

present financial embarrassment of the country by a loan, if we can obtain one. As this is a matter of opinion, however, it is well to bring it forward for discussion.

Mr. HOWATT.—Mr Chairman, as regards the manner in which this debate is conducted, I certainly agree to a very great extent with the hon. member for New London (Mr Sinclair). The main question now before this Committee appears to me to be the best means of raising the money required for the purchase of proprietors' estates. The duty of the Government is, in my opinion, to make every enquiry before taking any active steps in the matter of a loan, and when the necessary information has been obtained, and the most feasible and profitable course ascertained, all parties will, I consider, be willing to do their utmost to forward the measure. But, Sir, while I am perfectly willing to support and forward the working of the Land Purchase Bill, there is a possibility that it may not operate fairly over the whole Island. In some parts of the country much land has been bought under this Bill, while in other parts very little has been purchased. Unless then it can be made work fairly for all parts of the Island, something in addition to that Bill is clearly necessary. I would favor the passing of an Act somewhat similar in its working to the Fifteen Years Purchase Bill, and compulsory on all the Proprietors throughout the Island. Of course the amount to be paid for the land would have to be settled by the Legislature. This course would, in my opinion, be the most equitable one to pursue. If a loan is obtained the money must be applied exclusively to purchasing land.

Mr. PROWSE.—Regarding the discussion on the paragraph now before this hon. Committee, I agree with much that has been said by the hon. members for New London and Tryon. But, Sir, when members of the Government go back 30 or 40 years, to the times of escheat, and introduce matters that are things of the past, they cannot complain when members of the Opposition reply in a somewhat similar manner. Let the members on the opposite side of the House wait, for a time at least, before charging us with insincerity. To the question which party has, during the last 16 years, done most to benefit the tenantry, there can, I think, be only one answer. Did the Conservatives offer any factious opposition to the Land Purchase Bill when it was brought forward by the Liberal Government? Was not the purchase of the Selkirk estate quite as satisfactory to the country as that of the Worell property? Each party has held the reins of power for 8 years, and the Conservatives have bought four times as much land as the Liberals. From the remarks of some members of the Government during the discussion yesterday, I was led to believe that they cared little or nothing for the opinions of the Home Government on matters in this Island. When they condemned the Conservatives for having delayed the Election in order to ascertain those opinions, they insinuated this. They now, however, acknowledge that objections were made by the Home Government to the establishment of a court of escheat, and that, therefore, that court was not established. If, Sir, the pressure brought to bear by the Imperial Government was so strong in one case, might it not be so in another? Reference has been made to the action of the late Government in the matter of the Land Commission. I think, Sir, that if any one act can prove their sincerity, the course they pursued in that matter will do so. To show that they were not actuated by party feelings, I may mention that the present Attorney General was employed to assist Mr. Thompson,—the claims of the hon. member for Charlottetown (Mr. Brecken), who was a supporter of the Government and a talented lawyer, being overlooked. The statement which has been

made—that the Conservatives never intended to benefit the tenants by the Land Commission—is very strong, for I consider that, but for the opposition of the present Government party to the Award, better terms would have been obtained. The hon. member for Belfast (Mr. Davies) does not deny the fact that he gave pecuniary support to the Tenant League, but would have this hon. Committee believe that, when he did so, that association was a thoroughly legal one. To show this hon. Committee how much truth there is in that statement, I will read the pledge of the League, as adopted at the meeting held in Charlottetown, after which time the hon. member subscribed to its funds:

"Resolved, That we the tenantry of ———, individually and collectively, virtually and solemnly pledge our honour and fidelity to each other, to withhold the further liquidation of rent and arrears of rent, and thus voluntarily enrol our respective names as a tenant organization, to resist the distraint, coercion, ejection, seizure, and sale for rent and arrears of rent, until a compromise be effected in conformity with resolutions proposed and carried by the meetings in Lots 48, 49, and 50, and further understood that each signature hereto annexed bear a proportional share of expenses in connection with this organization."

If, Mr. Chairman, the organization, when it passed that resolution, was not illegal, at what period did it become so? It was never, Sir, more illegal than at that time; and if the hon. member was justified in supporting it *then*, he would have been quite so in supporting it in all its actions.

Hon. LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION.—I have taken lengthy notes of this discussion, and especially of the speech of the hon. member for Belfast (Mr. Davies); but my friend, the hon. member for the city, having answered that gentleman so satisfactorily, I will reserve my notes, and the authorities I intended to quote, for some future occasion. If, Sir, you were entirely ignorant of the Land Question, the debate of to-day would have given you a very fair epitome of it. In 1855-56, the Liberal Government opposed escheat. Mr. Cooper—the apostle of escheat, as he used to be called—had some years before left the Island, and emigrated to California. He returned in 1855, and, expecting to find the country in the same state as he left it, again mounted his hobby (escheat), and in the Session of that year, we had many discussions on the subject. The present Colonial Secretary showed that the only way to settle the question was not by coercing the proprietors, but by moderate measures and equitable arrangements between man and man. In 1856, we had a speech from the throne to that effect. I must say that I at first thought that the hon. member for Belfast was foreshadowing the policy of the new Government, but the explanation of the hon. Attorney General shows that he has merely been reading his recantation. He has been bitten by escheat, but is now going to bury it, and the hon. Attorney General has informed us that he would not otherwise sit with him in the Government. We must recollect, Mr. Chairman, that this is St. George's Day, and also the anniversary of the introduction of Responsible Government, and that, therefore, large allowance should be made for the hon. member.

The paragraph was then unanimously agreed to.

Education Paragraph.

The adoption of the fifth paragraph of the Address was then moved by the Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL.