

THE EXAMINER

A Weekly Journal of Politics, Literature, and News.

Vol. XIV.

Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Monday, June 6, 1864.

New Series.—No. 27.

COLONIAL LEGISLATURE.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

SATURDAY, April 23.

On motion of the Hon. Mr. Dingwell, the Bill to facilitate the proceedings in the Court of Chancery, in cases where the defendants, or any of them, shall be absent from the Island, was read a third time and passed.

Hon. Mr. Yeo moved that the Bill for the regulation of the oyster fisheries be now read the third time.

Hon. Mr. Anderson moved, in amendment, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Beer, that the said Bill be not read a third time, but that the same be again referred to a Committee of the whole House, for the purpose of striking out the words, "the formation of new beds," in the preamble of the Bill. Agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. McDonald then moved, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Yeo, that it also be an instruction to the said committee, to further amend the said Bill by striking out the words, "in his possession," in the second section of the said Bill.

The House divided on Mr. McDonald's motion.

Contents.—Hon. Mr. McDonald.

Non-Contents.—Hon. Messrs. Henderson, Beer, Goff, Ramsay, McLaren, Anderson, Yeo, Lord, Walker, and Dingwell.

The Bill was then recommitted, and the preamble amended, by striking out the words above named.

On motion of the Hon. Mr. Henderson, the Bill to authorize the establishment of certain additional Small Debt Courts in this Island was read a third time, and the question being put, "whether this Bill shall pass?" the House divided on the motion:—

Contents.—Hon. Messrs. Beer, Henderson, Ramsay, McLaren, Anderson, Yeo, Lord, Walker, and Dingwell.

Non-Contents.—Hon. Messrs. McDonald and Goff.

So it was resolved in the affirmative.

On motion of the Hon. Mr. Ramsay, the Bill to further amend the Laws relating to Education, and to explain and amend the Act for the establishment of the Prince of Wales College, was read the third time and passed.

The Bill in addition to the Act to require clergymen and others authorized to solemnize marriages to return certificates thereof to the Surrogate of this Island, and to require clergymen to keep a record of baptisms, was read a second time, passed through committee, and agreed to without any amendment.

The Bill to alter and amend the Act for facilitating the partition of lands held by persons as joint tenants, co-partners, or tenants in common, was re-committed, and reported agreed to.

A Bill was brought from the House of Assembly, by the Hon. Col. Sec., to incorporate the P. E. Island Steam Navigation Company. —Read the first time.

Hon. Attorney General presented a Bill to alter the Act for the trial of actions in a summary way, and to make certain provisions for the trial of appeals from inferior courts to the Supreme Court of Judicature.

On presenting this Bill, his honor remarked that it had been often found, in cases of appeal, that the court was placed in difficulty when the facts were disputed and contradictory evidence adduced. It had been suggested, that it would be better to call in a jury to decide such cases, and the object of this Bill was to give the Court power to do so.

Adjourned till Monday next, at 11 o'clock.

MONDAY, April 25.

On motion of the Hon. Mr. McDonald, the Bill to incorporate the Prince Edward Island Steam Navigation Company was read a second time. The said Bill was then committed to a committee of the whole House, and reported agreed to without any amendment.

On motion of the Hon. Mr. Dingwell, the Bill in addition to the Act to require clergymen and others authorized to solemnize marriages to return certificates thereof to the Surrogate of the Island, and to require clergymen to keep a record of baptisms, was read the third time and passed.

On motion of the Hon. Mr. McDonald, the Bill to incorporate the Prince Edward Island Steam Navigation Company was read a third time and passed.

On motion of the Hon. Mr. Beer, the Bill to alter and amend the Act for facilitating the partition of lands held by persons as joint tenants, co-partners, or tenants in common was read the third time and passed.

BILL FOR SETTLING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LANDLORD AND TENANT.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL, on rising to move the second reading of the Bill intimated "An Act for settling differences between landlord and tenant, and to enable tenants on certain townships to purchase the fee-simple of their farms," said,—"The principal object of this Bill is to provide that the tenants on the various townships owned by those proprietors who submitted to the Land Commission, and signed the reference to the commissioners, shall be enabled to purchase their farms at the rate fixed by the Bill, fifteen years' purchase; and at the same time to enact that all arrears of rent due on those townships prior to the year 1858 should be forgiven; and also that all bonds, judgments, &c., given for rent due previous to that time shall be cancelled, except in about a dozen cases. These are the main and principal features of the Bill. Its provisions must be fully known to your honors, for they have been fully canvassed and discussed in the other end of this building, and I therefore deem it unnecessary to take up much of your honors' time in explaining the details of the Bill. It gives the tenant the right to purchase at the rate which I have named, and it leaves it open for him to avail himself of this advantage or not as he may think proper or find himself able; but it renders it compulsory on the proprietor to sell when the tenant shall offer him that price. A period of ten years is allowed, during which that right shall be open to the tenants. At any time within that period the tenant can tender the amount, fifteen years' purchase, and demand a deed in fee-simple of his farm. This, I think, will be a benefit to the tenants,—at all events, casting off the back rent up to 1858 will be a relief to a great many. This measure is one which, I hope and trust, will be acceptable to a large portion of the tenantry of this colony, and one which, I also hope, will prove very beneficial to them. It would, no doubt, be more generally acceptable to the tenantry,

and, I may add, more agreeable to the Legislature, if they could have ventured to fix the amount of the purchase money at a lower rate; but, from all that is known and experienced, and from what we find in the determination of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, there does not appear to be any prospect that the British Government would sanction any compulsory measure, such as this is, where the purchase money was fixed at a lower rate than that in the Bill,—fifteen years' purchase. We have reason to believe that this Bill will meet with the approbation of the Colonial Minister. His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor has indicated his opinion to his Government, that a measure of this kind would be one such as would meet the sanction of the Imperial Government, and such as they would venture to give their assent to; but we could not fix the price at a lower rate with any prospect of the measure becoming law, knowing the formidable opposition it would meet with from the landlords. Under these circumstances, there appears no alternative but to pass the Bill in these terms. To defer the measure with any vague prospect of passing a bill which would be more favorable to the tenantry, would, I think, be foolish, and would disappoint the hopes of a number of persons who are anxious to see some final legislation upon this question. It would be deferring it to an indefinite period; and it appears to me to be the soundest and best policy to adopt this measure, seeing that we have some hopes that it is one that Her Majesty's Government will consider reasonable, and which will meet their approbation and be carried into law. There will still be a number of estates, the tenants on which cannot avail themselves of the advantages which this Bill will offer, inasmuch as the proprietors of those estates did not consent to the Land Commission, nor agree to abide by the commissioners' decision; but the Legislature can only look forward to as early a period as may be found practicable to adopt measures, either by a loan or otherwise, to meet the condition of those classes. At present, we cannot venture to do so, as we have a demand of upwards of £18,000 upon us for a debt which was incurred in the purchase of the Worrell Estate, which was an unfortunate purchase, and has not turned out successfully. The Debentures must be redeemed in the course of a few months, and we have no way to redeem them but to authorize the issue of new debentures. They must also be issued at a higher rate of interest, so as to meet a sale. This will entail a heavy debt on the colony; and perhaps it would not be wise to incur any further debt this year, by issuing any more debentures for the purchase of proprietors' lands. There may be a difference of opinion on this point, and I may say that I would be gratified if we could venture to lend the tenants such a sum of money, or a portion of it, for the purchase of the lands of those proprietors to whom the provisions of this Bill do not extend, as would prove an inducement to such proprietors to sell their lands also. However, that is a measure which may yet be passed, if not this year at a future session; but so far, I think, those who desire the well-being of the colony would do well to give their support to this Bill. It enforces nothing upon the tenantry; it is merely an offer which they may accept or not as they think proper. If they please to wait till we can get a more compulsory measure carried into law, they must only do so; but at present, while we have reason to believe that this Bill will not meet any objection on the part of the proprietors, more especially when they see that it is one which Her Majesty's Government can approve of, I think it would be wrong to let the opportunity slip, and not seize the present measure and pass it into law.

Hon. Mr. LORD: I do not think it would look well, your honors, to let this Bill pass without expressing our opinions upon it. His honor the Attorney General thought it was almost useless or unnecessary to explain the nature of the Bill, as people were already so well acquainted with it; but we have a right, and the people will expect us, to express our opinions on this subject. His honor the Attorney General thinks it will be a great benefit to the tenants; but doctors will differ, and so will we. I presume that a large proportion of the tenants will be injured by it, and for these reasons: it fixes a very high price upon the land, and it does away with the working of the Land-purchase Bill. It is only here and there that a tenant can embrace the opportunity of purchasing under this Bill, as the price fixed upon the land is so high. We know the Bill underwent a great deal of discussion in the other end of the building, and at last it passed with a small majority. Now, his honor has stated, but I do not know what he rests his argument upon, that this Bill will be a benefit to the tenantry. If we take up the newspapers, we see that meetings have been held from one end of the country to the other; and just look at the resolutions passed at those meetings: they are all opposed to this measure,—the people say positively they will not have it. How can it be a popular measure? What benefit will it be to the people? His honor thinks it will be favorably received by the Colonial Minister; but I think that is very doubtful. If the terms he offered himself would not be accepted by the Government, I am very doubtful if His Grace will receive this measure very graciously. I think he will give it the cold shoulder. We have been told that the delegates have done a great deal of good; but if they have, it is yet to be seen. I do not know, Mr. President, that it is worth my while to say anything more. I am prepared to oppose the Bill. His honor the Attorney General anticipates that we will oppose it, and thinks we will not be the friends of the country if we will oppose it; but I oppose it because I think it will not be a benefit to the country. Even the whole of the back rents up to 1858 will not be given up. There are ten or twelve cases, it is said, in which judgments have been given, that are to be excepted; but I expect we will see a fine list of them. I have been told that there are a great number of bonds and judgments given to secure rent due prior to 1858. Some of those bonds and judgments are against persons who were active in politics at the last election. Those are the men who will suffer. With these few remarks I will sit down. This question has been so often discussed, that it is worn thread-bare; but we must have a little sport on the Land Question every session. It is useful at elections, and must be kept alive.

Hon. Mr. BEER: I did intend, your honors,

to let this Bill go into committee before speaking upon it; but I would observe, in answer to his honor who has just addressed you, that I do not see how it will place the tenants in a worse position. I think it will be a benefit to them. It contemplates giving up a large amount of arrears of rent to the tenants, and also gives them the privilege of purchasing the fee-simple of their farms by paying fifteen times the amount of the annual rent. These are steps in the right direction; but I am bound to say, as an honest man, that if the measure now before your honors is all that the Government intend to bring forward this session for the settlement of the great question of the day, it falls very far short of what is required, and falls very far short of what the Government and their supporters ought to do, and have it in their power to do, in behalf of the tenantry. I freely confess, your honors, that I have been deceived. I was led to believe, from conversation with members of the Legislature, and from the letter of the delegates to His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, dated 13th October, 1863, that it was the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill to assist the tenant in becoming a freeholder, by advancing him either one half or two-thirds of the amount of his purchase-money. As yet, your honors, there is no such Bill introduced, and I am free to admit that without a Bill of that nature to assist the working of the measure now before you, it will be of little service, further than the amount of arrears of rent it remits, inasmuch as it requires the purchase money to be paid down in one sum by the tenant who agrees to purchase. I am doubtful whether more than five tenants in every hundred could or would avail themselves of such terms. Had the Government introduced a measure to assist the tenant in purchasing his farm to the amount of one half or two-thirds of the cost of it, then, under such circumstances, the fifteen years' purchase would be a loan to him well worthy of his acceptance, and which every tenant who could, by any extra exertion of his own, collect together the amount required to be paid down, ought, for his own good, to avail himself of. The measure to which I allude would work very beneficially to the tenant without being any loss to the Government. Suppose a farm about to be purchased to contain 100 acres, and the price to be £83 7s. 6d., the sum advanced to the tenant to be £55, and that sum to be returned to the Government in a period of eleven years in instalments of £5 each, with interest, the effect and positive result would be, that the tenant would actually get his land at 4s. 6d. per acre less than fifteen years' purchase, or about 12s. 6d. per acre. This may appear incredible to some of your honors, but I pledge myself to prove it. The secret lies just here: the tenant, on making his purchase, ceases to pay rent, but pays interest instead. The average yearly amount of interest he would be required to pay instead of rent, while paying back the amount advanced by the Government, would be £3 10s. 1d., while, if he did not purchase, he would have to pay £5 11s. 2d. per year rent,—so that during the eleven years there would be a saving of £22 11s. 11d., or a little over 4s. 6d. per acre. I will illustrate my observations by the following calculations: price of farm, £83 7s. 6d.; tenant advances £28 7s. 6d.; Government £55. Then the farm is purchased, the deed obtained, and the Government to hold it as security till the advance should be repaid. Suppose it to be paid back as follows:

First yr., £5, with int. on £55, £3 6, in all, £8 6 0	
Second, do., do., 45, 3 0, do., 8 0 0	
Third, do., do., 45, 2 11, do., 7 14 0	
Fourth, do., do., 40, 2 8, do., 7 8 0	
Fifth, do., do., 35, 2 2, do., 7 2 0	
Sixth, do., do., 30, 1 16, do., 6 16 0	
Seventh, do., do., 25, 1 0, do., 6 10 0	
Eighth, do., do., 20, 1 4, do., 6 4 0	
Ninth, do., do., 15, 0 18, do., 5 18 0	
Tenth, do., do., 10, 0 12, do., 5 12 0	
Eleventh, do., do., 5, 0 6, do., 5 6 0	
	£74 10 0

Debit the eleven years' rent, which the tenant would have to pay if he did not purchase, £51 2 10

Add to this the amount advanced by the tenant, 28 7 6

Interest on £55, 18 14 11

Total cost of farm over rent, £90 15 7

Thus your honors will perceive that the average interest on the Government advance would be 36s. per year, and the interest on the tenants' advance would be 21s. 1d. per year, which would make £3 10s. 1d. instead of £5 11s. 2d. per year rent. In other words, if the tenant does not purchase his farm, he has to pay in the eleven years £51 2s. 10d. rent; but if he did purchase, by paying £90 15s. 7d. over that amount, as I have before indicated, in the eleven years, he would become a freeholder at about twelve shillings per acre. And here I would observe that in this calculation I charge, in the price the tenant would have to pay for the land, £18 14s., which he actually would not pay,—that is, the eleven years' interest on the amount the tenant would advance when he would agree to purchase; so that all the cost that would actually come out of the tenant's pocket, over and above his eleven years' rent, would be less than 9s. per acre. But as the tenant would advance that sum when he would agree to purchase, it would be nothing but right to charge the cost of the farm with the interest until all would be paid. I do not mean to say, your honors, that it is absolutely necessary for the Government to advance two-thirds of the purchase money. Even one half would amazingly help many hundreds of the tenants to obtain the fee-simple of their farms, who—without assistance—must remain as they are. I would stake my reputation as a business man that it would be the very best investment for the benefit of the country at large that could possibly be made. Supposing the Government were only to advance one half of the purchase-money, or say £40 on a good improved farm of 100 acres, and that the amount of £10,000 a-year, for five, six, or even ten years; what would be the probable result? But before I answer that question I would ask, is there any danger of the debentures being at a discount if they were not taken by the proprietors? I should say not. I believe that if debentures to the amount of £10,000 were now thrown into the market, bearing interest at six per cent., and redeemable in ten years, the competition for them would be so keen that if they were sold at auction they would command a premium; and no doubt many of the proprietors would be glad to take them as a good and safe investment. Under the operation of such a

measure some hundreds of those who are now tenants would every year become freeholders; and in three or four years the proprietors would begin to see that it would not pay to keep up expensive agencies on the Island. The balance of their lands would then be offered to the local Government at moderate prices, and the poorer class of tenants would be in a better position to participate in the general benefit. The tenants also of the non-consenting proprietors would petition and remonstrate to be placed on the same footing as the other tenants, and the proprietors, one after another, would give way, until the whole tenantry of the Island would have the opportunity of purchasing their farms, either from the proprietors or from the local Government. Do your honors suppose there is any reason to fear that the Government advance or instalments would not be paid back? I confess I have no fear on that ground, as the advance would only be given to those who were able to pay down one-third or one-half of the purchase money of their farms. Under the operation of such an Act as I am now advocating, I have no doubt but the advance made by the Government would be paid back by thousands before the debentures became due. Many a tenant would pay the whole advance in half the time allowed, in order to save the interest. In the meantime every estate that could be purchased, under the land purchase Act, at a price that would pay to sell out to the tenants, would undoubtedly be laid hold of; and thus, between the joint operation of the three Acts, in ten years' time there would be precious few tenants remaining in Prince Edward Island. It may be argued, in opposition to this, that this would be legislating for the more immediate benefit of the better class of tenants, and that the claims of the poor should be of paramount importance. In reply, I would say that it is impossible to legislate upon the land question, with any chance of success, so as to meet the case of the poor man at first, or otherwise than in an indirect way. True, the release from an accumulation of arrears of rent will be some relief to many a poor man; but as a general measure, the Bill now before your honors, accompanied or followed by one such as I have indicated, would, in the first place, benefit only the well-to-do class of the tenantry, but I am certain that the effect would very soon be greatly to the advantage and relief of the poorer class of the tenantry. Not one of your honors would more gladly support any measure to give the required and immediate relief to the poor man than I would myself; and I trust that I shall not be charged with egotism when I say that from my business transactions with a large number of the tenantry, I have as much knowledge of their circumstances as any of your honors. I also know that their patience is well nigh exhausted; and it is no wonder, for the conduct of some of the proprietors has had a tendency to exasperate the people. They have broken faith with their tenants; and is it any wonder that the tenants are now all in a ferment? The proprietors agreed to abide by the result of the land commission, but when they thought that its effect would be more in favor of the tenants than themselves, they took an objection to the award, which, as the Duke of Newcastle observed, "they might have waived;" hence all the uproar throughout the country, and the result will, I fear, be anything but beneficial to the tenantry. The Government have it now in their power to do the tenantry a very essential service; in fact they have a golden opportunity, which—if they allow to pass unimproved—will, I fear, result in consequences disastrous alike to themselves and the country at large. I know that a considerable number of the members of the legislature, in each end of this building, are strongly in favor of the introduction of such a measure as I have spoken of; but I am sorry to find that there are a few who are either timid or doubtful of its effect, and consequently its introduction is delayed. I would support such a measure, even if I knew that the final result would be a loss to the treasury of from £10,000 to £20,000, or as much as we will sink by the purchase of the Worrell Estate, as it would be more than counterbalanced by the general good that would result to the tenantry at large, by undermining and getting rid of the leasehold or rent-paying system; but I have no fear of any loss, or at most only a trifling one, which the country would cheerfully sustain. I will not oppose the Bill before your honors, for it is, as I before stated, a step in the right direction; but I cannot help expressing my disappointment at the non-introduction of a measure to aid and assist the operation of the Bill now before us. By the delay, the Government are, in my humble opinion, though not intentionally, guilty of political suicide. I may be told that it will be introduced at the next session, and I have no doubt but it will be introduced; but the present opportunity is thrown away, and another year, with amazing increased agitation, is unnecessarily allowed to elapse. But what guaranty is there that the present Government will have the opportunity of bringing it forward at another session? I am perfectly satisfied in my own mind that, in the possible event of a change of Government, the present opposition would not hesitate one moment in preparing and introducing such a measure, and doing their best to carry it through; but I have not that confidence in the way in which it would be worked if they should succeed. I would fear the return of a similar state of things to that which existed in 1857 and 1858, when treasury warrants and debentures were at from ten to fifteen per cent. discount. When schoolmasters, road contractors, and in fact all public servants had to submit, in many instances, to a loss of nearly one quarter of their earnings. I would say to the Government, "the time to make hay is when the sun shines." A more convenient season than the present may never occur. But possibly, your honors, I have been premature in making these remarks. It may be that such a measure as I have alluded to is in course of preparation; if so, I will hail it with pleasure.

Hon. Mr. DISWELL: I hardly know what the long speech of his honor who has just sat down amounts to. He condemns the Government for not introducing some other measure. I wish to say something on this subject, but I will not occupy much of your honors' time, for I am in the first place, I will not speak at all. I was surprised at his honor the Attorney General, for it is usual for him to make a good speech; and if he had a good subject, he could make as good a speech as any member in this building; but as he had an unpopular subject, he had just to confine himself to a few points.

I do not wish to accuse the Government of dishonesty in introducing this measure; but I contend that we are not representing the wishes of the people; we are going in direct opposition to the principle of responsible government,—for if we take into consideration the meetings which have been held throughout the country, and the resolutions which have been passed at those meetings and sent to the press, is it not self-evident that we are not representing the people outside of this room? It is true we were sent here by the people; but we were not returned here to put such a price upon their lands. It was partly on the religious question and partly on the commissioners' award that the present Government were returned.

The people did not authorize them to offer a price for their land; but they have held meetings throughout the country and said the Government must not offer such a price for it. This Bill contemplates giving a far greater price than the people are willing to give, as shown by the resolutions passed at their meetings; and should there not be an appeal to the people to know what they would be willing to give before such a Bill as this would be introduced? I know the Government depends on this question; and if they cannot make a settlement of it they should acknowledge that they have failed, and they should resign. That is my opinion, though I do not wish the Government to resign at the present time; but I do say, that they should not legislate contrary to the will of the people. The people have no power over this House at the present time any further than they can petition; and there is no other power over us. The Crown cannot dissolve this House, and the only means the people have of making themselves heard is by petition. We can force what they do not sanction, but is that to be tolerated? I do not stand here to oppose a reasonable measure, but an unreasonable one,—one which is being forced upon the people,—and therefore I cannot sanction it. I see this Bill gives the fishery reserves, and I ask what right have we to surrender to the proprietors the rights of the poor fishermen? It is no matter how poor or how few they are, their rights should be protected; and they will be protected if they petition the Imperial Government. Those grants to the fishermen were free and unconditional. They had no arrears to pay, and their right to those reserves has never been forfeited. It may be asked where are the fishermen? But there are, at least, as many fishermen as there are proprietors; and is not the poor man's right to his five ponds as sacred to him as the rich man's is to his thousands? And when I look around me and see the marks of many years on the heads of your honors, I cannot help thinking that you will consent to take away the poor man's right, and place it in the hands of the grasping proprietors. Surely your honors, who are sent here to legislate for and do justice to all classes, cannot do so. If a poor man should attempt to exercise any right upon what was not his own, he would be dragged into court; and why should such an honor be given to a man, for instance, who has a few inferior farms, and the proprietor of which asks twenty or twenty-five shillings an acre for it; but I say the poorer class of men should be our principal consideration. Those who can pay fifteen years' purchase, and their back-rent, are not so much in need of our legislation. This Bill will have the effect of raising the price of land which can now be bought for less than fifteen shillings an acre, for a great deal of the land in the country is not worth that much, and in this way the poor man will be injured. The Bill, then, will be a little benefit to the rich man, it is, therefore, a step in the wrong direction, in my opinion. It is said that it would be a great favor to the tenants to have the back rent forgiven up to 1858. Now, I ask, when the proprietors have been forgotten so much,—when so much indulgence has been shown to them and so little to the tenants,—should not they be relieved of all their rent up to the present time? If your honors are going to pass an Act, should it be one to benefit the proprietors,—to give up to them the fishery reserves and the arrears? No; I hope your honors will not consent to this. I know the effect of a Government measure upon this House. I know that if it were not for that, it would not pass. (Question, question?)

Hon. Mr. GORF: It is not right to insinuate that there is a pressure upon any members of this House, to prevent them from voting as they think proper.

Hon. Mr. DISWELL: I think I should know what is right as well as any of your honors; and I believe I can make such allusions as long as I do not mention names.

Hon. THE PRESIDENT: No, it is unparliamentary to impute motives to any member of the House, or to any party.

Hon. Mr. DISWELL: I have no written speech, but I said that the influence of the Government would be the means of passing the Bill; and I would ask, is that saying anything against one man more than another. His Honor the Attorney General said the Fishery Reserve Question had always been a difficult question, and perhaps it is; but if there is anything that will be the means of losing this Bill, it will be confirming those reserves to the proprietors, for the Duke of Newcastle is not the man to take away a right from any class of people.

Hon. Mr. YEO: If this Bill will not do any good it certainly will not do any harm. It strikes off the back rents to 1858, and it gives the great boon to the country; and it also gives the right to purchase for fifteen times the annual rent at any time within ten years. Talk about the fishery reserves! That question has been agitated for the last twenty-five years, and what is the result of it? What benefit has it been to the fishermen? And what is the use of offering the reserves to the proprietors? We cannot fix the price of a merchant's goods; we may refuse to buy, and that is all we can do. As soon as this Bill passes, those tenants who can buy will do so, and the landlords will sell at a lower price when all the best of their tenants are gone. There are some tenants who would not buy their farms at any price, and we should buy them for them; but the best thing the Government can do for the tenants, I am sorry that nothing better can be done; but it will be some benefit. I own a good deal of land myself, and I would sell some of it at a lower price, but I do not say that every one would do the same.

Hon. Mr. GORF: It is said that the proprietors have not good titles to the lands which they claim. I believe they have, and the Commissioners declared that their titles could not now be disturbed. If so, it is not to be expected that we could dictate terms to them, or say they should sell their land for so much, for it is well known that nothing can be done with the rights of property. And even if their titles were not strictly legal, yet the Imperial Government will not allow them to be interfered with, how are we going to pass compulsory measures to compel the proprietors to make concessions to their tenants? I look upon this Bill as one of the best measures ever proposed in the colony, for I expect it will become law. It will be binding upon the proprietors, but it will not be binding upon the tenants. It will secure the remission of arrears of rent to the amount of £40,000 or £50,000, and which can be recovered from every man who owes any, or a stock of corn or hay to buy

upon. It is a debt hanging over the heads of the tenants, which damps their energies, and prevents them, in many cases, from disposing of their farms when they wish to do so. I contend that this will be a great advantage. And as regards the purchase money, the proprietors have consented to a reduction of one fourth, which I think will be a great boon to the tenants, and if we rejected it we would be highly censurable. The Bill does not fix the price of land; it only compels the proprietors to take fifteen years' purchase in place of twenty which they formerly asked. I do not, therefore, see why we should object to the Bill, for the Government only interfered so far as to induce the proprietors to make a reduction in the price of their land, and it leaves the tenant free to purchase at that price, or, as they may think proper, to regard the fishing reserves. I think it would be a great grievance to have them thrown open to the public. What right would I have to the front of my farm if it were made public property? Would it not be better for a man to give a few pounds than to have the front of his farm taken on, and perhaps a fisherman's boat built in his garden or perhaps a school built in the Government to assist the tenant in purchasing their farms has been spoken of, and it is thought that such a Bill could be made to work to advantage. Well, it is the prerogative of the House of Assembly to bring in such a Bill, and if it were introduced I would probably support it, but I would be very cautious in entailing a burden upon our successors; yet I have a Bill of that kind will be introduced, and the amount the Government will be authorized to grant limited to a certain sum. It is time enough yet to bring in a Bill of that kind. It will be necessary for the tenants to make exertions to make up a portion of the purchase money, and it is necessary to see how the debentures will be disposed of in the market. These things would have to be fully considered before the Government made any advances for that purpose.

Hon. Mr. HENDERSON: Your honors, if I am not mistaken, there is a strong disposition shown by some individuals to make a party of the House to apply the curb, and as I am the youngest among you in politics, I am desirous of knowing whether the freedom of debate, which is agreeable to common usage, is to be denied here? If so, I will sit down at once, for I will not submit to any bit of bondage. His honor the President, in his honor will, of course, be allowed all the privileges which he has a right to claim.

Hon. Mr. HENDERSON: Well then, your honors, in making some general remarks in connection with the Bill, and the motion now before the House, I will take up the assertion of his honor from the First District of Prince County (Mr. L. GORF), that "this Bill will be a great benefit to the country;—that it will make political capital,"—together with the very important evidence against his own party, which he lately gave before your honors, when he said that he "did not believe that either party was sincere in their desire to settle the land question." The assertion and the evidence I cannot help observing that it is not a matter of course, and that we do not wish to allow any statement to go abroad without being fully examined, so that people may see that we take an interest in what they should, and what they should not believe. I have supported the party at present in power, and they have not given any proof of sincerity yet, but the moment I have reason to believe they are not sincere, I will not support them. In speaking on this subject I will first take up the evidence which I have already referred to, and will look out for something to corroborate it. In looking over the "Parliamentary Reporter" for the Session of 1855, when the Liberals were in the minority, and the Conservatives in the majority, I find a number of resolutions which were introduced to support him on the question of each, or any other kindred subject, met with the most determined and bitter opposition from the Government party. At page 51 Mr. Cooper says:—"The Hon. Col. Secretary speaks with so much contempt of the two or three horse flat, that I can only wonder the really bold side of the rest are in his net, or have swallowed the bait and taken the hook; but if it is so it is a poor prospect for the poor defaulted tenantry to find that their representatives are on the hook, or in the net of the Col. Secretary." "Hon. Col. Secretary," which other member who wanted to support him on the question of each, or any other kindred subject, met with the most determined and bitter opposition from the Government party. At page 51 Mr. Cooper says:—"The Hon. Col. Secretary speaks with so much contempt of the two or three horse flat, that I can only wonder the really bold side of the rest are in his net, or have swallowed the bait and taken the hook; but if it is so it is a poor prospect for the poor defaulted tenantry to find that their representatives are on the hook, or in the net of the Col. Secretary." "Hon. Col. Secretary," which other member who wanted to support him on the question of each, or any other kindred subject, met with the most determined and bitter opposition from the Government party. At page 51 Mr. Cooper says:—"The Hon. Col. Secretary speaks with so much contempt of the two or three horse flat, that I can only wonder the really bold side of the rest are in his net, or have swallowed the bait and taken the hook; but if it is so it is a poor prospect for the poor defaulted tenantry to find that their representatives are on the hook, or in the net of the Col. Secretary." "Hon. Col. Secretary," which other member who wanted to support him on the question of each, or any other kindred subject, met with the most determined and bitter opposition from the Government party. At page 51 Mr. Cooper says:—"The Hon. Col. Secretary speaks with so much contempt of the two or three horse flat, that I can only wonder the really bold side of the rest are in his net, or have swallowed the bait and taken the hook; but if it is so it is a poor prospect for the poor defaulted tenantry to find that their representatives are on the hook, or in the net of the Col. Secretary." "Hon. Col. Secretary," which other member who wanted to support him on the question of each, or any other kindred subject, met with the most determined and bitter opposition from the Government party. At page 51 Mr. Cooper says:—"The Hon. Col. Secretary speaks with so much contempt of the two or three horse flat, that I can only wonder the really bold side of the rest are in his net, or have swallowed the bait and taken the hook; but if it is so it is a poor prospect for the poor defaulted tenantry to find that their representatives are on the hook, or in the net of the Col. Secretary." "Hon. Col. Secretary," which other member who wanted to support him on the question of each, or any other kindred subject, met with the most determined and bitter opposition from the Government party. At page 51 Mr. Cooper says:—"The Hon. Col. Secretary speaks with so much contempt of the two or three horse flat, that I can only wonder the really bold side of the rest are in his net, or have swallowed the bait and taken the hook; but if it is so it is a poor prospect for the poor defaulted tenantry to find that their representatives are on the hook, or in the net of the Col. Secretary." "Hon. Col. Secretary," which other member who wanted to support him on the question of each, or any other kindred subject, met with the most determined and bitter opposition from the Government party. At page 51 Mr. Cooper says:—"The Hon. Col. Secretary speaks with so much contempt of the two or three horse flat, that I can only wonder the really bold side of the rest are in his net, or have swallowed the bait and taken the hook; but if it is so it is a poor prospect for the poor defaulted tenantry to find that their representatives are on the hook, or in the net of the Col. Secretary." "Hon. Col. Secretary," which other member who wanted to support him on the question of each, or any other kindred subject, met with the most determined and bitter opposition from the Government party. At page 51 Mr. Cooper says:—"The Hon. Col. Secretary speaks with so much contempt of the two or three horse flat, that I can only wonder the really bold side of the rest are in his net, or have swallowed the bait and taken the hook; but if it is so it is a poor prospect for the poor defaulted tenantry to find that their representatives are on the hook, or in the net of the Col. Secretary." "Hon. Col. Secretary," which other member who wanted to support him on the question of each, or any other kindred subject, met with the most determined and bitter opposition from the Government party. At page 51 Mr. Cooper says:—"The Hon. Col. Secretary speaks with so much contempt of the two or three horse flat, that I can only wonder the really bold side of the rest are in his net, or have swallowed the bait and taken the hook; but if it is so it is a poor prospect for the poor defaulted tenantry to find that their representatives are on the hook, or in the net of the Col. Secretary." "Hon. Col. Secretary," which other member who wanted to support him on the question of each, or any other kindred subject, met with the most determined and bitter opposition from the Government party. At page 51 Mr. Cooper says:—"The Hon. Col. Secretary speaks with so much contempt of the two or three horse flat, that I can only wonder the really bold side of the rest are in his net, or have swallowed the bait and taken the hook; but if it is so it is a poor prospect for the poor defaulted tenantry to find that their representatives are on the hook, or in the net of the Col. Secretary." "Hon. Col. Secretary," which other member who wanted to support him on the question of each, or any other kindred subject, met with the most determined and bitter opposition from the Government party. At page 51 Mr. Cooper says:—"The Hon. Col. Secretary speaks with so much contempt of the two or three horse flat, that I can only wonder the really bold side of the rest are in his net, or have swallowed the bait and taken the hook; but if it is so it is a poor prospect for the poor defaulted tenantry to find that their representatives are on the hook, or in the net of the Col. Secretary." "Hon. Col. Secretary," which other member who wanted to support him on the question of each, or any other kindred subject, met with the most determined and bitter opposition from the Government party. At page 51 Mr. Cooper says:—"The Hon. Col. Secretary speaks with so much contempt of the two or three horse flat, that I can only wonder the really bold side of the rest are in his net, or have swallowed the bait and taken the hook; but if it is so it is a poor prospect for the poor defaulted tenantry to find that their representatives are on the hook, or in the net of the Col. Secretary." "Hon. Col. Secretary," which other member who wanted to support him on the question of each, or any other kindred subject, met with the most determined and bitter opposition from the Government party. At page 51 Mr. Cooper says:—"The Hon. Col. Secretary speaks with so much contempt of the two or three horse flat, that I can only wonder the really bold side of the rest are in his net, or have swallowed the bait and taken the hook; but if it is so it is a poor prospect for the poor defaulted tenantry to find that their representatives are on the hook, or in the net of the Col. Secretary." "Hon. Col. Secretary," which other member who wanted to support him on the question of each, or any other kindred subject, met with the most determined and bitter opposition from the Government party. At page 51 Mr. Cooper says:—"The Hon. Col. Secretary speaks with so much contempt of the two or three horse flat, that I can only wonder the really bold side of the rest are in his net, or have swallowed the bait and taken the hook; but if it is so it is a poor prospect for the poor defaulted tenantry to find that their representatives are on the hook, or in the net of the Col. Secretary." "Hon. Col. Secretary," which other member who wanted to support him on the question of each, or any other kindred subject, met with the most determined and bitter opposition from the Government party. At page 51 Mr. Cooper says:—"The Hon. Col. Secretary speaks with so much contempt of the two or three horse flat, that I