

These chairmen, however, do not constitute a co-operative body like a ministry; they do not consult and concur in the adoption of homogeneous and mutually helpful measures; there is no thought of acting in concert. Each committee goes its own way, at its own pace, and it is impossible to discover any unity of method in the disconnected and desultory action of the House, or any common purpose in the measures which its committees from time to time recommend.

We will now glance for one moment at the way in which legislation is conducted under this system. In the first place as to the initiation of legislative measures. Under the British system, which is also the Canadian, public bills fall into two classes, those brought in by the ministry of the day as responsible advisers of the Sovereign, and those brought in by private members. In neither House of Congress, on the other hand, is there any such thing as Government bills. In England or Canada a strong Cabinet can obtain the concurrence of the Legislature in all acts which facilitate its administration; it is, so to speak, the Legislature. For, as Sir Henry Maine says, "The nation whose constitutional practice suggested to Montesquieu his memorable maxim concerning executive, legislative, and judicial powers, has in the course of a century falsified it. The formal executive is the true source of legislation; the formal Legislature is incessantly concerned with executive government" (t).

In America, on the other hand, the initiation of legislation belongs to nobody in particular. Any member may introduce

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mittee on Rules, which consists of the Speaker of the House of Representatives and four other members, has now a degree of control which was not looked forward to twenty years ago. That committee from time to time introduces a programme for the conduct of the business of the House, which determines the amount of time to be devoted to the several parts of the House's business. This constitutes the committee a sort of "Steering Committee" and it gives great power. . . . The ascendancy of the Committee on Rules in the House of Representatives has no further effect than this, that it gives the House a definite programme. But that, so far as I can see, is all that it does, except to increase still further the arbitrary power of the Speaker of the House who is, of course, the domineering member of the Committee."

(t) Popular Government, p. 239.