

Although it may be a reflection beneath contempt, I desire to say that, so far as my individual opinions are concerned in reference to the trunks, they are precisely in accord with the action taken by the House of Commons and my fellow committeemen, although it is unusual to refer to the proceedings of committees, would justify the statement which I make. More than that, in the sub-committee, of which I am a member, we carried the motion to do away with the stationery, restricting the distribution to that which is required in the Senate. It may be advisable on the part of newspapers to attribute to the senators motives of that kind, but I am inclined to think that those who could conceive an idea of that kind must be actuated more by what they would do themselves than what they attribute to other people. I repudiate the statement on behalf of myself individually, because my name is given in the newspapers as having made the motion, and on behalf of the Senate. I am sure that 79 out of the 80 senators here were not aware of the action which had been taken by the House of Commons when the debate took place in this House, and when I made the motion.

Hon. Mr. McCLELAN—-I am very glad to be able to confirm the remarks made by the hon. leader of the opposition, and to say that I aided him in his efforts in that committee, on the occasion to which he refers, to economize with regard to the stationery, although the general committee did not concur in our report. I am glad to know that, the representatives in another place, having heard what our efforts were, followed the same course, and that a very large saving will be effected.

Hon. Mr. POWER—It seems to me that this discussion is slightly irregular, but I for one do not claim any superior virtue. I was a member of that sub-committee, and I did not agree with the hon. leader of the opposition and my hon. friend from Hopewell. Since the proceedings of the committee have been discussed here, we may as well say a little more about it. I said at the time that I was confident the general committee would not adopt that portion of the report of the sub-committee. It is very easy to acquire a reputation for being virtuous by proposing something which is safe not to be carried. That was the view I took of it.

Hon. Mr. McCLELAN—See what an influence it had.

Hon. Mr. POWER—I do not think it had any influence with the House of Commons at all. The public accounts show that the Senate has not been more extravagant in the matter of stationery than the House of Commons. The manner in which we spend the money appropriated for stationery is our own concern, and I am satisfied that if the members of the House of Commons do not take their allowance in the same way as the members of this House do, they will take twice as much in other ways, and at the end of the session it will be found that no money has been saved by the resolution they passed.

Hon. Mr. MACDONALD (B.C.)—You hit the nail on the head that time.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—The hon. gentleman is just as unfair in his imputation that we are assuming a virtue, in the course that we pursued in the sub-committee, as the newspaper reporters were in the statements they made. While we are not all of the boldly selfish character of the hon. gentleman, he should give us credit for having pursued a consistent course. He knows that for years I have been advocating this course, and he has no right to say that I or any other senator, assumed a virtue and that we knew our recommendation would not be carried out.

Hon. Mr. POWER—I simply state facts. You can draw your own inferences.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—But they were not facts.

The motion was agreed to.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACT BROKING.

INQUIRY.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL rose to call the attention of the Minister of Justice to the following letter alleged to have been written by Mr. Petit, the defeated candidate at the last Dominion election, in the county of Terrebonne :—

“ I have received from the Department of Public Works, at Ottawa, a letter informing me that you are a tenderer for the supply of — for the public buildings at ——. As your tender is the same as that of another firm, they write to ask