

it departed from the paths of rectitude. But, Sir, I believe that the contrary is the fact,—that the Tenant Union was at first based on the principle of resistance to the payment of rents, and that afterwards it renounced it and modified its constitution. Perhaps this hon. gentleman, who is sworn to support the laws, will inform this hon. committee whether the Union was working on an illegal principle or not, when he subscribed to its funds. It is easy to draw nice distinctions about moral and physical resistance; but when an association of that kind, with a large proportion of not very scrupulous members, gets under way, where is it to stop? Notwithstanding that he has told us that he warned the Leaguers they were going too far, and cautioned them to beware of violating the laws, I believe he sympathized with their association when it was illegal, and sympathized with it to the end; in short, that he owes his seat in this House to the use he made of that political horse. Sir, I believe, as I remarked last night, that he rode the Tenant Union horse to the very door of this Legislative hall, and then turned him adrift. The hon. member has endeavored to make it appear that, after all, there was scarcely such a thing as resistance to the officers of Her Majesty's Supreme Court. I can tell that hon. gentleman that I have had writs in my own hands, which had nothing to do with rent, that I could not get the Sheriff to execute. That officer informed me that he could not undertake the duty unless a body of some twenty or thirty men were placed at his disposal. I have, Sir, often gone home from my professional duties, humiliated with the thought that in this, my native Colony, society was in such a state that Her Majesty's laws could not be carried out without the intervention of a stronger power than the ordinary officers of justice. We have been told that the late Government should have called into requisition the civil force of the Colony,—should have armed man against man, and brother against brother, before they sent for the troops. Supposing they had done so, what would have been the consequence? The men sworn in to do duty for their Queen would have been marched forth with the Sheriff, armed to execute the writs of the Court; the tin trumpets—those trumpets which have no doubt been music to the hon. member's ears, and should be taken now and hung around his neck—(applause)—would have been sounded, and neighbors have rushed to spill neighbour's blood. But British troops are cautious, and being under strict discipline, would commit no act of violence unless it was unavoidable. Neither would they be deterred from doing their duty by any fear of offending or injuring a neighbor. Under all the circumstances, then, I hold that the late Government pursued a wise course in calling in the aid of the military, for after they came there was an end to the League. True, we had to build the barracks; but would the hon. member deny shelter to Her Majesty's troops? Had they not been brought here, I believe blood would have been shed before the Leaguers would have desisted in their mad resistance; and once stationed in the Colony, the troops must be provided with comfortable accommodation. But the outlay for the barracks will not prove a loss, for do not the troops spend amongst us annually some £6000 of that money which we so much require? At a particular time, about a year ago, when a subject was agitating the public mind, of more concern to us than even the land question—one, Sir, that came home to our hearths and our homes, namely, the Fenian raids—this hon. member, who now complains so loudly of the action of the late Administration in seeking the intervention of the military to quell the Tenant Union disturbances, said to me in the course of a conversation that I had with him, that he was grateful to the Government for bringing the troops here.

Hon. Mr. DAVIES.—I am glad that the troops are here.

Mr. BRECKEN.—Very good, Mr. Chairman, and I hope he will use his influence as a member of the Government to retain them here. But there is another interesting point in his history which the hon. member did not give. He has vindicated the tenantry, and denounced the late Government, the Supreme Court, and all concerned, for being so harsh with the Tenant League prisoners; and, Sir, this same hon. gentleman who speaks in this strain, was foreman of the Grand Jury which presented to the Court a true bill against those men—a bill which declared that with evil intent, malice aforethought, and dear knows what all, they had broken the law.

Hon. Mr. DAVIES.—What was the nature of the Judge's charge?

Mr. BRECKEN.—I am not prepared to enter into the merits of the case; but, Sir, I consider it very unfair for an hon. gentleman, one of His Excellency's responsible advisers, to rise up in this House and insinuate that the fountains of justice are impure,—that the men who occupy the Bench of this Colony, and who are sworn to administer justice, have failed to discharge their duty. He would not venture to state that the Court said so and so; but simply that he had heard that such and such was the nature of the statements. If he believed what he heard, he ought to have instituted a charge against the Judges. It would be easy for him to have gained access to the records of the Court, and satisfied himself whether the sentences were as reported to him. This was the course for the hon. member to pursue, instead of bringing up the matter here; and, Sir, as he is now a member of Her Majesty's Executive Council, I trust he will not allow the case to rest with his remarks before this hon. Committee, but that he will have it investigated to the very bottom. As regards the financial question, and the censure he passed upon the late Government for purchasing the Cunard estates, I may say that that purchase involved a loss to myself personally of perhaps nearly £100 a year in a business way—more, probably, than the hon. member ever realized from his advocacy of the cause of the tenantry—and also that in that purchase the interests of my constituents were not regarded. But, Sir, it is not right to be too selfish in considering the expediency of a public question—it is the duty of an enlightened legislator to look to the general good. The price paid for the Cunard estate may have been higher than the people could have wished; but notwithstanding the censure that has been cast upon the late Government for this purchase, it is a satisfaction for me to know that the average price paid by them for lands is 1s. 2d. less than that paid by the Liberal Government for the Worrell estate. The Conservatives bought the Cunard estate on the best terms they could obtain; and I believe the people on that estate are satisfied with the purchase. But we heard nothing from the last speaker as to what his party is prepared to do in the future. The Sullivan estate, I understand, is in the market; is it to be purchased or is it to be escheated? Let us have something tangible before this Committee, and not the nonsense to which we have listened from the hon. member for Belfast (Mr. Davies).

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL.—The discussion on this paragraph has, Mr. Chairman, embraced nearly every question before the Legislature for many years past. We have heard a very lengthy address from my hon. friend, the member for Belfast. Although I do not agree with him in many points that he has brought forward, yet I cannot think that his speech called for such severe condemnation from the hon. member for Charlottetown. The object of the hon. member was, I think, simply to explain the reasons that have induced him to act as he has in the matter of the land question.