

amended by pruning superfluous clauses, altering them or adding to them in the interest of the public. And there is no reason why this House should not attract to itself a great portion of the original private Bill business of the whole Dominion. I do not know, therefore, and my hon. friend did not specify, in what respect it is that we do not perform the duties which are expected of us—the exact expression, I think, he made use of, was that we did not hold our own. It may be that what he complains of is a necessary consequence of our position. The public admire speeches; they like discussions, especially if they are a trifle warm. They like political questions with which they habitually deal themselves as matter of private conversation. They hear nothing of that kind here, or only at rare intervals. That kind of discussion is not exactly within our function—quite within our powers, but not within the functions that we assume to ourselves. It appears to me that it would not be of advantage to the Senate if every debatable question which is spoken of day after day, night after night, in the House of Commons, were dragged up in the Senate and subjected to the same treatment here. The reasons which prompt the long discussions, and cause them to be prolonged from day to day and week to week, with a great deal—I hope I may be pardoned for saying so, and I mean no offence—a great deal of repetition, do not exist here. But there are strong motives for such debates in the other House. It is important to a man in another place who has shortly to go before the people, to denounce the Government, if he happens to be in opposition, for their extravagance and corruption, and if he happens to be on the Government side of the House to show how unpatriotic and corrupt the opposition are. These are two subjects fertile in themselves, and expanded to a degree that it is almost impossible to calculate except by those who will go through the labor of wading through *Hansard*. These are the discussions and debates which attract the public eye, and capture the popular taste. They would approve of us if we talked for days and days without any results, probably, but the quiet unobtrusive labor which this House goes through in supervising and perfecting the legislation of the country, I have no doubt they would appreciate if they knew of it;

but they do not know of it: it is not the kind of labor which presents itself before the eyes of the public in every newspaper of the Dominion. And great numbers, a large majority probably of our people, for whom we are earnestly, honestly, and diligently working in this House and in our committee rooms, day after day, never know that we are engaged in seeking to further their welfare at all. They see nothing, perhaps, but some sentence in the papers, stating that the Old Women of the Senate adjourned at 4-30 to-day. This produces a laugh; it is circulated in every paper and those who have not seen us may imagine that our garments are not of that virile and masculine character that they ought to be. They find fault with our adjournments not knowing that our labors are concurrent with those of the House of Commons, and that there are times when faction and oratory hold the field, and there is nothing for us to do for the moment. There is nothing too absurd for people who are not much interested in the matter, and who amuse themselves by reading sneers and jokes about the Senate, to believe. They laugh at the cheap and stale jokes and take them for granted; no one is there to dispute what is said, and they form the idea that we are a parcel of imbecile old people, who are slumbering away a quiet and well paid life up here, doing nothing but drawing our pay; and allowing the business of the country to go where it pleases. It is not our fault if this be the impression of many people, and it ought not to affect us. We ought not to admit because there are jokes in the papers about us that we are not holding our own, not fulfilling the purposes of our existence. We are independent of all that and we are men of sufficient experience and knowledge of the world and of business, and of sufficient thorough public training to treat these things as not affecting us one jot. The consciousness that we are doing our work and doing it thoroughly ought to be, and I have no doubt is, quite sufficient for us, and if we may feel a passing irritation at being characterised by contemptuous epithets it passes away very quickly, and makes very little impression on any member of this House. It appears to me, and I am confirmed in this impression by many hon. gentlemen, that the presence of the press in our House, and the reports, short as