

face of it South Essex should have gone for the platform the Liberals advocated by at least 500 majority. But this officer knew that there were such influences as public works and the Red Parlour, and he was so much in the secrets of the party that he lost four or five hundred on the result of the contest. I say that it is due to the people of Pelee Island, due to the County of Essex, and due to this House and to the Dominion of Canada, that the Minister of Customs should give an explanation of his extraordinary conduct in this matter.

Mr. BOWELL. Mr. Speaker, there can be no objection to bringing down such correspondence as is in the Department of Customs, and I dare say also, such as can be found in the Department of Public Works. The hon. gentleman has a great deal more correspondence in his possession than I ever saw or heard of. The hon. gentleman is quite correct in much that he has said in reference to the feeling on Pelee Island, but there are one or two statements which he made which it would have been better had he verified them by facts. In the first place he stated—and I mention this because it refers to one who is no longer here—he stated among other things that in addition to the letter or telegrams which he read of my own, a letter was also sent by the late First Minister to the effect that if they would vote for the Conservative party, and against the hon. member himself, Mr. McCormick would be removed from the Island and another officer substituted in his place. Whether that be correct or not I am not prepared to say, for the reason that I never had any conversation with the late First Minister in reference to the appointment of Mr. McCormick, or the substitution of Mr. Atkinson during the short period in which he performed the duties of sub-collector on Pelee Island. I doubt very much whether, knowing as I do the cautious manner in which the late First Minister carried on correspondence of that kind, that he ever wrote such a letter. He may have written a letter. I am not prepared to say that he did not, as I repeat I know nothing about it, but I question very much whether any letter can be produced containing the promises which the hon. gentleman has said were contained in that letter. I shall say no more in reference to that matter. The statement of the hon. gentleman (Mr. Allan) is quite correct with regard to the difficulties which occurred upon the original appointment of Mr. McCormick and the feeling which existed on the Island at the time. Mr. McCormick—after the death of the elder McCormick, who was, I think, his uncle, but I will not be positive about that—was recommended to the department as being a man of education, and a man well fitted for the position to which he was appointed, and which was worth about \$300 a year. A protest was at once entered by the people of the Island against that appointment. They declared the doctor, for certain reasons which they gave, to be unfit, morally and otherwise, for the position. I made full enquiry at the time, and found, to my satisfaction, that the opposition to the doctor arose more from family difficulties than from any want of knowledge or ability on his part to perform the duties of the office. Constant letters of complaint, and, if my recollection serves me aright, petitions demanding his removal were

received by the department from the people there. I made enquiries through the inspector, Mr. Mewburn, who certainly will not be accused of being one of those monstrous Tories to whom the hon. gentleman has referred. He was one of the appointments of the Government of Mr. Mackenzie, and he is just as strong in his views and sentiments as the hon. gentleman who has addressed the House. But I will say this for him, that I believe him to be an honest and straightforward officer who conscientiously performs all the duties of his office. His report was that Dr. McCormick was performing his duties on the Island efficiently. Still, the rebellion continued, until I promised more than a year ago that I would make further investigation, and, if possible, make a change and appoint some one who would suit the people. At the time to which the hon. gentleman refers trouble had arisen, but not, so far as my knowledge goes, to the extent which the hon. gentleman has represented. I did order, not the dismissal of Dr. McCormick, but his removal to another port. That Mr. Gott may have felt a little chagrined at not being informed of what was done by the department may be perfectly true. There are many persons who, from the position they hold, think that whenever the head of the department or those who have the responsibility at headquarters, make a change, they should be consulted or should be notified of it. Dr. McCormick was ordered to report for duty at Windsor, where at that time an additional official was required. The hon. gentleman tells us that he did not go there. That was a matter that I knew nothing about until some time afterwards.

Mr. ALLAN. He did not stay there. He may have gone there.

Mr. BOWELL. I subsequently heard from Mr. Gott that he was at Amherstburg, and that he preferred not going to Windsor. A notice was given to Mr. Atkinson to perform the duties of the office. I think the hon. gentleman was quite correct in saying that my letter to Mr. Atkinson stated that he would be appointed. I was not in the city of Ottawa when that was sent, and the probabilities are that he would have been appointed, notwithstanding the fact, of which the hon. gentleman informs us, that he was a great admirer of himself and the unrestricted reciprocity—I was going to say sad, but I do not desire to be disrespectful—the principles of unrestricted reciprocity which the hon. gentleman was advocating, and on which he was contesting his election at that time. But I found the rebellion against him still greater and the objections to him much more numerous on the part of the people than they had been against Dr. McCormick. When the papers come down, the hon. gentleman will see the petitions were large and numerous signed; I do not vouch for their respectability, but I take it for granted that all the farmers and residents of that island are respectable people. After looking carefully into the whole matter, as there was such diversity of opinion, and as I had no positive information in the department of malfeasance of office on the part of Dr. McCormick, I decided that I would reinstate him in the position, and send an officer to make full investigation into all the charges made against him, personally as well as officially; and that, if it should be found that he had been guilty of any of the charges, I would remove him alto-