

gating board made up of men appointed by parliament, as is the case with the Auditor General, who would probe into those departments, and whose report upon the administration of any of them, so far as public expenditure and administration are concerned, would meet with the same weight and the same approval that the report of the Auditor General does with reference to any of the matters coming within his department. Would that be unreasonable? I say it would not, and I contend that it would be placing in the hands of parliament, machinery infinitely more efficient than the system which we have to-day of a committee of the House of Commons attempting, under the most adverse circumstances, to elicit information, which finally they discover they cannot obtain. That would be one method by which the proceedings of parliament might be shortened. I am of opinion, with my right hon. friend, that the adoption at present of the closure would not very greatly facilitate the shortening of our sessions.

It is necessary also, that the idea should be developed that the public business cannot be promoted by the making of long speeches, and we want to get away from the impression that a public man's services must be measured in proportion to the length of his speeches on the various questions coming before parliament. Public opinion may protest against the length of our sessions, but public opinion by a free expression upon this question could rectify abuses of this kind very much more readily than any other machinery that could be set in motion. The time has come when both parties should get together and engraft on our parliamentary system business methods, and drop altogether the idea that business can only be transacted by hostile camps being arrayed one against the other. In this connection, I might say that one of the great evils of to-day in prolonging the sessions lies in this, that the government in initiating its business brings down its measures and forces them through entirely irrespective of the sentiments, the wishes, or the views of the opposition. The whole matter is practically cut and dried in caucus. The measure is introduced by the government in the House, and then it is at once thrown for dissection and discussion

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED.

into what might be termed an inflammatory body, then follow the most vigorous steps to inflame the body more and more as the discussion of the subject proceeds until exhaustion gradually follows. When one comes to investigate the system under which we labour, it seems really extraordinary that we are able to transact the public business with the limited success we achieve. I think the House is indebted to the hon. senator from Wellington for introducing the subject, and I trust we may ultimately make some progress toward the desired end.

Hon. Mr. POWER—The hon. leader of the opposition has, to a certain extent, misapprehended the object of a session of parliament. As far as the observation of a few years goes, my impression is that a session of parliament is the time and this is the locality where the government start with an idea that they may get some business through, and as a rule are not very sanguine about succeeding. The opposition, as conducted in modern times, start with the idea that the government shall not get business through, or shall get as little as possible through, and the great object of a session of parliament, as looked at from an opposition point of view, is not the transaction of business, but the ousting of the government from their position and the substitution of the opposition. I am surprised that an old parliamentarian like the leader of the opposition should have talked in the ingenuous way he did about this matter. He knows better; and the hon. gentleman knows that he has been to-day at another gathering, not a meeting of either House of parliament, where that doctrine has been acted upon to the fullest extent, where it was decided not to go on with the business of the country but to try to burst the government. The hon. gentleman cannot make us believe that he is a sort of Moses coming to market to buy green glasses; he knows better. I quite sympathize with the hon. gentleman from North Wellington in thinking that it would be better if our business were conducted in a more businesslike way, but I do not feel in the slightest degree sanguine that any good will be done by any attempt to act just now. We are now in the middle of a