

that was apparently recognized by every one who spoke—that there is a dissatisfaction with the position and status of the Senate, not only outside, throughout the country, and in the other Chamber, but in this House itself. I stated that it did not appear that any gentleman contended that the fault was with the individuals who constitute the House. I may go further and say that it does not appear to me that the cause of dissatisfaction is altogether in the manner in which we do a portion of our work. I think that the work, or revising and amending measures that come to us from the other branch of Parliament is fairly well done here. This House and its committees give a great deal of patient labor to the work of improving the legislation which comes to them from the other House, and in that way fulfil a very valuable function in the constitution. I may venture to say, particularly as the same statement has been made by hon. gentlemen who habitually support the Government, that if the Senate were more independent, and did the work not only of revising and amending the measures which come to us from the House of Commons, but of occasionally rejecting Bills that come from the lower House, it would be discharging its duties of checking the improvident and improper legislation better than it does, and that the people would be more interested in it than they are now. I quite concur with the hon. gentleman from New Westminster in saying that the action of the Senate last year—an action which I very much regretted myself—in throwing out the measure providing for the construction of a railway from Harvey to Salisbury, did a great deal to excite public interest in the Senate, and I am sorry to say in certain sections of Canada to decrease the respect for the Senate. If the Senate would go a little further this Session and take the step suggested by the hon. member from Victoria (Mr. McDonald), and reject the iniquitous Tariff Bill now before the House of Commons, they would earn the gratitude of vast numbers of the people of this country; and I hope that, encouraged by their success of last year, they may be tempted to manifest their independence in that direction. One of the reasons why the Senate does not do its work as well as it might be done, and why it is not as much

respected in the country as it might be, is the reason indicated in the last few sentences—that it is not as independent as it should be. It is looked upon as being the mere creature of the Premier of the day. That is one of the reasons why so little interest is taken in it by the people outside. Those people, as a rule, know very little of the motives which prompt the appointments of gentlemen to this House, and they look upon the Senate as being a House that is filled with the mere creatures of the gentleman who happens to occupy the position of Premier at the present time. That fact also naturally accounts for the fact that the Senate is not as independent as it should be. Gentlemen are actuated by a feeling of gratitude, which is a natural and proper feeling, to the person to whom they owe their positions here, and it will require a great deal of provocation to induce them to oppose the desires of the present Premier.

HON. MR. OGILVIE—Only some of them.

HON. MR. POWER—There have been one or two instances where the Senate has done that, and I hope that instances of that kind will gradually become more frequent. Having said so much about the Senate as it is, I turn to the plan of appointment proposed by the hon. gentleman from Shediac; and without going into this at any length the following objections strike me on the surface. As the hon. gentleman from Charlottetown stated, election by the Local Legislatures would practically amount to appointment by the premiers of the various Provinces. It would be much better for the Liberal party, of course, if that mode of appointment had been in force since Confederation. The Province of Nova Scotia has had a Liberal Government since 1867, with the exception of four years, from 1878 to 1882; Ontario has had a Liberal Government since 1871, and the Province of Quebec has now a Liberal Government. New Brunswick has had a sort of coalition Government during the past few years. But the point is that the system of appointment by the the Local Legislatures would not give us a Senate which would be very much more representative of the feelings of the people at large than the present system. We would be a little nearer to