

fact, be to adopt this language, and act accordingly. The confidence of the majority in themselves, however, was happily, not so easily shaken. They had won the battle, and they were determined to improve it to the fullest extent, by the complete establishment of Responsible Government, and the carrying out, both in letter and in spirit of the principles, set forth, as the basis of such a system, in Lord John Russell's Despatch of the 16th October, 1839. The hon. member then referred to a Copy of that Despatch and read some extracts upon which he severally commented, for the purpose of shewing that the System of Responsible Government about to be introduced into this Colony was precisely such as that to which Lord John Russell gave his approval and sanction in that Despatch. Now, concluded the honorable and learned member, the foundation of the Government about to be established in this Island, is the confidence of the People. Heretofore, public offices or appointments were held, not only during good behaviour, but for life, whatever might be the behaviour of those who held them, none being constituted the judges of official conduct, but the officials themselves, and they who had a direct interest in sustaining the actual incumbents in their several appointments. Heretofore the general interests of the people had been in a great measure lost sight of, or made only a secondary consideration by the Government and their officials, the perpetuation of their own power and the support of their family or individual interests being the primary objects of their activity and concern. This Colony has, however, in the opinion of the parent state, attained its majority; and our interests are no longer like those of a minor, to be intrusted to the rash care of ambitious and unfaithful trustees, but our own affairs and our own estate are to be entrusted to our own management; and the directors thereof will henceforth be appointed by the people.

HON. SOL. GENERAL, in reply, said that the system of Responsible Government, the advent of which the hon. member who had just sat down, had hailed with so much satisfaction, was so singularly corrupt, that it would carry along with it its own antidote. Let it once go into operation, and the people would soon see their best interests being gradually sacrificed to corruption, pandering to and upheld by, corruption. The idea that his Excellency had, in his Message, referred to Lord John Russell's Despatch, to shew that the system of Government, the introduction of which was sought by the majority of the House, was what had been recommended, for their adoption to the people of the British North American Provinces, was such as he (the hon. Sol. General) thought could scarcely have entered into any head but that of the hon. member (Mr. Coles), who had just expressed it. The extracts contained in the Message of his Excellency were merely given to shew the House how very far the majority had erred in putting such a construction upon the Despatch from which they were taken, as they had endeavoured to give to it, by insisting throughout the whole of the negotiations for a change in the Government, that the course they had adopted and were pursuing, was sanctioned by the authority of that Despatch. The Despatch was written with a view to make Public Functionaries responsible, not to the People, but to the Crown; Lord Sydenham, who it was that penned it, needed a powerful and faithful support to carry his grand and noble project. The patronage of the Government required to be brought in the strongest manner to his aid, and its servants to be warned, that their tenure of office was in future to depend upon their unanimous support: and the Despatch so far, was successful. It had been said, that a sufficient guarantee for the purity of the House, under the new system, was afforded by the legal necessity which existed for the vacating of his seat by every member who might accept of an office of emolument under the Government, and who consequently could not, as an officeholder, be a member of the Assembly unless it were the pleasure of a constituency that he should be. To this he would reply, that it was quite possible for an indi-

vidual to get into the House at a general election, and then to receive an office of profit as the reward of subservience to the corrupt purposes of a majority, which might happen to be a very weak one; he would of course have to go back to his constituents less popular than when they returned him; but rather than run the risk of losing so valuable an instrument, and whose successful competitor might perhaps, upset the Majority they would next endeavour to corrupt their constituents by a few appointments to petty offices, or perhaps by means still more discreditable, seeing the success of his election was of such vital importance to the stability of their power.

Mr. MOONEY then rose and said, that if the hon. Sol. General had been paid to persuade the public that the Government, for which he had been a prop for fifteen years, had been corrupt, he could not have done it better than he had this evening. He did not wish members of the Assembly to hold offices of emolument because they would corrupt them. O yes, make them all, the whole House, corrupt! How pure then his own colleague must have been! Did the hon. Sol. General ever think of that before? He (Mr. Mooney) supposed he had, but it had not suited his purpose to say anything about it, until he saw his overthrow inevitable. Then, however, he stepped forward to warn the House to beware of a system which he himself had so long tolerated. It was sour plums with him: the fox and the grapes. It would no longer be in his power to reap the fruits of patronage; and, therefore, he wished to destroy it. With what grace his colleague could support the views of the hon. and learned Solicitor was a mystery to him (Mr. Mooney.) In doing so, he abandoned the love of his neighbour at any rate, and erect to observe the Christian precept, "Do unto others as you wish others to do unto you." He (Mr. Mooney) remembered the time when Mr. Longworth was enjoying the pickings of High Sheriff, of a Commissioner of Small Debts, and a Justice of the Peace; and still he was a member of the Assembly at the same time. What had Mr. Nicholas Conroy to keep him pure when he was a member of the House whilst at the same time, he was a Sub-Collector of Customs, a Justice of the Peace, a Commissioner of Small Debts and High Sheriff? What present pickings has the hon. member of the Government, Mr. Thornton, although he will vote that members of Assembly must not take office under the new Administration: and what he had in days gone by? He is now High Sheriff, a Justice of the Peace, a Commissioner of Small Debts, Deputy clerk of the Crown, and surveyor of Lumber, by law authorised. And as for the hon. member, Mr. Pope, he (Mr. Mooney) could not tell how many offices he had been in the enjoyment of in the course of his political life; but then it was to be remembered that he was a handsome man in days gone by, although now all his beauty was gone in the estimation of his former admirers. The hon. Sol. General now views him as one of the most deformed of the human race; and, really, if he be a little disfigured in the face, it is not to be wondered at, considering the quantity of gravel which has been thrown at him this session, by the hon. and learned member. But with respect to the hon. Sol. General himself, his end was inconsistent keeping with his past career; for "Oh, Sir," continued the hon. member, "how hard he dies! No gentleman ever left the field of political conflict with more consistency than he is doing. Obstruct he would, obstruct he did, every measure which had a tendency to raise the people from the degraded position, in which he and they with whom he acted had placed them by their unequal legislation: and obstruct every thing for the good of the people he will to the last; and this he has been doing ever since I first had the honour of gazing upon his bonny face across the floor of this House."

Mr. LONGWORTH maintained that those hon. members who were most loud in their laudations of the Responsible system as it existed in the neighbouring Provinces were—for it was impossible that it could be otherwise—thoroughly convinced in their own minds of its inherent corruption. How could it be otherwise

than corrupt, when the Government and all the principal Officials were to be taken from the Assembly? Could not every one see that when the connection of the Government and Government Officials with the Assembly should be of so close and intimate a nature, it could always be made for the private or individual interests of the majority in the House to support the Government. And, as to the purity of the House being preserved by members having, in their acceptance of offices of emolument, to vacate their seats, and run to their constituents, the idea was ridiculous; they should be excluded a together from seats in the House: for it would not, by any means, be found difficult to engage a few active and wily electioneering agents in the country, in the service of men who had the government patronage at their command, and could, as a reward, bestow a few petty appointments upon the most serviceable of their friends on such occasions. Returns so effected, would certainly neither add to the purity of the House, nor afford any guarantee for the preservation of that measure of purity, previously existing in it. In defence of their system, the majority declared they merely sought to carry into effect here, the practice sanctioned by the working of the constitution in England. That, however, which they were labouring into practice was, in fact, totally irreconcilable to the principles which regulate the construction of the House of Commons. They desired to give seats in the Assembly to the Treasurer and collector of Impost; and yet from the House of Commons are excluded all who are concerned in, or connected with, the collection or distribution of the revenue; and not only were such public officers excluded from the House of Commons, but all, he believed, engaged in the collection of the revenue, were denied the right of voting at elections of members of parliament. As to the Despatch of Lord John Russell to which the hon. member for Queen's County had so confidently referred, as affording authority for the course which he and his party were pursuing, it was to be regarded as nothing but a dead letter. It was very well known, that it was written in Canada and sent home that it might come out as a Despatch from the Home Government; the object was to frighten and coerce the Officials in Canada into a compliance with the views of the Governor General, touching a union of the Lower and Upper Provinces. It was serviceable in effecting that object, the only one for which it was designed, and was then allowed to become a dead letter. The honorable member then referred to the report of a Speech of the Speaker of the House of Assembly of New Brunswick on a Bill, having for its object, the exclusion from seats in the Assembly of Officers of Government, excepting those whose offices were of a political nature; and read as follows: "He would only say, that during the last general election, complaints of Government influence in the House of Assembly were heard from one end of the Province to the other. It was impossible for any hon. member who was not determined to shut his eyes, to fail to see those holding Government appointments could use the influence which their offices gave them, for their own purposes, and thus acquire an advantage over other candidates at an election, which he (the Speaker) thought unfair, and altogether unconstitutional. It would be a libel on the good sense of that House, and on the good sense of the constituencies, to refuse to pass a Bill of this kind, on the plea that it was narrowing these privileges: it was enlarging them; for were they to fill up that branch of the Legislature with officials the people might be enslaved." The hon. member then said, these were precisely his own sentiments; and he hesitated not to say, that unless public officers directly concerned in the receipt and disbursements of public money, and all holding offices of emolument under the control of the Government should be excluded from the Assembly, the consequence would be to the enslaving of the people. In the event of a general election, it would be found that the Government, in order to secure the support of a majority in the Assembly, would exert their influence to its utmost extent

to effect the return of those men upon whom their own existence as a Government was wholly dependent; and men so returned, would not be the representatives of the people, but the nominees of the Government. Still, however successful such a Government might be, for a time, in the practice of corruption, its corruption would, in the end, prove its overthrow. In their course there lay a rock a-head, which would prove their destruction; for it would be impossible for them to steer, so as to avoid it. The majority in the House, from amongst whom the new Government would principally be taken, had cajoled the people, by instilling into their minds a hope of relief to be afforded them by an alteration in the tenure of lands. This could never be effected: they who had promised it well knew it could not; and, when this fact should become evident to the people, and could no longer be deluded by the promise of such relief, there would be an end for ever of their confidence in those who had abused it to further their own private interests, and the overthrow of the Government would be inevitable. With respect to what had been personally levelled against himself and others by the hon. member for Queen's County (Mr. Mooney) it was quite sufficient to reply, that their appointments would not have been continued to them, had their conduct proved them to be unworthy of them. If they had not done their duty, they would have been turned out of office.

Mr. MOONEY, (from his chair.) You would have been turned out long ago, would the people have had their will.

Mr. LONGWORTH. We have only the hon. member's word for that; and I, for one, attach very little value to it.

Mr. POPE said, nothing tended to degrade the House so much, as the indulgence of personalities in debate. The hon. member who had just sat down scarcely ever rose without ascribing unworthy motives to those whose views of public questions and public policy differed from his own. Such a mode of meeting the arguments of those to whom he stood opposed, was not only most unfair, but low and grovelling in an extreme degree, and indicated a paucity of ideas whereunto to support his views. He had no right whatever to impute motives to any individual, the existence of which it was impossible for him to prove. Where, however, he attempted to base his arguments upon facts, he was not much more successful in establishing his own views, than when he sought to discredit those of individuals to whom he was opposed by the unfounded ascription of unworthy designs. He had said, that in England, all who were directly concerned in the receipt of disbursements of public money were excluded from seats in the House of Commons; but that was not the fact. No one was more concerned in, or more immediately connected with the management of the Public revenue, than the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and yet, not only had he a seat in the House of Commons, but he was absolutely necessary, for the due consideration of all matters connected with the public revenue and public expenditure that he should be a member of the House.

But to come nearer home, was not Mr. Howe in Nova Scotia, a member of Assembly and the Government leader therein, at the same time that he held the office of Collector of Excise. It was, indeed, true that, in the very same spirit which actuated some of those who were opposed to a change in the Government here, and particularly to those whom they expected to constitute the new Government, that gentleman's character had been assailed with the most rancorous hostility, and the most unworthy motives had been ascribed to all his public actions. He was represented as the most abandoned and prodigal of men; and persecuted with such unceasing and determined malignity, that, in the end, he resigned his situation. He had, however, happily lived to obtain a complete but honest and honorable triumph, over those who had, as unjustly as unsparingly maligning his character and opposed his endeavours to obtain for the people of Nova Scotia a full participation in the benefits of the British Constitution, and now in the possession of a place