

there were more than two or three representatives of the government here. That is an instance of what is taking place over and over again. The hon. Postmaster General (Mr. Mulock) is out of the House three-quarters of the time and more. When questions are asked information cannot be got because ministers are not here to answer questions. That all has its influence upon the interest in and work of the session; you take the whole spirit, the energy and the business out of the session. It has been taken out of this session. There has been a doleful lagging of business. Let us come to the statement that has been made in reference to Mr. Rothwell. Mr. Rothwell is a good servant; we will acknowledge that. So are very many; so, I believe, are most of the civil servants, but neither the hon. acting minister nor the Prime Minister has given any sufficient explanation of the work that Mr. Rothwell is doing. The extension of salary is a large one; it is a tremendous leap in the remuneration of a high salaried officer from \$2,000 to \$2,400. Why is it that a fair increase could not be made? Mr. Rothwell, the year before last and the year before, worked his hours, late hours and long hours, and he got his regular increase. I do not suppose that he has worked any more hours this year, and it has not been shown that his duties have been such as would justify such an addition to his salary. I do not criticise the absence of the ministers severely out of any feeling of animosity to the ministers. It is not that, but the Prime Minister knows that the country and the House remark upon this. If the hon. Minister of Public Works' state of health is such as to allow him to go to Paris and undertake with his peculiar temperament the headship of the Canadian representation at the Paris Exposition, with trips through the provinces, going to Belgium and addressing public meetings, being one night in Paris and the next night in London, the reason for his absence completely falls to the ground. The hon. minister is not away on account of debilitated condition, or of ill-health. He is away doing more active and more consuming work, I should think, for a man of his temperament than if he were to remain here. I grant that the right hon. gentleman is entirely right in saying that he returned from his first visit to Paris too early. If he had taken more time he would have given himself a fairer chance for recuperating. Instead of putting him in charge of the Paris Exposition the right hon. gentleman should have used his influence to have him go somewhere where rest and quiet could be got. But surely, if he is well enough, if a man like the hon. Minister of Public Works, with his temperament, is standing the strain of that peculiar work in Paris, if he can attend the multitude of banquets which are a necessary concomitant of it, if he can take these flights through the provinces, going to Belgium and addressing meetings, he is

perfectly able to stand his work here, and if he is able to stand his work here, here is where he ought to be instead of there. And then, as to the hon. Minister of the Interior; the hon. gentleman, as I read the matter, and as I understood it, has good general health. His indisposition is a serious one, and he requires treatment for it. But it is not a sudden thing. The hon. minister was looking well, and one would have thought that at the end of last session when his infirmity was of just about the same character and seriousness as it was later, because his affliction, and unfortunately a great affliction it is, has been with him for a long number of years, he could have taken the opportunity of going for medical advice. But, he did not do it. Neither did he take any extra advice or any care. On the contrary, he engaged in very heavy work. In the early autumn and winter he undertook a large contract, in the first place, making a tour of Manitoba and the North-west Territories and going to British Columbia. I believe, on a general speaking tour in company with some of his colleagues, and then plunging with all the vigour that he is possessed of into a red-hot campaign in Manitoba. Then, coming back to parliament looking very well as a matter of general health and with the peculiar infirmity that follows him not accentuated, he immediately slides out from the whole work of the session. He immediately slides out from the whole work of the session, and leaves the department in which is the Yukon and the Interior and the immigration business, just at a time when it is of the utmost importance, from a public point of view, that he should be here. A man cannot be a minister and do just the same as he would do if he were a private person. He has duties towards the House and duties towards the public, and the pity of it is that in this case he had not chosen the holiday interim for his treatment and absence, when he could have been better spared than he could at the time of the session. I think that is not an unfair criticism to make in reference to these two ministers. I made it, not in the spirit of animosity, but because I think the business of this House has been most seriously interfered with by their absence, and besides, I think it was a very bad precedent that men shall undertake the responsibilities of cabinet ministers and then not consider that they are under very great obligations to be in their places, most especially at the time of the session of parliament.

**Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER.**  
Coming to the case of Mr. Rothwell, there seems something extraordinary in this \$400 increase at a time when a great many meritorious men in the service cannot get even the ordinary statutory increase of \$50, no matter how long they work or how arduous their duties are. What seems extraordinary in all these increases in the