

jection that was felt in reference to the time in which it should become law, was removed by the amendment that was passed. At all events, this is not the proper time to discuss the character of the law.

Mr. KAULBACK—I may state for the information of the House that the impression prevailed in my county that it was intended to repeal this law, and that it would be, therefore, incurring needless expense for the Grand Jury and Sessions to take measures for bringing it into operation. The law is very obnoxious to the people, and I confess that I promised to do my utmost to strike it off the Statute Book.

Hon. PROV. SEC.—I feel it necessary, after what has just fallen from the hon. member for Halifax, to say something on this subject. The hon. member has stated with perfect accuracy this at the time the bill was introduced to change the franchise of the country, I gave it my most determined opposition. I stated the objections I entertained to that measure, and did all that I could constitutionally to oppose its passage; but the House does not require to be told that not only I but the party with which I have been accustomed to act, with remarkable unanimity, exerted our power to the utmost to defeat that bill. I differ from the hon. member for Colchester as to the feeling in this House in reference to the measure; it was not merely objectionable as regards the time it was to go into operation. The party which claimed to represent public opinion in this country, with the greatest unanimity declared against the fundamental principle of that law during its passage through the House. These efforts, however, were unsuccessful, and the bill was sent up to the Legislative Council, where it was amended so far as respects the time in which it should go into effect. The moment that took place my position was entirely changed. Whilst I could constitutionally oppose its passage here I did so; but the instant it became the law of the land, I was bound as a member of the Legislature, as a member of the community of Nova Scotia, to respect and observe it. (Hear, hear.) There is no question that this responsibility rests even with greater force upon the members of the government whose duty it is to enforce the laws upon the statute book of the country. Therefore my duty as a citizen, as a representative of the people, and as a member of the Government is clear and unqualified, and it is to respect the law as far as lies in my power. I may endeavour to repeal it, but, as I stated on a former occasion, from the attitude taken by the Legislative Council, I feel it would be utterly useless to make any change in the fundamental principles of the act on the statute book. I feel it necessary to state that whilst my opinions are to a large extent unchanged with regard to the policy of that measure—for if it were now under the consideration of the House I would oppose it as I did in the session of 1863—under existing circumstances I think the hon. member for Halifax, on reflection, will see that the duty of all of us is to carry out and vindicate the law, and that until we have changed it in a legitimate manner we must bow to it as to any other statute of the land.

Mr. TOBIN—I think it will be found that I have said nothing to controvert the doctrine laid down by the hon. Provincial Secretary. I

stated that I was not surprised that the grand juries refused to bring a law so obnoxious to the people into operation. Am I not at liberty to characterize that law or that bill rather by any language that I may see fit? Why, it can hardly be said to have become law as yet—it never been enforced in this country.

Mr. ARCHIBALD—The hon. gentleman knows that it goes into operation this year.

Mr. TOBIN—I am not surprised that the hon. gentleman is warm on the subject of this pet baby of his. I am afraid he will have to provide a pap spoon for it before long, if he wishes that it should grow up. It did not pass the Legislative Council at the first session it was introduced. It was laid over and was not allowed to take effect until the general election was over. Last winter it was taken up and a clause inserted to bring it into operation, if possible this year. The House, I contend, has a perfect right to deal with it, and should not force upon the people a measure so obnoxious to them. Let me add, that if any gentlemen wish to destroy themselves politically in this country, all they have to do, is to force it upon the people.

ACT OF INCORPORATION.

Hon. Mr. SHANNON presented a petition, and introduced a bill, for the incorporation of the Waverley Gold Mining Company.

P. O. CORRESPONDENCE.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL laid on the table certain correspondence connected with the Post Office at Truro. Also in reference to the loss of a money letter in the Antigonishe P. O.

BILL RELATIVE TO PUBLIC OFFICES.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL asked leave to introduce a bill to "authorise certain Incorporated Companies to become sureties for public officers." The hon. gentleman briefly explained that this bill was founded upon the Imperial Act, and the object was, that in case of contracts for the performance of public services, instead of the Government taking the individual bonds of the contractors this Company undertook to guarantee the performance of the work. A branch of the Company was in existence in Canada, and the object of this application was to introduce the practice into this country.

The bill was read a first time.

INDIAN AFFAIRS.

The Hon. PROVINCIAL SECRETARY, by command, laid upon the table the Report of the Commissioners upon Indian affairs.

The report furnishes an abstract of blankets and coats distributed amongst the Indians in various parts of the province during the year 1864—772 blankets and 150 great coats. It also contains an account of the debits and credits—balance in hand \$169.23, reserved to meet further applications this winter.

Annexed also is a statement showing receipts for portions of the Indian reserves, sold to individuals who had settled upon and improved them; also, sundry payments made from that fund—leaving a balance in the treasury, including interest to 31st Dec., \$1067.83.

The commissioner refers to prospective sales as desirable in some cases—and to the policy which should be preserved, with reference to the very large tracts of land, held as reserves—with very little prospect of inducing the Indians to occupy and improve them.