

management of the department he would certainly not have asked the officer at its head to answer the enquiry in question. He thought when these were examined, it would be found there was good ground for the course he had taken, and if it was likely to produce anything like energy and greater industry on the part of the department, a service would have been done to the country. He was given to understand that within the last two years the accumulation of unsettled business has been out of all proportion to all previous years. The head of the department was not himself so much to blame, especially in respect to the disputed claims, because these were altogether out of his hands and matters for the investigation of the executive committee. Doubtless the delay had occurred in consequence of the fact that the executive had had their attention called during the recess to other questions, but he thought it hardly fair to the country that this neglect of matters so interesting to large numbers of the people should be exhibited. It was no trifling affair for a poor man in the country to be kept in a state of doubt, for many months, in reference to lands on which he wished to raise a home- stead and make his living. He was quite satisfied with the return that had been presented, and would now move that it be referred to the Crown Land committee for their consideration.

Mr. STEWART CAMPBELL said that there was no doubt that there was some necessity for an improvement in the Crown Land Department, for he had to go no further than to a gentleman on his right hand, who had paid money for 100 acres two years ago, but the line of which had not even yet been run out.

Hon. PRO. SECY. could not congratulate the hon. member for Richmond on his success in endeavouring to find some material for a charge against the government. When the return was placed in his hand the other day, the hon. member had actually expressed his surprise that the list of disputed cases was so small, and then put out hap-hazard another question, the answer to which he thought might give him the material which failed him at the first experiment. But even this second venture did not appear to answer the purpose of the hon. gentleman. All he could say now was that the head of the department was a most laborious officer, and that he was convinced that there was some neglect on the part of the government—that these claims must have accumulated during the last two years. True they had accumulated, but it was for the simple reason that during the past two years there had been an amazing activity in the department that never existed previously. Within the last year the applications in the Crown Lands had doubled with only the same number of officers to attend to them. It was a natural result that with double the number of applications and double the amount of money paid, there should be within the past two years an accumulation of work. The hon. member for Richmond, added the Prov. Secy., held in his hand the proof that, instead of any neglect on the part of the government, there was not a single case pending before the Executive Committee with the exception of the list of disputed claims at the smallness of which he himself expressed surprise, and some of which had existed since 1862.

Mr. MILLER said that he did not think there was anything in the remarks he had made to warrant the tone and style of observation in which the hon. Provincial Secretary had thought proper to indulge. When he called for these papers, he did it under the impression that there was neglect on the part of the government, and he reiterated it now. When he moved for the return he was actuated by a desire to serve those whom he was convinced had been badly treated in connection with the department. When the return was placed on the table, he did not deny that he had expressed his surprise that the list was small. He was not, however, astonished that the list of disputed cases was so small, but that the list of what he thought were the undecided applications was so insignificant in comparison with what he imagined it was. He considered it a disgrace to the government that they had not endeavoured to settle these claims and put the matter at rest. It was a very easy matter for gentlemen to sit at ease in their offices and pocket their salaries, but the people had a right to have more attention paid to their affairs. The government might have been more worthily employed in settling these claims than gadding about the country on self-constituted missions and endeavouring to barter away the privileges which these people so highly value without their consent and approval. If these gentlemen had remained at home last summer he thought they would have been in a better position to assume the tone of arrogance and superciliousness which they adopted with reference to those who took them to task for their neglect of the public business. The hon. Provincial Secretary assumed he had a right to sneer at gentlemen who charged him with neglecting his public duty; but he had to learn, as others had already, that the independent members of the house were not to be treated with impunity, in the style he was accustomed to use. If any member came forward and asked a question of the government, he ought to be given the information he required in a courteous manner. If the hon. gentleman could take credit for himself for the condition of the land office, he was certainly exhibiting an amount of modesty for which he deserved a mark of distinction. There were some four or five hundred cases for which poor men in the country could get no satisfaction for years, and yet the honourable gentleman seemed to consider the matter of little importance. He (Mr. Miller) knew of several cases in his own county, in reference to which he had been trying for two years to get a settlement. The only answer he had, day after day, was, that the department could not get a committee of the Executive Council together. He would tell the Hon. Prov. Secy. that if he took the trouble to ask for the returns of the cases undecided when that hon. gentleman came into office, and compared them with those since that time, the comparison would not be flattering to the government. It would be found that the number when he came into power were few indeed in comparison with what he had allowed to accumulate for the last two years.

Hon. PRO. SECY. replied that when he listened to the hon. member for Richmond he was reminded of an anecdote of a person who on his way to attend a discussion between two noted characters, met with a deaf and dumb man. He asked that individual, by means of a