

state or signs, where he was going, and the reply was, "To the discussion." "But how are you going to tell who has the best of the argument?" "Oh," was the reply, "I shall know who has the best of it, for I shall see who first gets angry." So when the honourable member got up and made such an exhibition of anger on the present occasion, he must have convinced the House that he had a very poor case. He had not taunted the hon. member for anything except this: that when he got information, which he had asked for he endeavored to send forth to the country in the debates the impression that he had substantial cause of complaint against the Government. Why, the hon. member himself held the evidence in his own hand that the case he wished to make out had broken down at the very outset. More than that, when he received the return of the disputed returns, he did not hesitate to express his great surprise that what he hoped was going to be a mountain, had turned out a *mus*. Then what next did he do? Finding that the whole case had failed—as his own admission showed—then he thought that he would make another venture, in the hope of gaining something, and so he asked for a return of all the cases of every description. And what was the result? He got the evidence placed in his hands—evidence from an officer in whom he admitted he had the highest confidence—that there was not a single case whatever except the list of disputed ones, at the smallness of which he was so astonished. Now, it was obvious to the house why the hon. member was groping in the dark when he asked for the return. He wished to take the government to task for sending a delegation to Canada last fall. It did not say much for that hon. gentleman, that having admitted that the entire amount of disputed claims were altogether less than he had supposed, he should endeavor to create a false impression over the face of this country, that the government was chargeable with what could not be proved by the returns before the house. The accumulation of business in the department, as he had previously observed, arose from the great activity that now existed in this country. Yet the hon. member endeavored to get off a little ebullition of temper, and attacked the government for sending delegates to Canada. That was not the question before the house, and when the hon. member dragged it in he was simply making himself ridiculous. Any independent member would get a courteous reply, and all the information he required, from the government, if it were asked in the proper manner.

Mr. ARCHIBALD said that he had listened to the observations of the hon. member for Richmond, and he certainly did not think there was anything either in the manner in which they had been delivered or the subject referred to, to call forth the reply that had just been given by the hon. Provincial Secretary. Any hon. gentlemen had a perfect right to enquire into the working of a public department—especially one in which the public was so much interested as the Crown Land office. In view of what had transpired, he felt that the country was under a great obligation to the hon. member for Richmond in bringing this matter before the House. Although he knew nothing of the cases referred to, he happened to know that there

were several claims still in abeyance, which were pending when the late government were in office. He did not think this was very creditable to the present government, although he had no intention of charging them with dereliction of duty, for he was aware from his own experience of the difficulties attending the adjustment of the various claims presented. There was no department of the public service that required more attention and industry on the part of the government than the Crown Land department, and it was of the utmost importance that controverted claims should be decided as speedily as possible. If it was the fact, as stated, that 46 claims still remained undisposed of, it certainly seemed a large accumulation of business,—and although he was aware, as he had just remarked, of the arduous nature of the duties which devolved upon the government in connection with this department, he could not help thinking that the business was getting too much in arrear. When his government were in power he had felt it a most serious duty to endeavor to prevent the accumulation of business in this department of the public service, and he thought it was almost better in some cases of controversy to decide at once, even if it were a hasty decision (and perhaps subsequent events might prove a wrong one) than to keep the contending parties in doubt and put them to increased expense. The hon. Provincial Secretary had not alluded to the case mentioned by the member for Guysborough, of a member of this house having two years ago made an application to the Crown Land department for a grant, and paid his money, and yet no survey had been made. That was a case that did not affect the government, but the office in charge of the department.

Hon. PROV. SECY. said that the member for Colchester had better wait until he heard the facts of that case before he reasoned upon it. At present he was totally in the dark.

Mr. ARCHIBALD said he had no personal knowledge of the case—he merely repeated a statement made by a member of the House in course of this discussion. He was not acquainted with the motives or object of the hon. member for Richmond in making his enquiry, but he certainly thought he deserved the thanks of the House in drawing attention to the state of this department. He would not say that the government had failed in the discharge of their duty, because he was unacquainted with the facts, and there might be good and sufficient reasons why these 47 cases had not been disposed of—but he thought that a sufficient case had been made out to warrant the Crown Land Committee in ascertaining whether the affairs of this department had been administered with that vigor they should. As regards the case mentioned by the member for Guysborough he could not help thinking that there must be some mistake, for if true, the blame rested not upon the government, (for it was not a case of disputed claims) but upon the Crown Land Commissioner, and from his knowledge of that officer, he had always found him most anxious to discharge the duties of his office faithfully. He was in hopes, therefore, that some explanation would be given, and in the absence of the necessary information, he would refrain from any further observations.