

serve. Supporting such measure by such argument was as though the hon. member should justify a man for having stolen a cow, on the ground that the animal had been in his possession for a long period. The Reserves, by the express words of the original grants, remained in the Crown for fishing purposes. No Government would dare to exact exorbitant rents for the Reserves, and thus rule the tenantry with an iron rod, as the proprietary party had alleged. The intention of the Bill was to benefit the tenantry. The hon. member, Mr. POPE, had stated that the operation of the Bill would deprive freeholders of their rights, but it would have the effect of stopping the payment of rent for the Reserves. However, he doubted not the subject would be well discussed when the despatches came down.

Hon. Mr. POPE—The 5th clause claimed the sole control to be in the Government, to do with them as they pleased. One of the supporters of the Opposition had stated that the late Government had no control over the Reserves, but that they wanted to get it; and a member of the late Government, Hon. Mr. WIGHTMAN, said that the occupants would not have been disturbed. His own experience taught him a different lesson. That hon. member was one of a Government which had issued an order that he and some others should pay 1s. 6d. per foot frontage, which that hon. member himself at the time, and long before and long since, had been and was now in possession of far greater extent; for that possession he had never been called on to pay one farthing. The hon. member, Mr. COLES, had ordered a public prosecution against him.

Hon. Mr. COLES denied it. Hon. Mr. POPE had seen the order in the handwriting of the Hon. Mr. COLES himself. But, thank God, the day had gone by and he hoped would never return, when it would be in the power of any Government to gratify their vindictive feelings against a political opponent by attempting to deprive him of his property.

Mr. DOUSE had already stated his views on the question, and he was happy to say that he had been confirmed in them by the observations which had fallen from the hon. member, Mr. HOWAT. As an instance of what the tenantry might expect under the Bill, he would state that the late Government had given a license for the occupation of some Reserves on Wood Island to a Mr. Finlay, who took forcible possession, and deprived the poor tenant of his buildings and improvements. He maintained that the Government were not justified in such a course. He would rejoice to see all the shores settled by fishermen; but the hon. member, Mr. COLES, well knew that the action of the late Government on the subject was all a farce. That hon. member knew as well as any one that Escheat, the Loan Bill and the Reserves Bill, would never be realized. In 1855 that hon. member expressed himself in the following terms, in the debate on the subject of Escheat:—"When the Worrell Estate was offered to the Government, the question of Escheat did not enter into their consideration; nor was it requisite in investigating the titles that the validity of the original grants should be tested. That question the Government considered settled." Again he said, in the same speech—"Before I have done I think I shall be able to show that the British Government have expressed a positive determination not to allow the establishment of a Court of Escheat in this Colony."

After citing several passages from the reply of Sir Charles Fitzroy to an Address which had been presented to him by the inhabitants of King's County on the subject of the Land Question, the hon. member proceeded to state that the passages which he had just read were "the plain declarations of Her Majesty's Representative, that Escheat would not be conceded." Again, in the same speech after having quoted an extract from a Despatch of Sir George Grey, Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, to the same effect, the hon. member said—

"I ask what words can be used more expressive of the decision of the Government of Great Britain? Does it not emphatically declare that the Government will not sanction the establishment of a Court of Escheat? Again—"I would ask if Lord John Russell's Despatch in 1839, the year in which the hon. member was a delegate to England, does not state, as plainly and emphatically as words can, the determination of the Imperial Parliament not to sanction Escheat in this Island?"

He (Mr. Douse) could cite many statements of the hon. member to the same effect, but those which he had given were quite sufficient to shew the sentiments of the hon. member when he was at the head of a Government. Now he appeared in the character of an agitator for Escheat. The truth was, his only motive was a wish to keep the country in hot-water, as a means of getting back into power. He would wish to see the pursuits of commerce and agriculture occupy the attention of the people, who, he hoped, would no longer suffer themselves to be gulled by those who knew that their professions were "all smoke." He was satisfied that the hon. member, Mr. COOPER, could not be unconscious of the folly, not to use a worse term, of exciting the minds of the people on this subject, after so long experience of the utter uselessness of the agitation. As for himself, all his means were in the Island; he laid out his money in building ships and carrying on commerce. While such had been the nature of the business in which he had embarked, he fully agreed with the hon. member, Mr. COLES, that agriculture and fisheries were the best and surest foundation for the prosperity of the country.

Mr. DAVIES thought that it was a pity that, if the late Government had intended to take the Reserves, they had not expressly stated so in the Bill. These Reserves were comparatively of little value to the Government, but were worth a great deal to the tenant, as forming a valuable portion of his farm; and any tenant would be happy to see them used for fishing purposes. He agreed with the opinion of the hon. member, Mr. HOWAT, that it would be better to leave them as they were. Mr. COOPER had stated that they belonged to the Crown. The Colonial Minister, it appeared, entertained a different opinion, for he considered that the possession of the Proprietors for the period of sixty years, and the payment of the taxes, barred the right of the Crown; and that, consequently, the Proprietors could not be divested of the property in those Reserves.

Hon. Mr. POPE—The question of Escheat had been brought into this discussion quite unnecessarily. Doubtless there would be an extensive blow on that subject at another period of the Session. The Fishery Reserves Bill of the late Government was an unjust, dishonest and iniquitous measure—got up solely as a desperate attempt to prop up a tottering Government. That measure had been concocted in the hope of securing for the late Government a few votes along the shores. The Despatch on the subject stated that the Bill would take from the Proprietors and give the property to the tenantry. The hon. member, Mr. COLES, said the same. Then why did not the Bill expressly state so? Why was there not some clause inserted in the Bill confirming the tenants in their possession? The late Government, had the Bill received the Royal assent, would have used the influence of their position to coerce the tenants of reserves into becoming their supporters at the late general election. They could have made use of the Bill as they did of the bonds on the Worrell Estate. The hon. member, Mr. COLES, had stated that the right to the Reserves was in the Crown; but if so, only to be used for the purposes of the Fishery Reserves. No objection would be made by any tenant to the occupation of the Reserves for fishing purposes. If the only object of the Bill was the settlement of the tenants on their Reserves, why was the fifth clause, which the Hon. Mr. Longworth had read, introduced into the Bill? The real object of the Bill was not the confirmation of the possession of the tenants of their Reserves, but it was intended to be an engine of coercion to drive them to support the late Government. The despatch said that the legal maxim, that no time barred the right of the Crown, had been abandoned as unjust in principle and injurious in practice. He would ask how many men in this Island, alive at this day, could tell how much time had elapsed since the lands had been first occupied; and would it be just to those who, and whose fathers, had labored in summer's heat and winter's cold to purchase the fee simple of their farms, to invest a Government with the power, after the undisturbed possession of so many years, to strip them of the fruits of their hard labor?

Hon. Mr. WIGHTMAN would inform the hon. member that a similar Bill had been before the country some 18 or 20 years ago.

Hon. Mr. POPE—No. Hon. Mr. WIGHTMAN—Yes, and it was high time that the long vexed question was settled, in order to quiet the minds of the people. He would ask the hon. member, Mr. Palmer, what was the use of inserting the reservations in the original grants? Was it not the duty of the proprietors to have laid off the Reserves? Had they done so there would

remain no cause of dispute at this day. The first occupation of those reserves by the proprietors was neither more nor less than an act of simple usurpation. Certain portions of land were granted to the subject; other portions were reserved in the Crown. He admitted that it would be a great hardship to deprive a man of the fruits of his labor. He would be sorry so say that any Government would be justified, in the assertion of their strict rights, in taking the property of the tenant and giving it to another. The tenant should assuredly have the preference. As a member of the late Government, and a supporter of the Bill, he would state that it had never been the intention of the late Government to have charged a large sum for licenses to occupy the Reserves. They would have been issued at a nominal rate. The object of the Bill was to deprive the proprietors of the claims which they had usurped. He would be happy to support any equitable arrangement for the settlement of the question.

Hon. Mr. COLES—The hon. member, Mr. Douse, could not rise without referring to the subject of Escheat. He recollected the time when that hon. member had supported the establishment of a Court of Escheat—the time when the hon. member for Charlottetown had declared that the views of the venerable gentleman, Mr. Cooper, should be carried out, but praised the late Government for its opposition to them. He (Hon. Mr. Coles) had no cause to be ashamed of the course; he had pursued in vain to effect a settlement of the disputes between the proprietors and the tenants, without the necessity of extreme measures. But now, when all milder measures had been tried without effect, when the combined influence of the Government and the proprietary party had rendered futile all other means, he would support the institution of a Court of Enquiry, or any other Court invested with competent authority to put a final settlement to the question. Surely he should not be censured if, on the question of Escheat, he had become a convert to the views entertained by so full-blooded a Conservative as the hon. member, Mr. Douse. The question of Escheat, however, was not now before the Committee. The hon. member, Mr. DAVIES, had expressed his concurrence with the views enunciated by the hon. member, Mr. Howat, that the long possession of the proprietors confirmed their titles to the Reserves. Supporting such measure by such argument was as though the hon. member should justify a man for having stolen a cow, on the ground that the animal had been in his possession for a long period. The Reserves, by the express words of the original grants, remained in the Crown for fishing purposes. No Government would dare to exact exorbitant rents for the Reserves, and thus rule the tenantry with an iron rod, as the proprietary party had alleged. The intention of the Bill was to benefit the tenantry. The hon. member, Mr. POPE, had stated that the operation of the Bill would deprive freeholders of their rights; it would have the effect of stopping the payment of rent for the Reserves. However, he doubted not the subject would be well discussed when the despatches came down.

Hon. Mr. POPE—The 5th clause claimed the sole control to be in the Government, to do with them as they pleased. One of the supporters of the opposition had stated that the late Government had no control over the Reserves, but that they wanted to get them; and a member of the late Government, Hon. Mr. WIGHTMAN, said that the occupants would not have been disturbed. His own experience taught him a different lesson. That hon. member was one of a Government which had issued an order that he and some others should pay 1s. 6d. per foot frontage, while that hon. member himself at the time, and long before and long since, had been, and was now, in possession of shore fronts of far greater extent; for that possession he had never been called on to pay one farthing. The member, Mr. COLES, had ordered a public prosecution against him.

Hon. Mr. COLES denied it. Hon. Mr. POPE had seen the order in the handwriting of the Hon. Mr. COLES himself. But thank God, the day had gone by, and he hoped would never return, when it would be in the power of any Government to gratify their vindictive feelings against a political opponent, by attempting to deprive him of his property.

Hon. Mr. COLES denied the correctness of the statement made by the hon. member, POPE, with reference to the alleged prosecution of him for occupation of shore frontage at Summerside. Parties had applied for, and obtained permission to occupy certain portions of the shore for the purpose of building breastworks, &c., and the extent of the privilege was defined so as to leave sufficient space for vessels to lie alongside the public wharf; and if the Harbour Master, in the discharge of his public duty, had represented to the Government that the hon. member, or any others, had obstructed the access to the wharf, there was no doubt he had been instructed to take the steps pointed out by law to remove the nuisance. That hon. member had seen fit to charge the late government with having cancelled bonds given for the purchase of lands on the Worrell Estate, with a view to obtain public support. The charge was false. The late Government had thought it but an act of justice to remit so much of the amounts secured by bonds given to the former owners of the property as would leave the obligors in the same position with respect to the price of their lands, as those who had purchased directly from the Government.

Hon. Mr. POPE considered that the hon. member had betrayed as much ignorance as dishonesty, for he repeated that the letter to the Harbor Master, signed by that hon. member, expressly stated, that unless he paid 1s. 6d. per foot front he should be prosecuted. Now, that gentleman was willing to let him continue a public nuisance, on condition that he paid for it. When applied to by the Harbour Master on the subject, he had requested that officer to repair to a particularly warm climate.

Hon. Mr. THORNTON, after reading extracts from the Journals of the Assembly for 1843, 1844 and 1845, on the subject of the Reserves, said, that he had always thought it advisable, if we could not get all we wanted, to endeavour to get all we could. With reference to the Reserves Bill, he would wish those who were in possession of the Reserves, and had improved them, to keep them. As to the arguments that the proceedings under the original grants could not now be disturbed, that had been done already in some instances. The Crown Officers have given their opinion that the Reserves were in the Crown; and then assumed that they were the property of the Proprietors by long possession. He sincerely regretted that the Bill had not been sanctioned; and the reason assigned, namely, the long continued possession by the Proprietors, had somewhat surprised him. He had often heard legal gentlemen propound the maxim, that no lapse of time barred the right of the Crown. Now, it appeared, that doubts had begun to envelope that fundamental principle, and they were now told sixty years were sufficient to take away the title of the Crown. That the matter had not been finally settled, was apparent from the Despatch of the Colonial Minister, which stated that the Land Question was still the subject of his anxious consideration; and he had proposed a truly novel mode of untying the gordian knot—an arbitration, forsooth! between Proprietor and Tenant! A pretty chance truly would the poor tenant have before such a tribunal. The fable of the wolf and the lamb would be realized in the sad experience of the tenant, after submitting his rights against a proprietor to adjustment by arbitration. The only solution of the difficulty was by wise and just legislation. If the Proprietors did not own the Reserver, it was manifestly unjust in them to extort rent for them. A member of a former House, the Hon. Joseph POPE, had, if he remembered aright, suggested the appointment of Commissioners in each County to ascertain the extent of the Reserves, which should then be leased to the tenants at a moderate rent, which was to form a fund to be

applied to the compensation of any tenant whose Reserves should be taken for fishing purposes.

Mr. DAVIES was anxious for the settlement of the question as the Hon. Mr. W. Wightman, or Mr. Thornton, or any other hon. member. His sympathies were with the tenants; but he would never suffer his sympathies to influence him to the perpetration of an act of injustice. He repeated, that the possession, by the Proprietors, and their payment of taxes for so long a period gave them a good title.

Hon. Mr. PALMER considered that it was a mere waste of time to enter into a discussion of the merits of the question of the Reserves and Escheat at this time; those questions were not before the Committee; they could and doubtless, would, be discussed at sufficient length when the Despatches were brought down. The Reserve Bill had not received the Royal assent, and the amendment called upon members to regret that they regretted its loss. He hoped they would confine themselves to the subject before the Committee.

Hon. Mr. WHELAN had no desire to protract the discussion, but he differed materially from the hon. member, Mr. Palmer; that gentleman had declared the debate inopportune—that the present was not the proper time for entering into the merits of the Reserves. He would ask that hon. member what would be the proper time? For what were hon. members there, if not for the discussion and decision of all matters pertaining to the general interests of the Island? It was a farce to suppose that the reference, in the Address, to the Bill which had been disallowed, would pass without any discussion. A large party in the House, and throughout the country, were deeply interested in the success of the Bill, and his amendment, declaratory of regret at the failure of the measure, was but an expression of their sentiments.

Hon. Mr. HAVILAND—The present Government had been asked why they had not, when in opposition, given their aid in perfecting the Reserves Bill, so as to ensure its approval by the Imperial authorities. His answer was, that it was not the duty of an Opposition to aid and assist their opponents in concocting and maturing their measures. The reasons assigned for the House expressing regret at the failure of the Bill were various; and some of them extraordinary. The hon. member, Mr. Thornton, had admitted that the Bill sent home was not of as satisfactory a description as it might have been; but said he would support a Fishery Reserve Bill, no matter how unjust and iniquitous, if it had the effect of giving a *quietus* to this question. Hon. members of the Opposition had stated that it had never been the intention of the late Government to exact Rent for the Reserves from the tenants in occupation. Why then was the 5th clause inserted? In the preparation of the Bill the late Government had had the benefit of the professional services of their Law Clerk, and the Crown Officers, and that was sufficient justification for him in deducing the meaning from the words of the Act itself. The hon. member, Mr. Howat, layman though he was, had read the Bill in accordance with the dictates of common sense, and as Lawyers would construe it. It was idle to say that the Bill would confer a boon on the tenantry. They were in a far better position now, with their leases for 999 years, at the annual rent of a shilling per acre, than they would be when placed at the tender mercies of the Government of the day. On many of the shore farms, the tenants had erected their buildings, within the limits of the Reserves. It might be that the Opposition supposed a tenant would rather pay a pound an acre, than a shilling; and yet if he should chance to become obnoxious to the Government for the time being, he must comply with such a demand, if made, or witness the forfeiture of the fruits of his own labour, and that of his forefathers. The hon. member, Mr. Wightman, had stated that the Bill in question had been before the Legislature 18 or 20 years. This he denied.

Hon. Mr. WIGHTMAN had meant that the question had been mooted from time to time, during that period, on the subject.

Hon. Mr. HAVILAND—No measure on the subject, so iniquitous as this, had ever been before the House. So far from regretting that it had not become Law, every honest man had cause to thank God that it had not been sanctioned.

Hon. Mr. COLES recollected when a Petition was presented, praying that the Rent for the Reserves might be paid to the Government, instead of the Proprietors.

Mr. DOUSE—The signatures of the Petition referred to had been obtained in the same manner as the names subscribed to one which had been sent down to Belfast. The names of all the members of families, and of all the children attending the schools, had been put down. He wished that the sense of the people could be honestly and fairly tested on the question. If they were thoroughly acquainted with the principle and details of the Bill, they would no longer be humbugged by the hon. member, Mr. Coles, and his party.

The question was then taken on the amendment, which was negatived, on the following division:—

Yeas—Hon. Speaker, Hon. Messrs. Pope, Yeo, Palmer, Gray, Longworth, Haviland and Laird, and Messrs. Douse, Ramsay, John Yeo, Montgomery, McNeill, Holm, Davies—15.

Ayes—Hon. Messrs. Perry, Thornton, Whelan, Coles, Kelly and Wightman, and Messrs. Sinclair, Walker, Doyle, McDonald, Cooper, Knight and Sutherland—13.

The 10th paragraph of the Address having been read—

Hon. Mr. WHELAN—The majority of the House were certainly fully justified in saying that they were "not surprised to learn that Her Majesty's Government had declined to propose the contemplated Loan to the Imperial Parliament," for they had used their most strenuous endeavours to obstruct the Loan Bill through all its stages; but it was hardly correct to say that the Imperial Government had declined to propose it, when it was well known that the Bill had been proposed by the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Stanley, who had succeeded Mr. Labouchere. The latter had suggested the idea of a Loan, under the guarantee of the British Government; and his successor in office, taking an enlarged and statesmanlike view of the subject, had introduced the Bill to the House of Commons in a speech which reflected great honor on him, and gave the people of the Island good cause to remember him, as the only Colonial Minister who had manifested a sincere interest in their affairs, and a desire to repair, as far as he could, the wrongs which had been perpetrated upon them. Before that Bill could come up for a second reading, Lord Stanley was no longer Colonial Minister; his place was then filled up by the present incumbent, who, surrounded by Proprietors, had, by their influence, been induced to withdraw the Bill. That withdrawal, however, did not effect their justice of the claim. Nor, however greatly it was to be regretted that such a measure had been abandoned at such a time, did it prevent, although it had delayed, its ultimate settlement. The Proprietors had already experienced the effect of our Legislation. The operation of the Land Purchase Bill had compelled them to dispose of their lands on terms lower than those they had demanded and obtained previously to its enactment. And well they knew that, if this Bill had passed, and they had declined to bring their properties within the sphere of its action, the Imperial Government would offer no further objection to increased taxation or to the establishment of a Court of Enquiry. It was not true, as had been reported, that the people at large would be taxed under the Land Purchase Bill. That such would be the case, he did not believe; but had no chicanery been used by the interested parties—had no letters been withheld,—it was probable that the Government would have obtained the Worrell Estate for 50 per cent. less than they ultimately paid for it. His only wish was to have the matter settled on fair and equitable

terms—he had no wish to fan the agitation for the sake of popularity.

Mr. DOUSE—It would be of no use to try it. Hon. Mr. COLES—Assuredly it would be of no use to endeavour to carry any measure for the benefit of the people, so long as they returned to that House such members as the hon. gentleman, whose political position was based upon the influence of the proprietors, and not the spontaneous approval of the electors themselves. The Bill guaranteeing the Loan, had been withdrawn from the House of Commons, not on account of the debt of the Colony, which was but trifling, but through proprietary influence at the Colonial office. It had not been contemplated to draw the whole of the £100,000 at once—it might not be absorbed for 20 years—it would have been drawn in such amounts, and at such times as would be requisite to pay for Lands which might be offered to the Government; and even if the whole amount were sunk, it was not very probable that the Home Government, knowing how detrimental to the Island, the course they had pursued had been, would ever exact the repayment. The British Government had broken faith with the Colony. The Bill had been prepared at their own suggestion. The introduction of it into the Imperial Parliament was deferred for a session, in consequence of the war in which the nation was then engaged. It was, in the next session of parliament, brought forward by the Colonial Minister of the day, who advocated its passage, as an act of justice due from the mother country, in compensation for the injurious policy which had so long and so seriously retarded the prosperity, and crippled the resources of the Island. He knew no more honest and equitable mode of settling the land question, than that which the Bill pointed out; but since it appeared, by the relative stats of parties on the floor of the House, that the people had become indifferent to such settlement, he would no longer advocate such a plan, but would rather take up the original grants and see what the rights of the proprietors actually were. The suggestion of the Colonial Minister, that the question should be settled by arbitration, he considered in the same light as the hon. member, Mr. Thornton, that it was all moonshine. Notwithstanding the refusal of Escheat, the Original Grants were liable to forfeiture for the non-payment of the Quit Rents, and the usurpation of the Fishery Reserves. The paragraph stated that hon. members on the Government side of the House were not surprised at the withdrawal of the Bill guaranteeing the Loan. Doubtless they were not; for proprietors, he believed, had access to information at the Colonial Office before the Lieutenant Governor had received his despatches; and the hon. member, Mr. Douse, had even boasted on the floor of the House, that he could always obtain such information when he wanted it. However that might be, the opposition of the proprietary party to measures of local legislation had sometimes been proved to have been impolitic. He repeated the expression of his regret that the Bill had been withdrawn—the withdrawal was a breach of faith. The Island Legislature had done all they had been desired to do, and all that was in their power to do, to meet the views and recommendations of the Imperial Government. The agitation of this question, they might be sure, would not die out. After this disappointment of their reasonable expectations, the people will resuscitate it with more vigor than ever. By the exertions of himself, and a few others in the House, the agitation had been for years kept down, or at least, in obedience. In doing so, he had differed from many of his friends and constituents; but now since the proprietors had frustrated measures of a milder remedial character, he thought it best to call things by their proper names, and he would be prepared to vote for a Court of Escheat or Enquiry, he cared not what it might be called, to test their titles.

Hon. Col. GRAY—There was a time when he might have been surprised at what the House had just heard, but late events had prepared him for hearing, without astonishment, anything from the hon. member who had just sat down, however absurd, untrue, or improbable—he might otherwise dispute the right of the hon. member to make the proprietors the scape goats to carry off his own misdeeds. He was not himself a proprietor, nor was he connected with that body. It was idle to say that the influence of the proprietors had caused the British Government to withdraw the Bill guaranteeing the Loan. The loss of that Bill was attributable, not to the influence or action of the proprietors, but solely to the falsehoods and misrepresentations contained in the Despatch which was sent from here. This was the reason why Lord Stanley's successor in the Colonial Office felt himself compelled to withdraw the measure; and the Despatch announcing that withdrawal, expressly assigned as a reason, the financial condition of the Colony. He did not intend to take up the time of the Committee with discussions on subjects of which they had heard so much, that hon. members must be sick of them. He had not come there to defend proprietors; but really, when such charges had been made, not only against them, but when the British Government was charged with a violation of its pledged faith, he was compelled to ask those who impugned the honor of that Government, to adduce their proofs—to give, if they could, one solitary instance which could justify the confident assertion, that the traditional honor of the British Government had been sullied—that its promises were not to be relied on. He defied any hon. member to adduce a single case of the kind.

Committee rose and progress was reported.

FRIDAY, April 15, 1859.

The Committee on the Address was resumed.

Hon. Mr. COLES—I deny, Mr. Chairman, that the Despatches sent by the late Government, on the subject of the Finances of the Colony, contained falsehoods or misrepresentations. That false statements prejudicial to the credit of the Island had been sent to England is true; but they emanated from members of the present Government party. In their Journal, the debt of the Colony was represented as being £70,000 instead of £30,000; but even that latter amount is not correct, if credit is given for the public lands now veiled in the Government, for which £21,000 were paid. The actual debt is about £16,000, of which £11,500 are represented by Treasury Notes bearing no interest. No wonder then that misrepresentations so gross should induce the Colonial Minister to withdraw the Bill from Parliament. I know that it had been generally circulated that the expenditure of last year would exceed the Revenue by £15,000. The truth, Sir, is, that the deficiency does not exceed £9,000. These are specimens of the misrepresentations set afloat by the opponents of the Bill. It is not very likely that the Lieut. Governor would be a party to the official transmission of false statements, particularly on such a matter as the state of the public finances. His long experience as a public officer in Canada, where for years he was Colonial Secretary, precluded any such idea, and if any Government imagined that they could gull him, would find themselves mistaken. Notwithstanding the indignation of the hon. member, Col. Gray, I repeat that faith was broken with the Island. No matter for what reasons the Bill was withdrawn, the idea of it originated with the British Government, and our proceedings were in accordance with their suggestions. It met the opposition of the thin minority, who got up the cry that it would involve the ruin of the country; and now let those who had opposed it take the consequences of this conduct. I will now give the Committee a specimen of the opinions expressed by the hon. member for Charlottetown on the Land Question in the year 1855. On the debate on Escheat, that gentleman, in the course of his observations, said—

"In the first place, Sir, I do not think there is any weight in the argument, that because it has been hitherto refused, we should cease our exertions to obtain it. I shall never pay such servile respect to the Despatch of a Colonial Minister, nor will I submit with blind and uncomplaining submission to the continuance of what I may consider to be