

power which the bill proposed to give to the Government as shown by the schedule of classifying ships, was one of a most extraordinary nature, and deserving particular attention and the most serious consideration. He hoped that before any such power should be conferred the expediency as well as the necessity of doing so would be well weighed.

Hon. Mr. Letellier de St. Just—If on the second reading of a Bill explanations may not be given, it was somewhat odd that the Hon. Minister of Marine had been called on for explanations now. He believed, however, that the second reading of a bill presented the most opportune time for discussing not only the general principles of a bill, but some of its most striking details. A willingness to suffer a Bill to go into Committee of the Whole was yielding or conceding the principle of it, and, indeed, admitting the necessity for it so far as its general features are concerned. That principle in legislation he could not admit. Looking at this bill particularly, he considered it only as an Administration measure, setting forth that the Government may have certain powers and no more. It does not set forth how ships shall be classified, pilots regulated, or fees collected. It confers simply administrative power, assigning duties to a particular Minister, that Minister being bound to govern himself by existing laws, which cannot be interfered with without special legislation. Nevertheless the bill may go a little too far in conferring, as some allege it does, legislative powers upon the Governor in Council. The House must not incautiously, too readily as it were, yield up their own power in favor of Ministers. It might be well to be a little lenient in this matter, but he admired the prudence of an hon. member (Mr. McCully) in recommending that the exercise of the power proposed to be given to His Excellency in Council should be limited to the end of next Session.

Hon. Mr. Wark—The bill has simply a two-fold character, that of erecting a Department and that of defining the duties and powers of the officer at the head of it. Could it bear the construction alleged with regard to it of classifying ships, it would at least be necessary to examine very closely its details. One part of the 5th clause appeared to him as being possible of bearing a construction which possibly was not designed, that which stated that the Department shall have, exercise, and discharge such other duties as may from time to time be assigned to, or vested, in or conferred upon it by order of the Governor in Council, as the question might arise whether a Min-

ister by a mere Order in Council might not be required, not only to have, but to exercise certain duties, the exercise of which by him were not contemplated when the bill became law.

Hon. Mr. Ryan saw more than one new feature in the Bill. It was a new one, that of transferring to a Minister duties which hitherto had been discharged by public bodies. He may have interpreted the bill incorrectly, but he thought that the wording of the bill in this particular should be most distinct, and leave room for neither cavil nor doubt. A transfer of certain powers hitherto belonging to incorporated bodies was by this bill virtually made to the Government. The right of classifying ships, a function which does not belong to any Government in the world, claimed in the Bill for the Minister of Marine, seemed to him extraordinary. So far, the classifying of ships has rested with a Board of Merchants. It is well known that in London an institution has grown up called Lloyds, which gives character to ships, and which has its agents at every seaport of any note all the world over, and there is a French Lloyds and an American Lloyds, and the Government apparently design to interfere with this old and long recognized institution, and become classifiers themselves. He looked upon it as very unsafe to put such a power into the hands of the Government, as it was decidedly a bad principle to take out of the hands of the people the powers which they had exercised almost from time immemorial. At every port, he would repeat, Lloyds' agents were to be found superintending the building of and classifying ships, and he would respectfully ask whether it really came within the functions of a Minister of Marine to act as Lloyds' agent, classifying vessels in Saint John, N.B., Quebec, Halifax or Montreal; and if it were, would the certificates of the agents of the Hon. Minister of Marine stand so high in the commercial world as those of Lloyds' agents? He might further remark that certain Acts had been passed regulating Harbour Trusts, and he desired to know whether these Trusts are still to be administered under such Acts or ignored by the passing of this bill. It certainly did appear to him that if the Government had the control, regulation and management of harbours, and Harbour Trusts, the Harbour Commissioners could not do a single act without at least consulting the Government. Would it be prudent, he would ask, so to take away the powers of these Commissioners, as this Bill, if it becomes law, assuredly will do? The lan-