

HON. MR. BOTSFORD—I take the same view as the hon. member who has just sat down with respect to the question raised by the hon. member from Halifax. Let us look at the reason why the parliamentary practice has been as the hon. gentleman states it: it is that no act of the Senate should be such as would be discourteous to the representative of the Crown. Now, this case is just one in which an adviser of the representative of the Crown makes a motion in the introduction of some of the measures recommended in the Speech from the Throne. He anticipates measures which were recommended, and it cannot be construed as a discourtesy in any way to the representative of the Crown. For these reasons, I think it would be very injudicious and unnecessary in us to retrace our steps. The Bills that were introduced were referred to in the Speech from the Throne. It would be very different indeed for a member, who is not in the position occupied by the leader of the House, to introduce a measure under these circumstances. Therefore, I consider that the introduction of these Bills by one of His Excellency's advisers cannot be construed to be an act of discourtesy to the Crown.

HON. MR. SCOTT—There is no doubt that the universal practice, at least as far as my experience of thirty years goes, has been to limit the proceedings to the introduction of one Bill. Of course, the mere assertion of that right carries with it the right to introduce a dozen Bills, if we so please. It is a mere question of asserting a right. When attention was called to the matter the other day, had the House persisted in pressing the Minister to withdraw the Bills, and he had chosen to do so, it would have been all very well; but I certainly should not agree now to the Bills being withdrawn. It was the exercise of the right of Parliament to introduce these Bills. It was contrary to the usual etiquette, but although I like to adhere to parliamentary rule I am not such a stickler when it comes down to the question of etiquette. It is all very well to observe a practice, and I hope that the practice will not be broken—that this will be regarded rather as an exception—but attention having been called to it once I thought

that was sufficient. I should object to the Bills being withdrawn.

HON. MR. POIRIER—I do not wish to go into the merits of this question, but simply to draw the attention of my hon. friend from Halifax, who has shown himself so conservative as not to allow us to touch the sacred ark of precedent even with a little finger, to this fact, that even in the House of Lords, which is a pretty conservative body, they have not been so careful as that, inasmuch as this very rule of presenting a Bill *pro formâ* is not now, and has not been for some twenty years, followed. They have done away with the practice altogether, and immediately they go on with the consideration of the Address, without even introducing a Bill *pro formâ*. Therefore, I do not see so great an evil or impropriety in touching a precedent when the House of Lords themselves set us the example of interfering with precedent. I may add that the practice of presenting a Bill *pro formâ* was very likely continued because there was no other Bill in readiness; but there is no difference, so far as respect to the Throne is concerned, between a Bill *pro formâ* and real legislation. The position of the two is identical, and as we have not delayed the consideration of the Address, and have only introduced real Bills instead of fictitious Bills, I do not see that such a great breach of the precedents of the House has been committed, since, as I have said, the House of Lords themselves have set the example of doing away altogether with the introduction of a *pro formâ* Bill.

HON. MR. VIDAL—I think the question which is now before us differs very greatly from the position which it occupied when these Bills were introduced. We could then, with great propriety, if we had thought proper to do so, have laid them aside, but having given them a first reading I think all that had been pointed out as to the effects of retrogressive action is undeniable. The position is such that we could not take a step of that kind. It has been abundantly shown that no disrespect was intended or offered to the Crown. When hon. gentlemen remember that it has been constantly pressed upon the Government in this House that they should introduce Bills in the early part of