

his Department, but it was in no wise their intention to interfere with the properties owned by municipalities or individuals. All that was transferred by the Bill to his charge was the property of Canada, of the Government of Canada. In a word it vested in the Department of Marine and Fisheries the public property enumerated and none other.

Hon. Mr. Steeves begged to ask if, for instance, the harbour of Saint John, N.B., would come under the control of that Department?

Hon. Mr. Mitchell said that no harbour would come under its control, but such as was legislated upon by both Houses of Parliament, and the Department would only possess the power which might in that way be conferred upon it. The honourable member had evidently misapprehended the object and purport of the Bill. He would, as he had already several times stated, bring in a measure in the next part of the session, making regulations for the management of the fisheries and other of the subjects which come under the provision of his Department, and then it would be quite proper to discuss the merits of such proposed legislation. For instance, at present, the expense for lighthouses was defrayed in different portions of the Dominion in different ways. In New Brunswick by a tax on the tonnage, while in Canada there was no such charge. The Bill he would bring in would give the opportunity of deciding whether it was better to adopt the New Brunswick mode, or that which obtained in Canada. But the Bill before the House did not give him power to deal with these subjects, nor did it abrogate any power now possessed by local authorities anywhere.

Hon. Mr. Allan said if he understood the matter right, the Bill would vest in the Department of Marine and Fisheries all the powers heretofore possessed and exercised by the Local Governments in respect of these particular interests.

Hon. Mr. Mitchell—Yes, that was precisely the object of the measure.

Hon. Mr. Allan—Nor did the Government intend to make any changes without previous legislation?

Hon. Mr. Mitchell—They did not. Things remained as they were. In New Brunswick the maintenance of the lighthouses, for instance, remained as formerly, and in Ontario and Quebec, in the Trinity Houses.

Hon. Mr. McCully called attention to the 129 clause of the Union Act, which provided that these matters should continue as they were at the time of Union until legislated upon by the Parliament of the Dominion.

Hon. Mr. Mitchell, the Bill gave the Government no new power, but left it to execute the existing laws. The duties and charges in respect of several of the subjects named, were as he had said different in the several Provinces, and before an Act to assimilate the practice could be prepared with any hope of establishing a uniform system much thought and labor would be necessary. There were three different modes of conducting shipping offices and of shipping seamen, and he did not know which of the three he would select. The Quebec system made the officers responsible to the Government instead of to Local Boards, but he did not know yet which would be adopted, and so of the pilots. At present in Canada they were under the supervision he believed of the Secretary of State, but by this Bill they would come under that of the Department of Marine. It was said the Bill was very short, but that it gave the Minister very large powers. Well, it was short and comprehensive, and it had to define the powers it entrusted to the Head of the Department, or if not to confide to him general powers. He had, however, thought it more fair to specify or enumerate the powers to be exercised so that if any were deemed inconsistent they might be pointed out and considered.

Hon. Mr. Botsford—But besides the powers enumerated the Bill conferred other powers not named.

Hon. Mr. Mitchell—He was glad the hon. member had referred to that point. The Department, as he had already stated, was an entirely new one. It had never existed as a separate Department, but it was intrusted with the supervision and administration of vast and important interests, and moreover it was in the very nature of things that it should continue to expand, yet as it was quite new it had been thought desirable in case subjects not contemplated should supervene, and require to be dealt with some measure of discretion should be given to the Minister in charge. Now there was a question with respect to seamen's hospitals. In Quebec the Marine Hospital was also an hospital for immigrants, and it had not been brought under the operation of the Bill, though if it were deemed desirable by the House, it might be so placed. Certain questions had been submitted to the