

tion of the Prime Minister to the opinion expressed by such an experienced man as the chief of the translating staff.

The PRIME MINISTER (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). (Translation.) Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend will allow me to remind him that the matter to which he has just called the attention of the House does not come, properly speaking, within the province of the government. It should be referred to the *Debates* Committee, which is represented in this House.

Let me assure the hon. gentleman that any suggestion the committee may offer will always receive the best consideration at the hands of the government.

#### THE PILOTAGE ACT.

The House resolved itself into committee on Bill (No. 11) to amend the Pilotage Act.—(Sir Louis Davies.)

(In the Committee.)

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES (Sir Louis Davies). This Bill has been reprinted in accordance with the amendments made in the committee, and I merely want to move it forward a stage. I move that the committee rise and report the Bill.

Bill reported.

#### THE SAFETY OF SHIPS.

Bill (No. 12) to amend the Act respecting the safety of ships (Sir Louis Davies), read the second time, and the House resolved itself into committee thereon.

(In the Committee.)

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES (Sir Louis Davies). This is merely, as I explained in introducing the Bill, to correct a clerical error made in the Bill of last session. There is no change in the law.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). What is the clerical error?

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. Hon. members will remember that the time for taking deck-loads was extended at the request of the shipping interest for twelve days, and that has been carried out by the Act and was a great boon. But the Bill in extending that time limited

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it to the end of the year, and it should read between March 16 and October 12.

Bill reported, read the third time, and passed.

#### CIVIL SERVICE ACT AMENDMENT.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE (Mr. Fielding) moved the second reading of Bill (No. 156) to amend the Civil Service Act.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER (Cape Breton). Would my hon. friend (Mr. Fielding) briefly explain this Bill; and particularly would he deal with the point as to whether under this Bill any change is made that affects the status of officers now in the service.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. The Bill does not affect the position of any officer now in the service, except as it may afford opportunity for promotion to some who would not otherwise have that opportunity. The chief object, as I explained at a previous stage of the Bill, is to provide for a grade of civil servants to occupy the place between the temporary clerks who may be employed at a minimum of \$400, and the second-class clerks who may be employed at a minimum of \$1,100. The view we take is that the difference between the two grades is too great. In former years, we had a junior second-class grade, which grade was afterwards abolished, and a third-class grade, which was also abolished, I think, when the ex-Minister of Finance (Mr. Foster) was in office, no doubt, for good and sufficient reasons as they appeared at the time. We have found an embarrassment arising from the fact that there are occasions when we need to employ gentlemen in the civil service who can hardly be expected to enter the service at so low a salary as \$400, but to whom we do not wish to give, at the outset, so high a salary as \$1,100. Many cases could be cited in which the absence of such a grade has proved quite embarrassing. We propose to create a grade of junior second-class clerks. As the Bill stands the minimum salary for this grade is set at \$600; but when the Bill is in committee, I shall propose to amend that so that we may make a man a junior second-class clerk and give him the rank and thus start him on his way upwards without necessarily giving him so high a salary. Though he may not get much more at the