

pretation of the constitution. If hon. gentlemen are interested they will find that they are the opening words of section 91 of the British North America Act itself so far as the power is concerned, and the enumeration of the powers in section 91 is an enumeration of powers that does not limit the generality of the terms of the general power conferred. The jurisdiction conferred upon the executive by this parliament under peace, order and good government is, as I have said, under the decisions of the privy council a rather restricted jurisdiction. But it is sufficient to serve our purposes in the event of any untoward circumstances requiring the exercise of such power.

The other matters that were referred to I think have been sufficiently dealt with in what has already been said in other years with respect to this legislation. I repeat, this legislation is not sought for any purpose other than the public good. I repeat, parliament is being asked to confer authority upon the executive peradventure it might be required. If necessary it is there.

I am not going to follow the example of the right hon. gentleman and discuss the marketing bill which stands for second reading to-day. But this I will say, that in all the legislation that was passed during the nine years the right hon. gentleman was in office, wherever it became essential or necessary to clothe the executive with power to make either regulations or rules or to do any acts that might be essential for the well-being of the country, that power will be found conferred upon the executive. No hon. member can tell me that there is any difference between conferring an unlimited power upon a harbour commission to guarantee bonds for the construction of a bridge and the conferring of power by the parliament of Canada upon the executive to take necessary action to provide relief for Canadians who are in necessitous circumstances. The principle is the same. Then why not frankly admit it and say: The principle is the same but we think that this power may peradventure be abused.

I said the other evening, and I say now, that no hon. gentleman can point to a single abuse of that power nor to any usurpation of authority nor to any deprivation of rights nor to any effort, successful or unsuccessful, on the part of the executive to do any act or thing except for the good of this dominion—not one; and I repeat that, in order that there may be no misapprehension with respect to the matter.

I have spoken at greater length than I anticipated but when one realizes the unreal-

[Mr. Bennett.]

ity of a discussion such as this, realizes that all these things that are now being condemned were once being done by the right hon. gentleman who now condemns them and that he would have to do them again to-morrow if he were similarly situated, that all these high heroics and histrionic efforts are, shall I say, but a passing phase of the work of an opposition that regards it as its sole duty at all times to oppose, when it is suggested that because of something said in this house last week this government or myself have learned something—I am always learning something, Mr. Speaker, and I trust that I always shall as long as I live—but with no desire to cast aspersions on the right hon. gentleman at all, I say to him that I have not learned anything from him with respect to matters of this kind. I say that without intending offence. When he suggests that because of something he said in the house last week I have changed my mind, the chances are that because he said it my mind would be more likely to remain just where it was. He should not betray his anger and annoyance because there are others who have as advanced thoughts as himself—

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I did not say changed his mind; I said cleared his mind.

Mr. BENNETT: —and because others may have thought of these things even before he did. He should not think he has a copyright on ideas and a patent on expressions, and I suggest to him that he be tolerant enough to believe that there are others who sometimes think and have views and opinions; and because others have thought and concluded and expressed their conclusions, if they agree with his own it does not follow that they have come about by reason of listening to what he said. That is what he asks this house to believe, but I think it would be placing too great a strain upon the credulity of the house and the country to believe it. With that I shall leave this matter, Mr. Speaker, believing that it is more important to get the third reading of the measure than to discuss further the heroics of the right hon. gentleman.

Mr. J. S. WOODSWORTH (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have had very little to say with respect to the measure now before the house. I do not desire to detain the house on the third reading of this bill but I should like in a word to make the position of some of us clear with regard to our votes upon it.

This is a case in which one might perhaps almost be justified in giving either an affirmative or a negative vote. We are anxious to