

Hon. LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION.—I hope, Mr. Chairman, that the hon. Attorney General will foreshadow the policy of the Government on this most important question of Education. We know that, if our children are properly educated, they will be able to judge for themselves and form correct opinions on the land question and other important matters, which it is most desirable that they should thoroughly understand, and they will then be less influenced by political demagogues. I certainly expected that some members in the Government would have given us an inkling, at least, of the policy which they intend pursuing in the matter of Education. Do they purpose raising the teachers' salaries, and paying them entirely out of the Treasury? and if so, how are they going to raise the money? The Government may, perhaps, be excused if they allow this matter to stand over for a few days, as the father of Free Education, our present Colonial Secretary, cannot, according to our Statutes, take his seat immediately, although we know that he has beaten the foremost man of the Tenant League, by an immense majority.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL.—I would, Mr. Chairman, judging from the debate we have just had on the land question, be unwilling to awaken any discussion on the paragraph now before this hon. Committee. I hope that my hon. friend, the Leader of the Government, will be in his place on the floor of this House when the Education question comes regularly up for discussion. I may, however, say that it is the intention of the Government to make the Education laws more extensively useful. The hon. leader of the Opposition has said that, if the people are properly educated, they will be less liable to be influenced by political demagogues. Now, Sir, if the Liberal party, as the Conservatives would have us believe, belong to that class, they must acknowledge that we show a great amount of forbearance in helping forward the cause of Education. As every true lover of his country should be willing and anxious to forward a measure such as this, I do not anticipate that there will be any great disagreement among the members of this hon. Committee upon the subject, or that we will be compelled to travel over ground similar to that gone over in the previous debate. We will, I trust, agree that, as Education is so great a boon to the country, it is right and proper to make the system, if possible, more extensively useful, and to help the school-master so far as lies in our power.

Mr. BRECKEN.—I agree with the remarks of the Hon. Attorney General, but think it would have been right to have given us an idea of the policy which the Government intend pursuing, one part of which is, I think, to pay the teachers entirely out of the public purse. I trust that the House will not make this matter a party measure, for it must be acknowledged by all that nothing can be more important to the country than free education. The Conservatives have been charged with mutilating the system, but abundant opportunity for discussing the matter will be afforded when it comes regularly up for discussion. I am quite willing to help forward the cause of free education—the credit for introducing which system must be acknowledged to be due to the present Leader of the Government (Mr. Coles).

Mr. McLENNAN.—I do not intend to offer any factious opposition to the paragraph under consideration; but as education is one of the questions which the party in power promised to put on a better footing, I suppose they will be prepared to introduce important amendments to the Act. At the late General Election, I was one of those who advocated that the teachers should be paid their full salaries from the treasury; and I believe it was the intention of the majority of the Conservative party, had the government remained in their hands, to amend the law in this particular. I am of opinion, judging from the revenue of last year, which exceeded the expenditure by about £7,000, that the teachers could be wholly paid out of the public purse, without any additional taxation. There are about 300 teachers employed in the Colony, and were the Government to pay each of them the £15 which it is now provided they shall receive from the people, the sum would only amount to £4,500. This is an outlay which the Government could very well afford, with a surplus of £7,000 of revenue, such as we had last year.

The paragraph was then agreed to, as were also the 6th and 7th.

Paragraph relating to Local Industry and Agriculture.

The 8th paragraph was then read, which relates to the development of local industry and improvements in agriculture.

Hon. LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION.—The wording of this paragraph is somewhat ambiguous. I would like to hear from some of the members of the Government an explanation of what they mean by the expression "local industry." It might refer to the establishment of cotton mills, to the manufacture of tin trumpets, or the encouragement of a woollen factory, as we know, Mr. Chairman, that a Bill was passed last session to incorporate a company of that nature. Or, perhaps they intend to give a bounty to encourage the fisheries, as I understand that the constituents of the hon. and gallant Colonel from Cascumpec are urging for a measure of this kind. The fishery bounty question was ably discussed at two or three public meetings held in Charlottetown, at which some rigid economists argued that a trade which would not support itself should be allowed to go down; and others just as strenuously maintained the opposite view. Though I will not at present give my own opinions on this question, yet I would be interested to hear whether the fisheries is one of the branches of "local industry" that are to be developed by the present Government.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL.—The enquiry, coming as it does from the hon. Leader of the Opposition, is very natural. Comparing great things with small, we know that the speech of Her Majesty at the opening of Parliament is generally very vague. Supposing that speech were to state that a Reform Bill was to be introduced, would it be proper for Mr. Gladstone to rise and ask what the clauses of that Bill were to be? If the Royal speech promised that a measure of reform would be brought forward, would that not be sufficient? The paragraph under consideration, however, does not promise that any measure at all will be introduced relating to local industry. Providing the