

perhaps when the petition is presented to the House of Commons the choice might be made by the Minister of Justice. I do not pretend to have sufficient experience to indicate the mode which could be adopted, but as hon. gentlemen know there is at present a revision of the rules of both Houses being made. Two committees have been appointed, one by the House of Commons and the other by the Senate to revise the rules. Would it not then be possible to instruct these committees to see whether they could not agree upon a mode which should be adopted for the distribution of private Bills on their introduction. I am not ready to say how it is done in England, but we all know that whatever mode of distributing the work obtains in England, it is done in a much more practical way. If the question was seriously studied by both committees, I think they could come very easily to some agreement in virtue of which the Senate would not be obliged to wait six or seven weeks before Bills come to them for their consideration, and they would not then be exposed to having the rush of work, and hasty consideration towards the end of the session which has been criticised so justly by some of the most prominent members of this House. There must be a remedy; as they say in French, 'Where there is a will there is a way.' We must admit that our frequent adjournments are not very well understood, or very favourably appreciated by the public; and in the eyes of many, we have to bear the responsibility of those adjournments. It is unjust. Any way we should put it on record that the members of the Senate have done everything in their power to change this state of things and have shown their willingness to assist in promoting the work of the session, and the interest of their country and the Senate.

Hon. Mr. BERNIER—This question has occupied the attention of the House almost every session for several years past, and I do not think any reform can be introduced. We must take conditions as they are. We must remember that most of the heads of the departments are in the other House, and that consequently any minister having measures to bring before parliament, it is only proper that he should introduce them in the House where he can explain them, and we can say nothing against such procedure.

Most of the ministers being in the other House, the bulk of the Bills must of necessity be first introduced in the Commons. We must also remember that the people at large look more to their members in the Commons to carry their measures through parliament than they do to the Senate. They are more in touch with people at large than we are, and consequently any one having a measure to promote sends it to the member representing the section from which he comes. The people have a right to go to whom they please and consequently we cannot force any reform in that way, or press for the introduction of private Bills in this Chamber more than is now done. The government might bring down their own measures sooner than they do sometimes; at the same time we must remember that the Senate has never unduly delayed the prorogation of parliament. Unless we make strict rules, applicable in all cases without exception, we cannot accomplish anything in that direction.

THE ADDRESS.

DEBATE CONTINUED.

The Order of the Day being called.

Resuming the adjourned debate on the consideration of His Excellency the Governor General's speech on the opening of the second session of the tenth parliament.—Hon. Mr. Scott.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON said: When the House adjourned yesterday afternoon I was making some observations with regard to the National Transcontinental Railway and I pointed out the grave questions that I think still exist and should be pressed on the minds of parliament and on the government and the country as to whether the eastern part of that road from Moncton to Quebec should be proceeded with. I placed some reasons before the House yesterday, which I think are very strong ones, and should call for serious consideration before any steps are taken to build that part of the line at all events. Parliament has at least a right to expect that a full and complete survey of that part of the line shall be laid before both Houses before any contracts are called for or anything is done in regard to it, in view of the very strong opinions that I know exist in the minds of men of both political parties as to the pro-