

expression of the opinions he entertained on the subject.

MR. BLAKE said he had not intended to take part in the debate, but, after the observations which had fallen from the hon. member for Cumberland, perhaps the House would permit him to say a very few words on the subject. The hon. member had, throughout the thread of his speech and at its close, argued as if the Bill which was now before them proposed a very large increase in the public burdens. He would not use the hard words which the hon. gentleman used with reference to the statements of his opponents, but he would appeal to Mr. Speaker and every hon. member whether this was a correct statement regarding this measure, which proposed to abolish one separate office and create another. It proposed no addition to the public expense, but rather a diminution of it, inasmuch as it proposed the appointment of a new Cabinet Minister, who should not have a separate Department, and who should not be at the head of a separate Department, but who should preside concurrently with an existing Cabinet Minister over an existing Department, and that, by an exercise of economy, which the hon. member for Northumberland thought unwise, and said was entirely unprecedented, he should be supplied with the same Deputy. The hon. gentleman said he had heard of one Minister having two Deputies, but the idea of two Ministers having one Deputy, was a thing which he objected to, and he (Mr. Blake) supposed on constitutional and economical grounds. It was not correct to allege that the measure now before them proposed an increase to the public burthens. On the contrary, as he had pointed out with reference to the political charge, it left things as they were. With reference to the staff of the two political officers dealt with, one by removal and the other by creation, in this Bill, it proposed an economy. A suggestion had been made that there was a great difficulty in there being two legal officers; that it would throw a doubt on the public mind as to whether there was division in the camp; and that the weight which was at present

attached to the opinion of one law officer of the Crown, standing in the high position of Minister of Justice, would be diminished in consequence of a suspicion on the part of the public that this officer's opinion was dissented from by the other legal officers of the Government. It did seem to him that this was criticism run mad. It was ridiculous in the extreme to suggest that there should be less weight in a legal discussion announced by one or other of those high law officers of the Government, because there existed another high officer of the Government, who must be presumed to concur in that decision, and must be presumed to add and not diminish the weight due to it. But he might point out to the House that, although this had not yet been achieved in England, and although in England there was a different system at present of providing the legal assistance required by the Government, yet, for many years, it had been agitated by those who had the best means of learning, or rather comprehending the difficulties under which the present system placed the Government before the country and the Parliament, that there should be an office of Minister of Justice created there, notwithstanding the existence of the Lord Chancellor also, that there should be another office created, the high State office of Minister of Justice—who should be a political officer, a member of the Cabinet, and having a seat in the House of Commons.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD: Hear, hear.

MR. BLAKE said he regarded the proposed change as one of very great importance, not merely with reference to the discharge of the executive and administrative functions of the Government, which were but partially discharged, but chiefly with reference to the disposition of that not unimportant portion of the duty of the Government in connection with the initiation and control of a large portion of the legislation passed through Parliament. In a Parliament which sat as ours did for a short time, where the members lived at high pressure for two months, or a week or

MR. TUPPER.