

ernment to provide for it now. It ought to be dealt with at once, either by this Government or by the Committee on Privileges, so that we should know exactly where we are. He would not trouble the House at present, and especially as his honourable friend from Montreal West was not in his seat; but he would like to take an early opportunity when that gentleman would be present to revert to the somewhat extraordinary remarks contained in his late speech before the House.

Mr. Blake said the argument that the four Provinces are as distant from the Dominion as any other dependency of the Crown was quite untenable. The Governments were, in a sense, independent, and long might they so continue; but the fact that the Provinces comprise the territory and the population of the Dominion, the right of the Government of the Dominion to appoint the Lieut.-Governors and veto the Acts of the Local Legislatures, the many points of concurrent or perhaps conflicting jurisdiction rendered it evident that the case was a peculiar one. We had heard during the election a great deal of the necessity of the Local and General Governments being in harmony—of the members of each Administration having the confidence of the other—and of the importance of members of the Local Governments being in harmony—of the members of each Administration having the confidence of the other—and of the importance of members of the Local Governments being also members of this House. The Minister of Justice had stated that this was a matter of great importance in the case of the Treasurer of Ontario, the member for South Brant, and had given “private reasons” for it, which, if made public, would show no doubt that he then conceived that his party preached that there was or ought to be an intimate relation between the two Governments (hear, hear)—why otherwise should it have been of such consequence that the Treasurer of Ontario should be a member of this House? It was in order that he and the other members of the Local Governments might in this House be followers and supporters of ministers, be controlled by their influence and guided by their policy, and then, of course, when they met their own Parliaments their course there would be guided by their course and their alliances in this House. (Hear, hear). In a word, they would be subservient to the Government of the Dominion. Therefore in order that the measure of Independence which was given by the Union Act should be preserved, it was very necessary that the members of the Local

[Mr. Howe (Hants)]

Government should not be members of this House, and the fewer the members holding salaried offices under the Crown, who were members of this House, the more effectually would its independence and dignity be maintained. This line of argument was not directed merely to the question of policy. It was pertinent to the construction of the statutes. Honourable gentlemen opposite proposed to construe the Independence of Parliament Act, as imported into the Union Act, as disqualifying merely Dominion and not Provincial officers, and argued that the reason ceasing, the law should also cease; but if, as he had shown, there existed a reason still, then the argument failed. There was no ground for striking out of the Act the clause which in express terms disqualified gentlemen in the position of members of the Local Governments. The Minister of Militia had argued that the effect of the construction proposed by the member for Chateauguay, would be to render himself and his colleagues ineligible to sit and therefore that construction must be erroneous. He (Mr. Blake) did not think that conclusion followed. It might well be that Ministers are—and in the construction they proposed of the Act, he was inclined to think they are—themselves disqualified. They construed the Independence of Parliament Act as applying to officers of the Dominion, and if so, it applied in express terms to themselves. (Hear, hear). Looking at the Union Act, it would be seen that while it provided for the appointment of heads of departments in the Local Governments, and rendered them eligible to sit in the Local House, it made no provision for any such appointments in the Government of the Dominion, and of course did not render such officers eligible to seats in this House. (Hear, hear). It provided merely for the appointment of Privy Councillors, by whose advice Parliament might be summoned, and then the Legislature might organize the departments and make proper provisions for securing the Independence of Parliament in this particular. Instead of the Privy Council adopting this course, they had themselves taken the responsibility of advising the Crown to organize the departments. They become salaried servants of the Crown, and they were, according to their own construction of the Act, ineligible for the seats they now occupied. This was the conclusion which he would draw from the position of Minister of Militia, and it differed very much from that honourable gentleman's own conclusion, which, indeed, seemed based on some inalienable right he claimed to occupy the Treasury benches. (Laughter). The argument