

of St. John and Quebec. These vessels range from 300 to 2,000 tons register. There are but thirty or forty Island vessels unsold in the English market. It is the withdrawal of the money from this Colony that makes the pressure. I do not mean to throw any blame on the Banks; I know better. They must respect the rights of their shareholders. If the Banks have not got bills of exchange, they must pay out the gold; and, if means are not obtained before the first of July, the Banks will have to close. Their object was to drive us into Confederation. They thought it would release us from these difficulties, and that the money we would get out of Confederation would pay for the Cunard estate. They were willing to sell our rights for the self-interests of a few. But before closing, Mr. Chairman, I would observe there is a very interesting tale being published at London. It comes out in the periodicals, and is called "Birds of Prey." If the author were as well acquainted with the transactions of some of the proprietary party as I am, and would introduce one of them into his work, it would render his name immortal.

Mr. BRECKEN.—We have listened to a lengthy speech from a member of her Majesty's Government, in which he has ignored the views of his colleagues. I thought, Mr. Chairman, it was the duty of a member of the Government to declare its policy; but instead of this, Sir, he has treated us first to a biography of himself, and then to a history of escheat, quit rents, and kindred subjects. He told us how he advocated escheat, because his heart felt for the wrongs of the tenantry; but the people, he said, would not listen to him. You will excuse me, Mr. Chairman, for going back to this old question, but as it has been introduced into this debate, I will briefly refer to two or three points connected therewith. I admit, with the hon. member for Bedeque, in the course of some of his remarks the other day, that the virgin soil of a country, of right, belongs to the people who compose its population. But, Sir, the granting away of the lands of this Colony was the fault of George III; and, as they have since frequently changed hands, the claims of the proprietors have become confirmed. The Crown, notwithstanding the original grants were forfeited, by allowing time to lapse without re-entering upon its rights, gradually increased the difficulty of effecting an escheat. It stands to reason, that this should be the case. If I allow a person to hold a property on certain conditions, some of which are not fulfilled, and I see it change hands without interfering, it must be supposed that I assent to the principle of his right to dispose of that property. Is it not a fact, also, that the government derived revenues from the lands of this Colony through the proprietors? Why was this? Was it not that they recognized them as the owners of the land? I am really sorry that the Government have one among them who ventures to rise on the floor of this House, and propound such extraordinary views. I do not say that the hon. member is dishonest; but I look upon him as laboring under a delusion. If the proprietors are not the owners of the lands which they claim, upon what principle was money paid by the party to which that hon. gentleman belongs for the Worrell Estate? I believe that he had a seat in this House when that purchase was effected; why, then, in the name of common sense, did he allow the government which he supported, to put their hands into the public chest and pay some £25,000 for that estate, if the parties from whom they purchased it had not the shadow of a title to the land?

Hon. Mr. DAVIES.—Half a loaf is better than none.

Mr. BRECKEN.—True, Mr. Chairman, half a loaf is better than none; but that was giving them the whole loaf. However, in either case, whether we

pay for the half or the whole, the claim is recognized, and it is folly to continue talking of escheat. But, Sir, the hon. member, while giving us his biography, omitted an interesting little piece of his history. He did not inform us how it was that he came into this House when he formerly had the honor to represent the constituency of Belfast. I believe he was borne in on the shoulders of the Conservatives; but shortly afterwards, when the Liberals celebrated their triumph he was found among their ranks. Still, this is the hon. gentleman who constitutes himself the *custos morum* of this House, and comes forward here to-day to lecture us on political morality. The Conservative Government—that base administration which he denounces with such vehemence—sold the country, he says, by the Land Commission. That Commission, he affirms, was a court of inquiry. For my part, I always understood it was a court for adjusting the difficulties between landlord and tenant, and not to consider the case between the proprietors and the Crown. Who appointed these Commissioners? There were three parties concerned—the tenantry had their Commissioner, as well as the proprietors and the Imperial Government. The proprietors chose Hon. Mr. Ritchie, of Halifax, and the Imperial Government Hon. Mr. Gray, of New Brunswick. But whom did the Conservatives choose as Commissioner on behalf of the tenantry? They nominated a more liberal and illustrious person than the hon. member for Belfast will ever be, namely, the Hon. Joseph Howe, of Nova Scotia. That is the sum and substance of what the Conservatives did for the Land Commission. They appointed the man of the people to guard the interests of the tenantry, and will the hon. member deny the fact?

Hon. Mr. DAVIES.—He was deceived.

Mr. BRECKEN.—I believe he did not deceive as many as did the hon. member himself on one occasion; and as to being deceived, I call for proof of the insinuation. Nor was the Hon. Mr. Howe the only friend the people had at the Commissioners' Court. Did not the Government of the day obtain the services of Mr. Thompson, of New Brunswick, as counsel for the tenantry,—a young gentleman of education and ability, whom I recommended to their notice? Yes, Mr. Chairman; and this gentleman appeared before that court, and boldly and ably advocated the rights of the people. And more than that, parties of all shades of politics and opinions were allowed to come before the Commissioners' Court and make their statements, without giving them on oath. Every species of representation respecting the grievances and hardships of the tenantry was made there; and I believe the hon. member himself also delivered a speech in presence of the Court. At the time of the French revolution, it used to be said: "O, Liberty! what crimes are practised in thy name?" and were it not making a too free comparison, I might say, how much buncombe is practised under the name of P. E. Island Liberalism! The Conservatives, we have been told, are everything that is bad and deceptive. Even when the people endeavored to get the arbitration clause of the Award carried into effect, and did not succeed, the cry was raised that the proprietors and the Tories had thrown obstacles in the way. The proprietors, it is true, raised an objection to the arbitration clause, on the ground that the Commissioners had no authority to delegate their powers to others; and I believe the objection had some force, for it is based on a principle recognized in all arbitrations; but the Conservative party of this Island were innocent of throwing any obstacle in the way of the confirmation of that clause. So much for the Land Commission; now for the Tenant League. I understood the hon. member to say that this association started on a right principle; but that afterwards