

is of very great importance indeed, in order to relieve the other branch of parliament of a part of their work, and in order to give this House the position which it ought to hold in the legislative work of the country, that the government should introduce measures on the programme in this end of the building. And while I am speaking of that, I would refer particularly to the Plebiscite Bill, a measure that has been, we know, very strongly promised by the government, referred to, if I remember right, in the speech at the beginning of this session, and one that this House would be perfectly competent to deal with in the first instance. I wish to know not only whether that bill will be introduced in this end of the building, but also when the government propose to introduce it. When will it be introduced, either here or elsewhere?

Hon. Mr. MILLER—I am very glad the hon. gentleman has brought this subject to the notice of the House. During the past years, on frequent occasions since confederation, this subject of introducing more legislation into this branch of parliament has frequently been discussed in this House and very fully discussed, and I do not think that any satisfactory reason has ever been given why more of the government bills are not introduced into the Senate than we are in the habit of receiving here. We are promised a great deal of legislation for this session—I am afraid more than we are likely to get through, and one bill which has just been alluded to might be introduced into this House. But instead of making an endeavour to initiate legislation here it seems to be more and more the course every year to allow all important legislation to originate in the other House. I think the government, if it tried, could introduce many important measures that parliament is called upon to pass, in this House. We have a great deal of time in the early part of the session which could be spent in considering important bills, whereas they come to the House late in the session when members are tired out with the monotony of a long session, perhaps in the hot weather, and we have to rush the bills through at railroad speed. We have not time to give them that consideration which it is the special duty of this House, as a court of revision to give to these bills, and as now we are starting with

a new Minister of Justice and a new government, I desire to press upon the leader of the House, as I have frequently done in former years, to distribute that legislation, allot more of the public measures which it is the duty of the government to bring before parliament to this House. It would tend to the more speedy passage of legislation, and would give this House the position it ought to occupy in the eyes of the country as a useful branch of the legislature. The subject is well worthy the attention of the minister, and I hope the minister will give it the consideration it should receive.

Hon. Mr. MILLS—I may say, in reply to the hon. gentleman from Richmond, that I told my hon. friend here before the adjournment that I hoped some measures of the government would be introduced in this House this session. I am still of that hope and trust at no distant day that some measures will be introduced here. But my hon. friend can well understand that there are nearly a dozen ministers in the other chamber and there are but two here.

Hon. Mr. MILLER—We should have more ministers in this House.

Hon. Mr. MILLS—And the natural consequence of that is that nearly all the government measures are introduced in the House of Commons. Every minister, in the first instance, is desirous of initiating those measures which specially concern his own department which he is supposed to have special charge of. If hon. gentlemen will look at the measures introduced this session, the Yukon Railway Bill is a bill relating to the Department of Railways and Canals, a bill affecting the public domain and properly belongs to the other chamber. Then, again, take the Franchise Act, my hon. friends would not expect a measure on that subject to be initiated in this House. Take again the bill relating to the payment of judges' salaries and the increase of the numbers of the courts. Hon. members would not expect that measure to be introduced here.

Hon. Mr. MILLER—That is trifling.

Hon. Mr. MILLS—It relates to the expenditure of public moneys. And so with many other measures of the government. Whether the plebiscite is a proper measure to introduce here, I am not prepared to say.