

On the sixth being read by the Chairman—

Hon. Mr. COLES rose, not for the purpose of objecting to the paragraph, but when he considered that, last year the present Government and its supporters objected to the use of the word "abundant" in reference to the harvest of the then past season, he could not but consider that, in applying the term "very abundant" to last year's crop, they had out-heroded Herod. Hon. Mr. Yeo, in particular, asserted that the Government was not as well acquainted with the country as he was. He was happy to bear testimony to the abundance of the late harvest, and it must be gratifying not only to the Legislature but to all classes of the community to know that the agriculturists had obtained remunerative prices for their produce. Last year the Government were taunted with the absence of reference to the introduction of any specific measure in the speech, which was termed a bag of wind. The present speech was entitled to the same designation, and when he reflected that after eight years in opposition, the new Government had mentioned no intended measures of a beneficial nature to be introduced, he certainly was surprised. They should at least show something to induce the country to believe that they were sincere in their assertions that the late Government was a do-nothing Government, and that they would do everything. Last year the Government introduced a bill, but up to the present time there was no information before the House of the formation of the Executive or of the new incumbents of the public offices. He believed that some were not yet appointed. It was reported that one appointment had been made of a gentleman not in the Island. Since the decline of prices in shipbuilding, and the constant diminution in the quantity of timber, the main and most reliable resources of the people would be found in the diligent prosecution of agriculture and the fisheries. The example set by a few individuals from the United States who had largely, and he believed, successfully embarked in the latter business, must have the effect of stimulating our people to greater exertions. He trusted that their past experience would induce them to persevere, and although he was not disposed to adopt the American system of bounties, he considered that every reasonable encouragement should be afforded to them. As the next paragraph would probably elicit discussion, he suggested the propriety of an adjournment.

Hon. Mr. YEO.—As reference had been made to him, he had no hesitation in stating that in the part of the country with which he was more particularly acquainted, the crops last year exceeded those of the preceding one by at least 25 per cent., especially in the articles of oats and barley.

Hon. Mr. COLES admitted that there was an increase in these articles, but last year the turnip crop failed to a considerable extent.

Hon. Mr. HAVILAND had objected last year to the term "abundant" in the speech, because he considered that it was not justified by the facts. As to the partial failure of the turnip crop, it was not so generally cultivated as the cereals. In fact, oats and barley were the main dependence of the agriculturist, the former especially, and never had there been known in the Island such crops and such prices, nor where the general depression in commercial business was considered, was money so plenty with our farmers. With reference to the character of the Address, it was not the intention of the Government to introduce any new measures of importance, as the season was too far advanced. The blame for that omission rested with the late Government, who, knowing the close division of parties returned at the general election in June last, should have convened the Legislature in January. The country did not expect extraordinary measures at this session. Besides, what would be the use of the Government introducing and carrying through the House any measures in accordance with the political views of the majority, when the other branch of the Legislature was in so extraordinary a state. The Government would be foolish, indeed, did they submit such measures to a packed body, bound hand and foot to support those who sent them there. The hon. member had alluded to the fact that the Government would bring in no Bill. A reference to the order book would show that he had given notice of his intention to introduce a Bill authorizing

Aliens to hold lands in the Island to a limited extent. The inducement afforded by such a measure to Americans to settle among us would be found very beneficial to the agricultural and other interests of the Island.

Hon. Mr. COLES—The hon. member appeared to be very wrathful about the Legislative Council. His allusions to that body were uncourteous, and by no means calculated to influence them to pass the Bill of which he had spoken. Perhaps he hoped that they would not sanction it. If he tried it, however, he would find that it would receive the disapproval. That body was not packed; they were as independent as the Members of this House, but the hon. member fears that they will not be a party to the destruction of the constitution, and so he wished to make the country believe that they would not pass his Bill. It had been reported that the two gentlemen last nominated to seats in the Council had not been confirmed in their appointments, but he could tell the Government that they had received their mandamuses. It had been the object of the liberal party to have every part of the country represented in that branch of the Legislature; to the effect that—to induce gentlemen resident in the country to consent to take their seats at the board, it was necessary that they should be indemnified their expenses. Even the old Tory party introduced a Bill to pay some of the Councillors;—that Bill was rejected, as it was partial in its application. It was not to be wondered at that the Council had been abused when even the Lieut. Governor had not escaped the censure of the hon. member, but now he finds it convenient to change his views. The prosperity of the country was due principally to the Reciprocity Treaty with the United States, where a ready market is always to be found for our staple exports. Before the passing of the Bill relative to that subject the case was widely different. True, the markets of the neighbouring Colonies were open to us, but they did not afford sufficient demand for our surplus produce. Newfoundland and New Brunswick are partially dependent on this Island for agricultural produce, but they were too limited to absorb what we could send. No less than 300,000 bushels of grain had been shipped last year. According to the opinions of some hon. members of the Government, Reciprocity would never be conceded.

Hon. Mr. HAVILAND—With reference to the abundance of the last harvest, the hon. member knew well that it was not attributable to the political principles or action of any party; but it afforded cause of thankfulness to that higher power who causes the earth to bring forth her fruits. He was surprised at the assurance of the hon. member in claiming credit for the institution of Reciprocity with the United States. The Bill did not originate with him.

Hon. Mr. COLES—It did.

Hon. Mr. HAVILAND—It did not. So far back as the year 1849 Mr. McLean, then a member of the House, introduced a Bill with that object, and he, Tory as he was, turned had voted in favor of it.

Hon. Mr. LONGWORTH—considered that the present discussion was altogether unnecessary: It arose from the circumstance of the hon. member (Mr. Coles) cavilling at the expression "very abundant" in reference to the late harvest. That it was so, is a fact which could not be disputed, and as that was admitted by the hon. member himself, his observations amounted to nothing. He regretted that the hon. member had, in legal phrase, travelled so far out of the record. A variety of topics had been touched upon having no possible connection with the subject matter of the paragraph now before the committee; and as those several matters would be legitimately before the House for discussion at a future period, he trusted hon. members would see the propriety of confining their observations to the matter under consideration. It could not be expected that important measures, calculated to call forth protracted discussion, could be introduced in a Session convened at so late a season of the year, and so soon after the formation of the Government. As to the observations which had been made with reference to the constitution of the Legislative Council, every hon. member would have an opportunity of expressing his sentiments at a proper time; and although the hon. member (Mr. Coles) might say that the appointments made to that body