

of that society; and, if my reading was correct, the Political Alliance was in favor of vote by ballot in 1858. But, what have the Conservatives since done to carry out this measure? It has been allowed to remain out of sight. We may assume that they, too, have changed their views, at least on this point. I consider, Mr. Chairman, that a party which brings forward any measure, departs from its principles, if it does not carry that measure out. I have, as I have said, always been opposed to vote by ballot, because I think that an Englishman should not be ashamed to record his vote openly. When the Conservatives came into power in 1859, we were to have total exclusion of officeholders from the floor of the House. This was then their great policy, and this policy they departed from in 1863. Can they tell us, then, that we are not carrying out Responsible Government, because we depart from some of the principles which guided us when that form of Government was introduced here? If this be the case, they themselves did not carry out the principles of Responsible Government, when they changed their policy, in regard to the officeholders.

Hon. LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION.—The people saw the error of their ways.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Yes; the people saw the error of their ways, and the Government and the Representatives of the people saw the error of their ways. But it was still a departure from their principles, though they may say it was only a different way of working those principles out. This is very well—very good; and I am sure that, although the then Opposition congratulated the Conservatives on having turned from the error of their ways, they never upbraided them for not bringing a regiment of officers into the House. But, Mr. Chairman, there was no desire, on the part of the present Government, to delay unnecessarily the summoning of the Legislature. As soon as possible after the late Administration was broken up, the present Leader formed his Government; and I believe that, rather than leave the country in confusion, had the Leader of the Opposition been able to form a government, our Leader would not have interfered with him. If the members on this side of the House had been grasping after offices, it would have been impossible to call the Assembly even now, and the Revenue Bill might have been lost, had we thus adhered to the former policy of the Liberal party,—for with more than two or three members out of the House, the Government would have been placed at the tender mercies of the Opposition; and, in that position, as you may imagine, we were not inclined to be placed. The gentlemen on that side of the House may be very pleasant and agreeable; but we cannot trust them, when they are able to obtain an adverse vote. Let the Opposition, then, not cry out too soon. Why are they in such a hurry to pounce down on us, driven, as it were, into the position which we held? They would, Mr. Chairman, show far more of the true patriotic spirit, if they refrained from doing so for a time, or, at least, until the Government has had an opportunity to develop its policy.

Hon. LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION.—I am, indeed, very much obliged to the Hon. Attorney General, for his able, lengthy, and statesmanlike lecture upon political morality. I was not present when this discussion commenced; but I understand it was begun by members on his own side of the House. The hon. member for Belfast opened it with that speech of his, which included the Tenant League and the calling in of the Troops. Then the Hon. Attorney General gave us a definition of Responsible Government; and now he has gone into the Franchise, vote by ballot, and Lord Derby's policy.

Mr. BRECKEN.—I wish, Mr. Chairman, to say a few words upon the ingenious remarks of the Hon. Attorney General concerning the Political Alliance. I can say only this: The Political Alliance was an organization of the Conservative party. The principle of vote by ballot was not, I believe, part of the Constitution of the Alliance. Though incorporated in the draft constitution, it never formed part of the policy of its members or of the Conservative party, and was never brought forward by that party, either at the hustings, or on the floor of the House. I find no fault with the Hon. Attorney General for having changed his opinions. The Conservatives saw their mistake in the total exclusion of officeholders from the floor of the House, and they acknowledged it. If the present Government see that they were wrong in carrying out Departmental Government, why do they not frankly avow it? I believe that they are pursuing a wise course; but let them say that they have found themselves in the wrong,—not that the necessities of the times have compelled them to act as they have done, and compromise their principles. No, Sir; nothing would justify that—not even the loss of the Revenue Bill.

Hon. Mr. HOWLAN.—We have, Mr. Chairman, heard much in this discussion about the consistency of party. We would almost be led to believe that those hon. members could be accused of no inconsistency. But what, Mr. Chairman, did we see in 1859? Why Sir, during that year, and until 1863, the actual Attorney General of the Island had a seat in the House, while the gentleman who nominally held that office did not receive the salary belonging to it. This was the belief throughout the Island at the time. The party were afraid to send the gentleman who really discharged the duties of Attorney General back to his constituents, and hence this anomaly. We are, however, taking a straightforward course; we are satisfied with three members on the floor. Much has been said, Mr. Chairman, regarding the Queen's Printer's rejection by his constituents, but the hon. member who last spoke, must remember that he very nearly shared the same fate. I contend, Sir, that it is not right or just to introduce that gentleman's name here since his defeat. This matter should be left in abeyance, for his case may yet be that of other hon. members. But, Sir, the present Government has been styled a "composite" party, by the Opposition. Why, Sir, the character of the Conservative Government for the last eight years, has been composite. During that time they have had three Leaders, while the present Leader (Mr. Coles) is the only one the Liberal party ever had. The members who form the present Government, have come from the east, the west, the north and the south, and thus far, Mr. Chairman, it is composite, but not so on real principles. It was the mismanagement of the Land Question by the late Administration, which gave the present Government the majority in this House. It was a Colonial disgrace to call in the Troops, and I am glad to hear it admitted, that the civil power was not sufficiently exercised before doing so. That the conduct of the Executive in this matter did not meet with the approval of the country, is shown by the fact that a gentleman, who was then a member of that body, has been returned by his constituents to the bosom of his family.

Mr. BRECKEN.—With all deference to the hon. member who has just spoken, I will tell him, Mr. Chairman, that he must, in his statements before this hon. committee, confine himself to facts. He has stated that I have introduced and made free use of the name of a gentleman not now in the House. He must remember, Sir, that that gentleman's rejection was brought up in discussion by hon. members on his