

people? Why not take time and maturely consider it? Why not submit it to the verdict of those who have to pay its cost, and if they accept it, let them bear the consequences. (Hear, hear.) With regard to the constitution of the Upper House of the proposed General Legislature, a good deal has been said, but I think the main point has too often been lost sight of. The course of the debate upon these resolutions has seemed to run in some instances as though we regarded a membership of this branch of the Legislature a position which we ought to occupy by right, as though we had some sort of a constitutional right to remain here, and as though governments and parliamentary bodies were instituted by the people, not for the benefit of the community, but for the advancement of those who compose them. We would seem to have overlooked a fundamental principle of all free governments, that governments should be carried on for the good of the governed; and the principle of responsible government, according to which government must be carried on according to the well-understood wishes of the people.

HON. MR. MCCREA—As expressed by their representatives.

HON. MR. REESOR—As expressed, my honorable friend says, by their representatives. Very well; we must remember that those who constitute the Government of this country have brought down here a very curious scheme, and have held out to you the inducement that if you support it you have a chance of being appointed for life to the seat you occupy; and there is thus a probability of your being blinded to what you owe to the people, of your ignoring the constituencies that sent you here, and of your forgetting the duty you owe to the country. Now, I hold with regard to the elective principle in this House, that the oftener a man is brought in contact with the people in a legitimate way, to learn their wishes as constitutionally and properly expressed, the more likely he is to use his influence and talent in conducting the government in such a manner as to secure the happiness and prosperity of the country. (Hear, hear.) It is said that, as you have a responsible government, the Government of the day will be held responsible to the people, through their representatives in the lower branch of the Legislature for the appointments, it may make to this House. Admitting this to be the case, we know what the tendency is in England, and what it was in this country when the Government

had the appointment of the members of the Legislative Council; the effect will be to find a place in this House for men distinguished for the aid they have given at elections to certain men or parties, and not as a reward of true merit or legislative ability. Furthermore, if this House is to be of any value at all, it is as affording a wholesome check over hasty and unwise legislation. But if you place the whole legislation of the country in the hands of a single man or body, I care not whether it is democratic or aristocratic in its tendencies, a power like that in the hands of the Executive to create the Legislative Council is a dangerous one. Unrestrained or unchecked action by a single elected body of the most democratic character is apt to go astray if they feel they have only themselves to consult. This is what is proposed to be done under this scheme; but let this House be elected, as before, by the people; let them be returned for a period of eight years as at present, or even longer if desired, and then, if there is a demand for legislation of a selfish or ill-considered character—a demand which, founded on ignorance or passion, is likely to right itself after the lapse of a few years—the members of this House would take the responsibility upon themselves of rejecting it, and public opinion would eventually sustain them and acknowledge that they have done some service to the country. But inasmuch as you appoint these members for life, you have no check over them, nor are they so likely to check legislation of an immature and ill-considered character. While the Ministry of the day which appoints them remains in power, it will expect and receive a cordial support from them; but let it be defeated, and a ministry, formed out of the opposite party, obtain office, there will certainly be difficulty—there will be a tendency to dead-locks between the two branches of the legislature, and a repetition of those scenes which were witnessed in this country some years ago, and which formed one of the principal causes that brought about the rebellion of 1837. Honorable gentlemen say that we will have the power to remedy those defects in the scheme if they are found to be injurious in their action, but it is well known from the experience of the past that no power can be brought to bear to bring about any change that may be required, without a great deal of agitation and labor. What has been the agitation to secure a change in the representation of the two sections of Canada in Parliament? It has been going on for ten or twelve years,