

minion. Then why, as a body, has not the Senate the confidence of the people of Canada? I challenge any hon. member of this House to assert that the Senate has the confidence of the people of this country as a legislative body to-day, although individually they have. Now, why is this? The answer is easily found. The senators represent a party, and not the people. They owe allegiance, or think they do, to the Government and party that appoints them, and not allegiance and responsibility to the people who should elect them. Look at our history since Confederation, and see what the Senate has done in notable instances, and the influence its acts have had on the public mind. The first notable instance of the Senate running counter to the action of the House of Commons, so far as I recollect, was when the Government led by the Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier passed the Yukon Railway Act, for the building of a railway into the Yukon district.

At that time the Senate of Canada was strongly Conservative. They threw out that Bill. Was there a man belonging to the Liberal Party throughout the length and breadth of Canada who believed, or at any rate expressed himself as believing, that the Senate threw out that Bill on public grounds? On the contrary, every one of them believed that it was because the Bill was introduced and carried by a Liberal Government and that the Conservative party did not want the Liberal Government to have the credit of passing a Bill of that kind. That is, every Liberal believed that the Senate acted as it did solely and wholly for partisan reasons. I am not saying that the Senate was governed in this matter by partisan considerations, but that all Liberals, and also many Conservatives, believed that it was so governed. It was stated by many, even before the Bill reached the Senate, that it would be defeated in that House.

Coming down to a later date, we find that this Government, I think it was in 1912, passed a Bill through this House called the Naval Aid Bill. That was a measure dear to the hearts of the members of the Government. No doubt they thought it in the interests of the people and believed that it would receive public support if the people had an opportunity to vote upon it. I have no doubt of their sincerity in presenting this Bill to the House and urging its adoption. Had the Senate been Conservative, the Bill would have gone through that House; but the Senate was Liberal,

and the Bill was rejected, or at least it was so amended as to be absolutely unacceptable to the Government. I am not saying, and no man can fairly say, that the Bill was defeated in the Senate for any other reason than the patriotic regard for the public interest that should inspire the members of the Senate in their public conduct. But, did the people generally believe that? No. The people generally believed, and said, that that Bill was rejected by the Senate for partisan purposes. That is what the Conservatives said, and that is what many Liberals said. Whether that is true or not it is not necessary to the consideration of the point I am now discussing to take into account.

Another Bill passed by the present Government in the same session, was a Bill in aid of the construction of good roads. I voted against that Bill, or at least against the sixth and last clause of it, and I did so because I thought it should not become law. I voted against the Naval Aid Bill for the same reason, and voted conscientiously as I thought to be my duty as a public man and representative of the people. I have no doubt that the people had the same view of the matter as I had. But you cannot convince the people that when the Senate defeated that Bill it did so on public grounds. They simply say that, when the Senate is Liberal, it will support Liberal legislation and reject Conservative legislation, and when the Senate is Conservative it will support Conservative legislation and reject Liberal legislation. Now, I ask you in all sincerity and in all candor, is that a condition of affairs which makes for the best government of Canada? It is not a question whether or not the Senate on these different occasions has been right or whether it has been wrong, the question is as to the feeling of confidence that the people ought to have in our system of government. I say that the people of Canada have not to-day, and have not had for many years, confidence in the Senate as a body to regulate our legislation. If that be so then, I submit, it is time we had a change in the system of selecting Senators, so that the Senate might be more in harmony with public sentiment.

We have precedents regarding the selecting of members of an Upper House. When Upper and Lower Canada were united in 1841, two Chambers were provided, a Legislative Assembly and a Legislative Council. This was shortly after the Mackenzie Rebellion in Upper Canada and the Papineau