

consider the subject, when it was brought before the House; and he did not think it was taking any unfair advantage of that party, if some of them were appointed on the committee of public accounts; for they would have an opportunity to examine these documents, when they were brought before the House. There certainly had been some advantage taken, in publishing the accounts referred to, before they had been proved and brought into the House.

Hon. Mr. PALMER wondered what the hon. member meant by an unfair advantage being taken. What was all this argument about? It must be within their recollection, that the editor of a newspaper undertook to publish and make remarks on the charges made in the public accounts sent down to the House. Now, he held that any editor had a right to do that, as long as he did not publish any libel on the House. What breach of the privileges of the House was it to publish anything, stating that such and such an item of charge appeared in the public accounts sent down to the House of Assembly? Was there any novelty in that? and where was the advantage? of whom was the advantage taken? who committed any breach or violation of the rules of that House? The public accounts were sent down to the House as public documents; they were public documents as soon as they came into the House; and therefore they were open to any reporter who came there. The Hon. Col. Secretary said he was not the least alarmed that the country would mistake the House; but he seemed to be dreadfully afraid that the public accounts would get before the country too soon. He (Hon. Mr. Palmer) thought he ought rather invite publicity, and not wish to stifle anything. In the case alluded to, the editor of a newspaper undertook the matter on his own responsibility, picked out any items he could get—as any reporter might do—and made comments on them. There was a long series of those items, he believed twenty or thirty of them; and the editor referred to had been incorrect in two or three, but in the great majority he had been correct; and he (Hon. Mr. Palmer) did not see that anything that could be done now would prevent such proceedings.

Hon. Mr. WHELAN said, he quite agreed with the hon. member in what he had said regarding the right of any editor coming into the house, and making comments on what he saw and heard; but he totally disagreed with him in other statements. A document was public if it had been adopted in the House; but it was essentially a private document, if it was in the hands of the chairman of the committee to whom it had been referred. Would the hon. member say, that a Bill introduced for a first and second reading was a public document, if it were read in a private capacity? Would he say that any person had a right to come and take that document or Bill—a private Bill, and make extracts from it for his own purposes? The hon. member would not listen to such intolerable nonsense—he did not believe it himself. If the reporter of any newspaper had been in his place, and listened to an extract read from the public accounts, he was perfectly justified in making any use of that report, provided he did not libel the House; but when the report of the committee was essentially a private document—when it had not been issued by the chairman, then it was improper for that person to take extracts from the document, before it had been submitted to the committee.

Hon. Mr. LONGWORTH said he had never listened to such arguments. Was not the hon. member aware that the documents of the House of Assembly were printed; and were they not then public? Since he had been a member of that House, he could obtain them, even without the leave of the Speaker. The Hon. Col. Secretary charged the minority of that House with falsifying the public accounts; but he would

wish to know on what grounds. If a printer obtained possession of those accounts, what right had the hon. member to say that the minority had falsified them? He could not see for what reason that hon. gentleman had charged the minority, as he had done.

Hon. COL. SECRETARY would soon give the reason. The hon. member knew well that the printer alluded to was an officer of that House (No, no)—he was under contracts to print the Journals and Debates of the House, and so had a right to walk into the apartments of the officers, of the House, and obtain the paper, which he required. If, however, he had published what was correct, there would have been no complaints; but what he (Hon. Col. Secretary) complained of, was the falsifying of the documents alluded to. No such statement as that referred to, was in the public accounts; and when they came before the House, the chairman of the committee said he never allowed them to go out of his hands. Besides, when the minority of the House were questioned on the subject, they did not say they had not taken extracts from those accounts. Would they or other parties suspected come forward and say, they had taken no extracts from them? If the printer alluded to had taken them, they ought to refuse to give him contracts for printing the Journals and Debates.

Mr. H. HAVILAND said, that was certainly, liberty with a vengeance. In this country, which was called a free country, it was tyranny in the worst form. Would the Government, or the country, or the Legislature, say the individual who gives in the lowest tender should not have the right to perform certain work? Most certainly he ought not to be rejected. It was most extraordinary! He thought the hon. member had been under the especial care of the Emperor of Russia last summer. It had been stated by another supporter of the Government, that editors of newspapers had no right to anything connected with the business of the Legislature, before it was brought before the House. [Hon. Mr. Whelan—I wish to explain; it is an error. No member has a right to make an extract.] He (Mr. Haviland,) said decidedly, that a member of that House had a right to circulate anything as that alluded to, thro' the length and breadth of the island; and when a committee was sitting upon any public question, on which the interests of this Colony were at stake, they might make the proceedings public, and print them every morning. In the House of Commons, in England, when a very important committee was sitting on matters relating to the late war, and when, perhaps, it would be to the injury of the very Government themselves, every morning in the Times newspaper were the proceedings of that committee made public. He contended that here also every item of the public accounts might be made public—that he might tell every printer what was contained in those accounts, relating to the Worrel Estate or other matters, and that the printers had a perfect right to print and publish anything of that nature.

Hon. Mr. MOONEY said, he had never seen any person more persecuted than the publisher of the *Islander*. It was a great shame to see poor Mr. Ings kicked about the carpet in that fashion. There was not one of these gentlemen willing to rise and take the whole charge upon their own shoulders, and free that gentleman. If he (Hon. Mr. Mooney) were a printer, he would never suffer such treatment. Statements were issued from that office, and there was no one to father them. He was very glad to see such a display at the commencement of the Session; it indicated that they would do something. They would cool down in a couple of days, and then perhaps come at it again. Before they had His Excellency's Speech answered they would wax hot; but would come back to Bagdad again, as Sinbad the sailor did. The minority had made nothing of it after all the blaze. It was a new doctrine, to say that a printer or an editor of a newspaper was justified in taking up anything relating to the business of the House, putting a false construction on it, and publishing it. Why, that House had no control over them. But, behold, whatever appeared, poor Mr. Ings was blamed for it. He (Hon. Mr. Mooney) would

“Rather be a dog and bay the moon;”

than such a man. The minority were poor defenders, and he thought bad pays. [Laughter].