, at the same time, there is no difference whatever between the senators so far as they are members of the Senate. I think they both get into the same habit and mode of carrying on political work, and whether they are in opposition or whether they are not, the facile and matter-of-fact conditions which exist are due to the fact that they are a nominative body and are here for life. There is an old remark which everybody knows that Providence fights on the side of the strongest battalions and so Providence fights on the side of ideas. There are just as able men in the Senate of Canada to-day as there were at any time in the history of the country. Great occasions make great men, and in the early days of the country there were many matters arising which brought out the strength of great men, but there is no reason whatever to believe, if an emergency of any kind arose in this country, that the Senate would not be able to provide as many able men as the country demanded. I have before me now the remark of Mr. Mill to which I referred before: