

the Session, and when, for the first time, they have met the wishes of the House by introducing at the earliest possible moment three Government measures, I think it would be a very great pity if objection were taken to the course they have pursued. I do not think we are at all bound by these precedents, even if they exist in all the strength which the hon. gentleman from Halifax is endeavoring to give to them. I think, however, it has been shown very clearly in reply that they are not of that character. I regard it, as the Minister has said, merely as a matter of form—as nothing more than a notice—and the great advantage of giving that notice is that the Bill, having been put in possession of the House, is ready for translation and distribution. There was no intention to take up these measures before the debate on the Address. The very notice that was given that they would be read the second time the day after that fixed for the consideration of the Address shows that there was no intention whatever to interfere with the ordinary procedure, making a reply to the Speech from the Throne the first business to which the House should give its attention. I hold, therefore, that there has been no wrong and no disrespect. As the hon. member from Westmoreland has remarked, there could be no disrespect in the introduction of these Bills by a member of the Government. Had the Bills been introduced by a private member possibly some objection might have been taken. I do not think it would have been a strong one; but these Bills being referred to in the Speech from the Throne, and being introduced by one of His Excellency's advisers, I cannot see any ground for objection. No wrong has been done, and there is no reason why the minutes should be altered. No precedent has been established which is likely to be inconvenient hereafter, inasmuch as no action has taken place, and what has been done has been simply giving notice.

HON. MR. McCLELAN—Do I understand the hon. gentleman to say it is not allowable to discuss a Bill at its first reading?

HON. MR. VIDAL.—I did not say that. I simply said that in this House, when a Bill is introduced and read the first time,

it is merely a notice, on which debates do not arise.

HON. MR. KAULBACH—I think the hon. gentleman from Halifax has not made out a case. The introduction of a Bill *pro formâ* is the assertion of a right to proceed to business at once, and whether one Bill or more Bills be introduced does not affect the principle. If it is a right we possess there can be no discourtesy to the Crown in the introduction of these Bills. I have been for a long time in Parliament, in the Local Legislature and here, and I am sure that in the Local Legislature we always adopted the same rule of introducing a Bill. I remember in one case it was not a *pro formâ* Bill. I think it was introduced by myself, and there was a discussion upon it. If I mistake not, it was discussed before the debate on the Address was terminated. The introduction of a Bill is the assertion of our right to proceed with the business of the House before the adoption of the Address, and whether the Bill introduced is *pro formâ*, or a measure intended to become law, does not make any difference. There can be no discourtesy to the Crown, and our proceedings have not been contrary to the acknowledged rights of the House.

HON. MR. POWER—Perhaps I may be allowed to say a few words, inasmuch as I stand alone on this matter, much to my surprise. Possibly the hon. gentleman from Acadie may be correct in saying that this Bill *pro formâ* is no longer introduced in the House of Lords, but I think I was quite justified in saying what I did, because I find it laid down in May, page 48, that a bill *pro formâ* is introduced in that House, and I find the same statement in Bourinot and in the Standing Orders of the House of Lords. If I was in error as to the practice of the House of Lords I had good reason for the mistake I made. I still do not feel clear that the hon. gentleman is right; because both of the works to which I have referred have been published within the period that he mentioned. The hon. gentleman from Sarnia said that it was very desirable that we should lose no time in the introduction of those measures. Now, if time was a matter of such consequence time would have been gained by adopting the English rule of considering