

Company's lands in the Northwest. Where the negotiations commenced he was not aware, and it was important that this House and the country should know all about the matter.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT said there had been some such correspondence, but as it had not been final it was not in the interest of the public, nor was it in proper shape, to have it brought down yet.

Hon. Mr. AIKINS asked if the sanction of Parliament was to be asked before the purchase was concluded.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—My own impression is that on so large and important a question as that Parliament will be consulted.

Hon. Mr. AIKINS asked if the House was to understand that the opinion of Parliament would be asked before the negotiations were closed. It was important to know, because in the past the Government had concluded purchases involving large sums of money before obtaining the consent of Parliament, which, if Parliament had been consulted upon, they would certainly have been adverse to—the steel rails for instance. In a matter of this kind where the purchase of an immense territory was involved Parliament should have a pledge from the Government that before the country was committed to the bargain they should have the assent of the Legislature.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT said he had given his opinion that Parliament would be consulted; that was the proper course, and he had no doubt the Government would do so. He assumed that the honorable gentleman would be perfectly safe in taking the statement he had made.

The motion was withdrawn.

DELAYED RETURNS.

Hon. Mr. AIKINS called the attention of the House to the fact that several returns for which he had asked early last session, had not yet been laid before the House. He had, for instance, asked for a return respecting the printing contract with Mr. Anglin, and at the time the honorable Secretary of State had stated the work had been given to that gentleman through inadvertence, but it would not be done again. He found by the public accounts for the past year, however, that it had been done again.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT promised to have the papers brought down at once.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL asked for explanations respecting the changes in the personnel of the Cabinet since the last session of Parliament. The explanations that had been given elsewhere had not touched the change in the personnel of the Government,

as represented in this House. The seat formerly occupied here by the honorable gentleman who was now Lieutenant Governor of Quebec, had been filled by the appointment of a Senator not now in his place. Explanations were also due to the House as to the reason of the absence of that honorable gentleman from his seat. No matter how high an opinion the House might have of the knowledge and ability of the honorable gentleman who represented the Government in this branch of the legislature the assistance of his colleague was necessary. The Government were not too strongly represented in this House, and he thought they were entitled to the services of both of the representatives of the Administration. It was said that the honorable gentleman who had recently been appointed to the portfolio of Agriculture, and whose duty was first to his department, and secondly to this House, had absented himself for the purpose of assisting at the election that was being contested for a member of the other branch of the legislature. If that was true, he could only express his surprise and regret, and that surprise and regret would no doubt be participated in by every member of this House—even by those who voted with the Government. The absence of a member of the Government during the session of Parliament, from his place in Parliament, and from his duties to the country in the discharge of the functions of the office which he held, was a slight to Parliament, a dereliction of duty which should be brought before the notice of the country, and which no member of this House would approve of. It was, however, only in keeping with the conduct of the Government in numerous transactions, practicing contrary to that which they had been proclaiming, insisting and preaching during the whole of the time they had been in Opposition. He remembered that when a member of the late Government, not during session of Parliament, not in dereliction of his duty to Parliament, but in vacation, assisted at an election of a member of the other branch of the Legislature, though not a member of this House he was called to account for it and it was described as an indecent act. He would make use of no adjectives, but he would say the policy which the Government now pursued was a persistent reversal of everything they had preached and clamored for when in Opposition.

Hon. Mr. DICKEY said having called attention to this matter during the debate on the address, he desired to refer to it again, lest it should be supposed that his