

What rate of interest has the Government allowed on said money, and when will it be paid to the Province ?

Mr. McLELAN. There are two amounts claimed by the Province of Ontario as due to it on account of the Land Improvement Fund:—1st. One-fourth of receipts from Common School Lands sold during the existence of the Upper Canada Improvement Fund, from the day of the abolition of the Fund to 1st July, 1867, less cost of collection, \$124,685.18. This amount was allowed by the arbitrators appointed in accordance with section 142 of the British North America Act, to determine the division and adjustment of the debts, etc., of Upper and Lower Canada, and in accordance with section 7 of their award, the amount will be credited to the Province of Ontario. 2nd. One-fifth of receipts from Crown lands so sold and moneys so received, \$101,771.68. This item is in abeyance pending the receipt of communications from the Province of Quebec as to whether that Province will allow the sum to be charged to the Province of Canada and credited to the Province of Ontario. The question of the method of calculating the interest will be taken up when the matter is settled.

#### EXECUTION OF LOUIS RIEL.

The House resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. Landry (Montmagny): That this House feels it its duty to express its deep regret that the sentence of death passed upon Louis Riel, convicted of high treason, was allowed to be carried into execution; and the motion of Sir Hector Langevin: That this question be now put.

Mr. THOMPSON (Antigonish). Although so much has already been said in the course of this debate, as the hon. member for West Durham (Mr. Blake), on Friday evening, intimated that the time had come when the House should hear from the law officer of the Government, that the time had come when I should rise, if I intended to rise at all, it is becoming that I should accept the hon. member's challenge and make, at this stage of the debate, late though it may appear, and tedious though the debate has already been, such a statement of the facts immediately connected with the part that my Department has had in this transaction as it was proper to make before the debate should close. I regret, Sir, the more because I am a comparative stranger in this House, that my first duty in making such a statement is to express my regret at the manner in which this discussion has been carried on, and the way it has been brought before the House.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. THOMPSON (Antigonish). It has been said, Sir, and the cheer that comes from hon. gentlemen opposite means a reaffirmation, I presume, of the statement, that the Government have chosen the mode and the time in which this question should be discussed and, as the hon. member stated, had framed the indictment. Even if that were true—as it is not, Mr. Speaker—I ask the hon. members who have just given that cheer, how they are to escape the responsibility for the manner in which they have carried on the discussion down to this moment? Mr. Speaker, it has been said from time to time in the course of this debate—it was generously admitted by the hon. member for Brockville (Mr. Wood) the other day—for the purpose of argument only, I presume,—but it was contended by the other side of the House most vehemently, that the right to discuss this matter at every step and every stage rested in Parliament precisely as if Parliament sat as a court of appeal.

Mr. MILLS. Hear, hear.

Mr. THOMPSON (Antigonish). I should like the hon. gentleman who says, "hear, hear," and those who follow

him, and any hon. gentleman who has engaged in this discussion or takes any interest in it, to point to a precedent which justifies the opposition. I should like them to point to a case in any Parliament in the British Empire, in which any man incurring the responsibility of a member of Parliament would say, "hear, hear," to such a proposition as that. We have had, not only the contention that Parliament is to be the court of appeal before which the whole evidence is to be discussed, and before which the whole evidence is to be sifted by lawyers on both sides of the House, but we have been entertained day after day by speeches for the defence. We have not merely had such a discussion as would take place in a court of appeal, but gentlemen have been speaking with carefully prepared briefs, analyses of evidence, and authorities, upon all of which this House is to be expected to pass an opinion and decision. I have only to state the case as it is to bring the House to the consciousness that this is not a suitable tribunal, that the temper which prevails in a Legislature composed of two actively hostile parties is not a place in which the administration of justice in any particular case can suitably be discussed. We have not only been told that Parliament is a court of appeal to try a question like this, but that, if Parliament comes to a wrong conclusion, the people at the polls are to decide it. If we have heated controversy and partisan feeling in this House which prevent the House coming to a judicial conclusion such as a court of appeal would arrive at, I should like to ask hon. gentlemen opposite how will it be when we go to the polls? Is partisanship, for the first time in the history of the country, to be eradicated there? Is a calm and cool consideration of the merits of a particular case—of the fate of a particular convict, to be made by the people of this country at the polls; and if so, will hon. gentlemen opposite pledge themselves that when the case is submitted for the determination of the electors we shall not have passions and partisan feeling appealed to on other issues, the National Policy, the Canadian Pacific Railway, and all the questions which have divided parties in this country for the last ten years? I need no better confirmation of the protest which I make against such a discussion on a motion of this kind in Parliament, as has taken place, than the attempts which hon. gentlemen opposite have made to prevent our bringing to the case a calm and deliberate judgment. The member for West Durham, himself, in the opening expressions of his speech, on Friday, condemned anything like feeling. He deplored the introduction into the debate of bygone issues and political considerations, and the sound of his voice had hardly died away in the expression of those sentiments, when he declared to the House, in tones that rang from end to end of this Chamber, that he intended to hold the Government responsible for every life that had been lost, for every pang that had been suffered, and for every dollar that had been expended.

Mr. BLAKE. Hear, hear.

Mr. THOMPSON (Antigonish). I should like the hon. gentleman to state how, after an assertion like that, how after the statement of the hon. member behind him who proclaimed three times in the course of this discussion that the men on the Treasury benches of this House are greater criminals than the man who died on the scaffold at Regina,—I should like to ask him how, after expressions like that have been bandied about in this debate, he expects this House to come to a conclusion in the manner in which a court of appeal would decide on any particular case? Not only has that attempt been made to prejudice the discussion, but hon. gentlemen have complained bitterly at a step which has been taken to preclude the introduction of other issues by which the judgment of the House might be