

course being suggested? Let the Hon. Gentleman move such Committee, and I have no objection, as a supporter of the Government, to meet him and discuss the matter fully. But the Hon. Member feels that he is in a small minority and hopes by his present course to induce some supporter of the Government to move for the Committee. With reference to the observations of the Hon. Gentleman, on the amount of the Salary of the Commissioner of Public Lands, he knows right well that it is fixed by law at £300, and cannot exceed that sum. He has alluded to the great loss of Land and School tax to the Treasury, during the time the property may remain in possession of the Government. Sir, that loss cannot be very serious, when we consider that those taxes were paid up previously to the time of purchase by the Government, and now, so soon after the purchase 19,000 or 20,000 acres will be liable as before, and it is but reasonable to suppose that ere 12, ay, or even 9 months shall have elapsed, a very large portion will have passed out of the hands of the Government, and thus have contributed its proportion of Land and School Tax to the Revenue, as a great desire to purchase from Government is felt, not merely by the Tenants on the Estate, but by persons residing in Tracadie, and in various parts of Prince County, because they know that better terms can be obtained from Government than from private individuals. The hon. gentleman stated that he did not oppose the Bill: true, he did not; but he never liked it, and only declined opposition because he knew it would be hopeless; but now he seeks to paint this Bill, which he never opposed, as injurious to the best interests of the people of this Island. As soon as the land purchase bill became law, the Government of that day, which is essentially the same as the present one, advertised their readiness to purchase. The Trustees of the Worrel property did not make any offer to the Government, though they were well aware the owner was anxious to sell. He was in England, and kept uninformed of the state of things in this Island. In February last Mr. Holf's Government succeeded the Liberals. He was one of the principal Trustees. If he and his party were disposed to put the land purchase bill in operation, they could have easily done so at that time, and have secured the Estate on terms, perhaps, as advantageous as Mr. Pope obtained, which would have been a great gain to the people. But they were opposed to the Bill, and they were deterred to let it remain as a dead letter upon the Statute Book. The hon. member, I must admit, is consistent in one particular; he intimates that the Government were hasty in effecting the purchase, that they should have waited, taken more time, &c. Why, Sir, that is a favourite plea with the hon. gentleman. When the introduction of Responsible Government was sought, his cry was 'wait, the time has not yet arrived.' The error of that opinion has been abundantly proved, and his fallacy will be manifested on this matter. Sir, by the provisions of the Bill and the course intended to be pursued by the Government, tenants can become proprietors in eleven years time; that is abundantly manifest. With reference to the remarks of the hon. member respecting the gentlemen selected to act as Commissioners under the Bill, I can only say that I know not where a better selection could have been made. Would he have the Government, in so important a matter, appoint men hostile to themselves? As the hon. Colonial Secretary has stated, and as the hon. member himself well knows, it was necessary that the Commissioner of public lands should be one; and as to the Surveyor General, if Mr. Wright had been appointed, it would have been all right. Sir, the hon. gentleman in his anxiety to damage the Government, forgets that the line of conduct insinuated as likely to influence the hon. member, Mr. Dingwell, would have an effect directly contrary to his

interests, were he, as stated by the hon. member, a land speculator, for in that case he would put as low a valuation as possible on the land; and although the hon. member has affirmed that the late government was not liable to censure for their inaction on the subject, I ask, was not an offer to sell, under the Act, made by Mr. Haviland, sen., to that Government?

Mr. HAVILAND.—Mr. Speaker, I will answer that question. The offer alluded to was made to the government which composed the party now in power.

Hon. SECRETARY. It was made but a fortnight before they went out of office, but before their resignation a commission was appointed and a report made.

Mr. DINGWELL. Mr. Speaker, as one of the Commissioners referred to by the Hon. Member for Charlottetown, I am compelled to notice the observations he has made affecting myself, and in doing so, I can assure him that I am no land speculator nor was I ever, and nothing in my conduct can justify the Hon. Member in making the remarks he has. In discharging my duty under the Commission I acted honestly, and I tell the Hon. Member that I am, and I trust ever have been, as honest and conscientious a man as himself. It is most improper for the Hon. Member to attribute interested motives to the Commissioners who merit no such imputations.

Mr. McINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise, merely to observe that I think the Government made a judicious selection of the gentlemen who acted as Commissioners; they are fully competent to estimate the value of land, and I for one am satisfied with their report. I must say, however, that in my opinion the Government were somewhat hasty in concluding the purchase, as, I believe, that, had they waited a little longer, they could have obtained the land at a lower price.

Mr. COOPER. The reason, Mr. Speaker of the comparatively high price paid by Mr. Cox is, that his land contained valuable improvements, it comprised 200 or 300 acres of well-fenced land, and the former residence of Mr. Worrel, &c. But my objection to the action of the Government is, that the bill makes purchasers pay for their improvements, and I certainly was under the impression that the title of Proprietors would have been investigated by the Commissioners.

On the second reading of the Sheriff's Bill, Mr. H. Haviland suggested an alteration to that part which held the sureties for a Sheriff liable for the acts of his Deputy after the death of the principal, which after some discussion was adopted without division.

February 14.

#### TENANTS' COMPENSATION BILL.

On motion of the Hon. Col. Secretary, that the House go into Committee on the Tenants' Compensation Bill—

Mr. COOPER opposed the motion, on the grounds that the Bill was but a prop to the Landlords' titles. It applies merely to a certain class of tenants, those who held written leases for definite periods, while it made no provision for the relief of the large class who had short leases, or had settled on land under an implied promise of a lease, or those whose settlement had been known to the proprietor and not objected to for years. If a general measure, affecting all classes of tenants were adopted, it might be of some service, but the present Bill tends but to strengthen the position of Landlords, instead of embracing provisions to investigate their titles. The arbitrators to be appointed under the Bill, should be empowered to enquire into and report upon the rights and titles of both Landlord and Tenant, and if a