

that the Government desired to have control of the Board. He held that the qualifications required for heads of corporations were often very different from those required in representatives of those bodies elsewhere. He presumed, neither the Corn Exchange nor the Board of Trade had been consulted, nor notified in regard to this measure. He took a very decided objection then to the principle of the bill, whose preamble was not proved. He thought it should be thrown out.

Hon. Mr. PENNY said he was very much surprised at some of the objections to this bill. As to legislating out of office, the same was done as regards Trinity House, by the bill of last year, which legislated out of existence the Harbor of Montreal the lights on the river, and such other matters, concerning the navigation. He went on to argue in reply to other objections that this was a public bill to all intents and purposes since Montreal harbor derived its revenue from the whole country. Every bale of goods sent to Upper Canada was taxed for the improvement of that harbor. At first, the Board consisted of men nominated by the Government, and it never gave more satisfaction. (Hear, hear.) They converted Lake St. Peter from a three hundred ton to a one thousand-ton channel, but were all dismissed in one day by a notice in the *Gazette*. This was the way the hon. gentlemen on the Opposition benches dealt with vested rights. When the change took place, moreover, this very principle of *ex-officio* representation on the Board was the one adopted. Up to last August the members of the Board were *ex-officio* members. It was the Mayor of the city and the Presidents of other corporations who represented them; so this elective principle was quite a new thing. For his own part he was rather in favour of it, and if he had drawn the bill, would have introduced the principle. His hon. friend (Mr. Vidal) had stated there was no complaint of the present Board, but the facts in connection with the giving out of the contracts for the dredges, should convince him of his error. Tenderers had come down materially in their second offers, while the Board had given out contracts at prices considerably higher than they could have got the work done for by other parties. All this proved the interest the country generally had in the proper administration of the affairs of the Harbor.

Hon. Mr. VIDAL said he did not affirm there had been no complaints, but that in

the proceedings taken here, none were stated.

Hon. Mr. PENNY said he referred to this matter, not to find fault with what the Commissioners did, but to show what the Dominion had to gain or lose by an improper or proper constitution of the Board. Though himself in favor of the elective system, he would be willing to leave the matter in the hands of the Government, who, he contended should possess the control, as they were responsible for the public expenditure. He argued that some of the members had no inherent rights to affect, and that the Board was to some extent a consultative body which the bill designed should give the Government advice. The measure took away nobody's rights.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—We are just going back to the system previously and long in force. The hon. gentleman in opposition made the change.

Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL—Of course we made the change in the interest of the advancement of the elective principle; we introduced it last year.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Under the old act, also, Government had the control.

Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL—Not under the elective principle.

Hon. Mr. RYAN expressed regret at the reference to the charges against the Commissioners, which had been much discussed and very well cleared up by the Montreal papers. He denied some of the charges brought against them, including that of imposing duties to the amount of 60 per cent on the inhabitants of Ontario, and asserted, as regards the action they had taken, that in the end they had reached a better result than could have been come to in any other way. Without going back to the accusations against the Commissioners, whether elective or nominative, he held that the business of the past had been most admirably conducted. (Hear, hear.) Its management had reflected credit not only on Montreal, but on the trade of the country in general; and he knew that the Harbour bonds were at a considerable premium, showing that the administration of the affairs of the harbour must have been very good and satisfactory indeed. He did not believe the trade of the country, that passed through Montreal, would be benefited by the change proposed by the Government, which was a retrograde change. The merchants who had most interest in the conservation of this harbour, having obtained the privilege of electing their representatives—a step in advance—were now to be put back, the Government pro-