

perform if not the most important of them. But we have another: and it is no less vital to order and good Government. We must stand in the way when hasty or inconsiderate legislation, or some popular paroxysm or excitement leads to measures which are injurious and disadvantageous to our country. If we do these three things what more does our country demand of us? What more have we to do than those three classes of things. Now, have we performed those duties or have we not? I think I can show you in a moment that we have done them most efficiently and effectually, and I say that has been the course of the Senate from the first. It has gradually taken up its position in the country, and it is filling that position effectively and with dignity. We do not make Ministries nor do we mar them. It is not in the constitution that this House turns out Ministries or forms them. It is not on the breath of this House that the Ministry exists; it is to the direct representatives of the people that they are responsible. With regard to the finances of the country, it is not we who appropriate the revenues of the country or its moneys to public works and other purposes; by the constitution, it is the other House that does that. Hon. gentlemen complain, and with some reason, that we have not ministers with portfolios here. But the more I see of the working of this House, the more I doubt whether the possession of portfolios in this House would be an unmixed benefit. If there be a Department which needs no money; which does not require that its chief shall stand in his own person before the representatives of the people, and state what he has done with the money entrusted to him the previous Session, and what money he requires for the uses of his Department for the ensuing year—if there is a Minister who has such a Department, we might have him here; but as to the heads of the Departments which are obliged to spend money in the interest of the country; which have to construct great public works, which have to deal with the finances of the country, to manage them, to pay our debts, to carry on the negotiation of our loans; to collect customs, and manage our inland revenues—who is it that has a right to call the head of such a Department to account in his proper person, and demand from him annually a detailed state-

ment of everything he has done, or proposes to do, how he has spent the public money, and what more he wants to spend? Who has to demand that of him? Not the Senate but the other House. The people of Canada can change their Constitution altogether, if they please I presume, but until they exercise that right it is the Lower House that must deal with the money of the country, that must settle how that money is to be spent, that must call to account every Minister who handles, or expects to handle, or has power to handle, the public money. He must come to that House, and must in his own proper person state the amount before that tribunal for every official act. These considerations are probably the reasons why portfolios have been gradually driven from the Senate into the other House, and any hon. gentleman who looks calmly and dispassionately at this question must see that, whether those reasons are conclusive or not—I do not say they are conclusive by any means, but they are growing upon me and I am inclined to believe that they are growing in their impression upon other members of the Senate too—these considerations deserve more weight in the demand which we frequently make, and which I, myself, have repeatedly joined in making, that we should have Departments in this House which will cause a larger measure of the work of the country to be done in the Senate. I think there are other modes by which we can appropriate to ourselves the work that we are peculiarly fitted to do. One of the most important functions of the House of Lords is to deal with the private legislation of the country. By a skilful adaptation of the rules of the two Houses a large portion—the greater part, I think, of the private legislation of England has been forced into the House of Lords, and it is done there, and done, it is admitted on all hands, most admirably. It is one of the plumes in the cap of the House of Lords, that there is no country in the world where the private legislation is done more perfectly and more thoroughly than in England. That is something we can hold out for ourselves, to attract to the Senate more of the initiative legislation of the country. We have to do with it largely as it is. Every private Bill that comes up receives the close attention of this House and many of them are