

here, might quote the opinions of George Coles, for the system in this Island is talked of in the neighboring Colonies as being the best system possible. He (Mr. C.) agreed with the hon. Col. Secretary, that there should have been a clause in the Act to compel the attendance of children at school. It was objected that the people do not now take a sufficient interest in the schools. There might be some truth in the statement, but if such was the case, it was the fault of the Government, in keeping a person in office who did not visit the schools perhaps once in four years. Under the Act, the people were made to feel that they had an interest in the schools, as they could not get a teacher without first erecting a suitable building, and supplying books and other things necessary. In one place, he (Mr. C.) had read of the Government built the school-houses, while the people supported the teachers. Here they had reversed that system, and made the people provide the houses and furniture, while the Government paid the teachers. The people also felt the land tax, as directly paid for the support of education. And he believed it would have been better for the Government, instead of the alteration proposed, to have raised the land tax to 3s 4d an acre, which would have given £2000, and to have taken £5 off the Teachers' salary, which would have amounted to £2000 more. Amendments like these would have relieved the pressure on the revenue, and would have been better than going back to the old system. The hon. member for Georgetown had stated that free education alone had left the Colony £90,000 in debt. It was not education that was the cause of all the debt of the country; but even if it had been the occasion of increasing it, the outlay would not be lost, as there was no telling the benefit which had resulted from ten years operation of the Free Education Act. The hon. member had also said that they were now introducing the system of education adopted in the most enlightened countries. It was a strange thing if the old system which we had in this Colony years ago, was the most perfect in the world. It had been stated, in excuse of the School Visitor, that he had not time to visit all the schools in the country; but he (Mr. C.) had heard a clergyman of some experience say, that he was mistaken if he could not walk through the Island and visit all the schools once a year. It was proposed in the Bill to have two Visitors, but he maintained that it was more judicious to give a good inspector, such as Mr. Stark, £300, then have two complaining that they were not sufficiently paid. The hon. members who supported the Government, should not charge those on this side of the House with factious opposition. There was an important principle involved in the change proposed in the Bill under consideration. If all the advantages were not derived from the present system that might be, on account of the children not attending school, he would go for bringing in a clause to compel their attendance, but he could not support a measure which was simply a return to the old system. He would still press his amendment that the Bill be read this day three months.

The House then divided on the motion of amendment, when there appeared—

For it—Messrs. Coles, Kelly, Thornton, Beaton,

Hensley, Warburton, Sutherland, Conroy, Hewlan, Walker, Sinclair—11.

AGAINST IT—Messrs. Longworth, Col. Secretary, Pope, Gray, Laird, Kaye, Montgomery, McLennan, Brecken, Yeo, Howat, Duncan, Green, Haslam—14

The main motion that the Bill be read a second time was then put and carried 15 to 11, Mr Ramsay, who was absent during the former division, voting with the majority.

The Bill was accordingly read a second time and committed to Committee. A short time having been spent in Committee, progress was reported and the House adjourned.

AFTERNOON SITTING.

April 18.

The House went into the order of the day, viz., Committee of the whole on consideration of the Report of the Special Committee on the Public Accounts—Mr. Sinclair in the chair.

After the report had been read by the chairman—

Hon. Mr. COLES said he had a great number of papers before him, but as it would take him a long time to get through them, and he would only, he supposed, be finding fault with the leader of the late Government, he did not think he would enter into the subject. He was disposed to let the present Administration have a fair trial, and to give the present leader an opportunity of proving himself a better financier than his predecessor. He (Mr C.) thought that the chairman of the Special Committee (Mr John Yeo) deserved a great deal of credit for preparing a report which had been signed by all the members of Committee, even those belonging to the minority of the House. The Report contained no one-sided explanations, it was simply an unvarnished statement of facts.

Hon. Mr. LONGWORTH was happy to find that the hon. leader of the Opposition took such a fair view of the case. There was no doubt that the revenue last year had not been equal to the expenditure. He (Mr L.) was also happy to find that the accounts were so correct that the members of Committee, belonging to both sides of the House, had no difficulty in signing the Report. The Committee had only a right to state facts, and not to draw inferences therefrom. They had, therefore, strictly adhered to their duty. He thought it ought to be gratifying to every member of the House, that there was so much unanimity on a matter of such importance as the Report of the Committee on Public Accounts.

Hon. Mr. HENSLEY could also express his gratification that there was such a good feeling between hon. members, and that there was likely to be very little discussion on a subject which frequently occupied the time of the House for two or three days. He thought there was a probability that the revenue would meet the expenditure for the current year.

Hon. Mr. WARBURTON, as one of the members of the Committee on Public Accounts, would certainly pay his tribute of praise to the Chairman, for the fidelity with which he had discharged his duty. It was unnecessary that he (Mr W.) should remark on the several items of the Report, as it would speak for itself. He was sorry, however, that it showed