

sent. Sir Charles Fitzroy's conduct clearly showed that he did not act in reality, as he would endeavour to make it appear. From the private representations sent to England by Sir Charles Fitzroy and Sir Henry Huntley, no despatches based on them could be relied on. It is very well for hon. members to say that Escheat was finally settled. It was not, however, dead in 1850. The despatch brought out by Sir Alexander Bannerman showed that the Ministry at home knew, from private information, what the new Governor would meet on coming to the Colony. If the Land Purchase Bill was the last measure for the relief of the people from the oppression of their landlords, it would be no use in discussing this question, but, Mr. Chairman, I am inclined to consider that Bill but as a beginning. I would, for one, just as soon see the lands in the hands of the proprietors as to see the landlords joining a set of speculators in taxing labor. My desire, Mr. Chairman, is that I may see the people treated as British subjects, not as aliens or bastards by the Imperial Government. (Laughter.) Oh, hon. members may laugh, but I repeat it, Mr. Chairman, that they have been so treated, and I do not wonder at it, when those who ought to stand up for the rights of the people are found on the side of their oppressors. Since we have Responsible Government, if the Governor and Council state the views of the people to the Council, we can obtain what we wish. I must, however, Mr. Chairman, confess that I expected from Responsible Government more than I have seen. (Laughter.) I had no intention of turning out one set of land speculators to put in another. I am willing to give the present Government credit for the good they have done and all they may do. I will give them credit for the Education Bill and the Tenants' Compensation Bill, but not for playing the game of the proprietors. I have heard hints of some members of this House speculating in lands, and from what I see, I am inclined to think it is the case. If this is the only way of relieving the tenants, they might as well remain in the purgatory in which they have been tormented for so many years. (Laughter.) I have no desire, Mr. Chairman, to turn out the present Government; they will, probably, last my time. But I am astonished at the way this question is treated in the House. We are met by the opponents of the measure as if we were advocating some dishonest scheme to rob people of their property. Mr. Chairman, if I had not a constitutional right to a Court of Escheat, I would never stand up in favor of it; but as a British subject, I feel that the people are entitled to it, and they who oppose their obtaining it are the parties who are taking away the rights of others. I see no reason for any one objecting to the establishment of a Court of Escheat. Let us have it; and if the lands cannot be escheated, as has been said, the Court can do no harm. Then why not have the Court? The complaints of the people are that there is no such Court. In the time of Governor Smith, a Township was escheated in two or three days after he issued his proclamation, and I believe if he had staid in the Colony, every Township would have been escheated, and the people have as much right to Escheat now as they had at that time.

HON. COL. SECRETARY. I rise, Mr. Chairman, merely for the purpose of answering that part of the hon. member's observations, which insinuate that the Government were in league with a third party, namely, land speculators in the purchase of the Worrel Estate. That statement is not true—the hon. member knows that the Government had not power to compel parties to sell their lands. But, Sir, when the Liberal party assumed the Government, they gave notice to the Trustees of Worrel Estate, that they were prepared to receive offers from them—they could not say to them "you must sell the property, whether you wish to do so or not." Then came the vote of want of confidence, which displaced the Liberal Government, and before they returned to power, Messrs. Pope & Co. had purchased from the Trustees. If Mr. Pope had continued to hold the property, he would have put the people to great trouble and inconvenience. And, Sir, as to the price—the Government gave no more than the amount which was asked from Captain Sleigh. The press opposed to the Government stated that it would cost twenty shillings an acre, we got it for six shillings an acre with the back rents. As to the assertion of the hon. member—that members of this House have been speculating in the lands. I deny it, and now call upon him to name a single individual to whom his charge will apply. Not one Liberal member has purchased

100 acres, and none could obtain more than 300. So there is not much chance of speculating in that. So far from the Government not taking all necessary precautions to guard the interests of the people, I can only state that Messrs. Pope & Company were dissatisfied at the strictness with which we conducted the negotiation for the purchase.

HON. MR. MOSTOWSKY.—Mr. Chairman, the question of Escheat has been agitated now for a very long time, and I do not agree with the Hon. Col. Secretary when he says, that the petitions before the House on the subject originated from a few individuals in Charlottetown. I know, Sir, that it has long excited great interest throughout the country. The tenantry were promised that they would have their lands on better terms when once Responsible Government was introduced, and I know that political capital was made out of it at the Elections. The first year after the introduction of Responsible Government, handbills in support of the Liberal candidates were circulated, in which it was stated, that the Land Question would be settled. The people understood by that, that a Court of Escheat would be established, and several were elected on the strength of that idea. As to the argument that the Home Government would not allow a Court of Escheat to be established because they had previously refused it, we know that many things have been granted which had previously been denied. I see no reason, Mr. Chairman, for Hon. Members objecting to the establishment of a legal and constitutional Court of Escheat, if for no other purpose than to put an end to the agitation of this question. A proprietor having a good title to his land will have no cause to fear an investigation, and should in my opinion, be the first to support the institution of such a Court, and I think it our duty, Sir, to endeavour to obtain the Court, only to quiet the minds of the people, which will not be until the Court shall have been established. I shall support the Resolution as having for its object the attainment of a legal and constitutional right, and not only on that ground, but with a view, as I said before, to terminate the future agitation of this question, and allay the excitement in the minds of the people. Why, Sir, I know one Township where the people refuse to pay their rents, as they were led to believe that the Government intended to take the lands from the proprietors, and grant them to the tenants. I must say, Sir, in justice to the Hon. Col. Secretary, that I never heard of his having made such promises, but I know that persons have been going about the country, instilling into the minds of the people, the idea that the Liberal party would obtain an Escheat of the proprietor's lands.

HON. MR. LOMB.—Really, Mr. Chairman, a new light appears to have dawned on the mind of the Hon. Member who has just sat down. We heard nothing of this last winter, when he and his party were in power. As to political capital having been made at the last general Election, out of promises of free lands to the tenantry, I have seen it stated in the *Islander* newspaper, that I promised the inhabitants of Lot 19, to get them free lands. Now, Sir, I deny the assertion most positively, I never promised any thing of the kind, and Escheat was never mentioned at any meeting on Lot 19, at which I was present. I believe Mr. Todd's Title to Lot 19 is good, and, Mr. Chairman, I deny that the agitation of this question is general throughout this Island; I admit there may be some excitement about it in two or three sections. About East Point there is a little interest felt in it. It has been discussed for the last 20 years, and I would like to know what good has resulted from the agitation of it? What benefit did the people gain from the mission to England of the Hon. Member (Mr. Cooper), which cost £300? But, Mr. Chairman, I am surprised at the Hon. Members, Messrs. Cooper and McIntosh, stating that the tenants on the Worrel Estate are no better off than they were before. Why, Sir, I was informed by Mr. Charles Dingwell that some of the tenants had agreed for the purchase of their lands at three pounds an acre, and when I stated that surely Mr. Pope would not enforce the bonds, he told me that he would. Sir, I maintain that the tenants on that Estate who have availed themselves of the provisions of the Land Purchase Bill, are much better off than they were before. Why, Sir, look at the land about St. Peter's Bay, which is the highest priced of the whole Estate, the tenants can get that at 12s. 6d. an acre, and will any man tell me that Mr. Pope would have sold those lands at that price? No, Sir, he would not have given it for double that amount. I am decidedly opposed to any further agitation of this question, and I must say that it does not look very well to see certain parties now supporting the Hon. Member Mr. Cooper, on this question. I recollect, Mr. Chairman, the time when that Hon. Member, and Mr. McIntosh were brought to the Bar of the House, for their concurrence at the famous Hay River Meeting; on that occasion some of those who now go with him, had not the spirit to raise their voices in his behalf, at the time when the Hon. Member for Charlottetown, (Messrs. Mr. Palmer), was the warm friend and supporter of the Proprietors.