

days of the Family Compact to have been in that position. (Cheers.) The Tories assume with James I., from whom they seem to have all descended—(laughter)—for they are all apparently, in political ethica, about as imbecile as he was—a divine right to rule.

The Workingmen and Government Contractors.

I saw not long ago in a Tory paper an accusation made against myself that I was allowing the poor workingman to be robbed of his wages by contractors. What are the facts? One of our contractors on the Ottawa River failed to carry out his contract. I withheld enough money from him to enable me to pay between \$8,000 and \$10,000 to the poor workingmen who were in his employ, and who but for that action of the Government would have been left without a cent. (Cheers.) We initiated a system of letting public works by contract, under which contractors were compelled to give security to the Government for the execution of their undertakings either upon real estate or in the shape of deposits of money or other securities. Well, Sir, one who gave such security broke down on one of the canal contracts the other day; one of his sub-contractors walked off with \$12,000 of money the contractor obtained from the Government, leaving only \$5,000 or \$6,000 in our hands, and owing \$20,000 to the workingmen. As it happened, we had \$14,000 in our hands as security, and we were able to despatch to Montreal one of our clerks from whom everyone of those workingmen received his pay. (Cheers.) These men and newspapers who make such accusations know also that I compelled some contractors on the public works to terminate a system some of them had of paying their men by giving them orders for goods—the old truck system—and to pay them every week or every fortnight in cash the whole of their wages. (Cheers.) Nevertheless I am branded by those people as an opponent of the workingman; and those who were so much in former days the enemies of the workingmen, they, forsooth, are the friends of the workingmen! They patronize the workingman and take him under their care, and if the workingman will only shut his eyes and open his mouth he will see what he will get. (Cheers and laughter.)

Social Position of the Workingman in Canada.

The institutions of this country are eminently favourable to the production of a class of workingmen without its equal in any other country of the world. Under the able management of the Local Governments our educational system has been perfected to such a degree that it is now confessedly the foremost system of education in the world. (Cheers.) Our youth can go from the primary schools to the graded schools, from them to the Collegiate Institutes or Grammar Schools, and from those to the Universities at a smaller cost than in any other country on the face of the earth. (Cheers.) Our land system is free. We want no protection in it. Any man of ordinary intelligence can go to the statute book and make out a deed for his land for himself if he likes—though I am bound to say it would be better for him to employ a lawyer to prevent mistakes. (Laughter.) So simple is our mode of conveyance of land. One of the excellencies of this system is that all our workingmen—our farmers, our farm-labourers, and a very large proportion of our mechanics—have a hold upon the soil; and there can be no real thorough independence of a people in any nation unless they are able to control the possession of