

that the franchise of this country was placed in a position of certainty. If an election was held next summer difficulties would be sure to ensue, as matters are now. If we are to have the franchise the same as in the adjoining province let it be done now. Let the country clearly understand what is to be the franchise.

Mr. S. CAMPBELL.—I am glad that the Provincial Secretary has addressed a circular to the different counties on this subject. As respects the county of Guysboro it was not a mere accidental omission on the part of the sessions and grand jury to fulfill the requirements of the law, but there was a positive refusal—a deliberate violation of the law of the country. Guysboro was one of those counties where it was required that action should be taken at the fall term of the supreme court. Previous to that fall term, the Clerk of the Peace, by the direction of the Custos, called a special sessions to be held at the same time as the supreme court in the county, at which the grand jury were to be in attendance. So far they fulfilled their duty.

The Supreme Court met, the special sessions was convened, the grand jury met in connection with that special case, and then a resolution was deliberately presented by a number of gentlemen in that sessions, refusing to act under the law. Certain resolutions were passed by which they declared that they would not act under the law at all. There could be therefore no excuse in that county, as exists in Lunenburg, where it was entirely an accidental omission on the part of the officials. I think, therefore, that in addition to the circular which the Provincial Secretary has addressed to the different counties, there should be some enquiry made as to the particular circumstances under which action has not been taken in any county. It would not distress me much if this act was not carried out in the county of Guysboro; but I do think it hard that any portion of the people of this country, by the deliberate action of any one, should be disfranchised, for that will be the effect if this difficulty is not remedied.

Mr. ROSS.—I may state in reference to Victoria that the new franchise act has not been acted on by the Custos or Sessions. The Custos neglected to call the special Sessions. The Judge called the Custos to account, and his reply was that he had no instructions from the Government. The law, I stated at the time, was sufficient instructions.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL.—It will be found that the circular addressed to the several Custos will contain all the information required by the hon. member for Guysboro.

Hon. PROV. SECRETARY.—I think this circular covers the ground wished by the hon. member for Guysboro. It requires the Custos to furnish without delay for the information of the government the proceedings had by the Court of Sessions and its officers in respect to the new Franchise Law &c.

Mr. TORIN.—I am not surprised that the grand juries in the different counties of this country have refused to bring that law into operation. It is one of the most obnoxious laws that was ever passed in this House. It had not the sanction of this House—nor to any great extent of the upper branch. That law was the means of destroying the influence and power in this

country of the party that passed it in this House. Now the same party come forward and endeavour to force the Government into bringing this obnoxious law into operation and pressing it upon the people. Where was the influence of the hon. member for Guysboro in his own county? Had not he sufficient influence with the Grand Jury and with the electors to prevent them disfranchising themselves in the event of an election? These gentlemen who originated and passed this law are accountable for the manner in which it has been received by the people. The House should deal with the franchise of this country and put it upon either a manhood or property basis. Let there be a law in which the people can have confidence, not one establishing a board of assessors who will have it in their power to give any man a vote or refuse it. I remember hearing the Provincial Secretary himself denounce this act when it was before the Legislature as one of the worst measures that could be devised.

Mr. S. CAMPBELL.—I was certainly astonished when I heard the hon. member for Lunenburg attempt a quasi justification for the course taken in his county in reference to this law, but I am still more so, at the remarks that have fallen from the hon. gentleman who represents the city of Halifax. I am surprised that he should attempt to justify the action of any men in contravention of the law of the land. The hon. gentleman asks, where was the influence of the member for Guysboro? Let me tell him that the member for Guysboro had no more to do with the action of the Special Sessions on the occasion in question than he himself. But I shall tell him what I did. The Supreme Court was sitting and the Judge about to discharge the Grand Jury from their attendance, when I brought to the notice of His Lordship the fact that this law ought to be complied with, and that a special sessions had been called in connection with it. I did my duty on that occasion. What more could I have done? What is to become of the dignity and privileges of this Legislature if the laws it passes are to be openly evaded and set at naught. I called attention yesterday to an invasion of the rights of this House. We have it also in prospect to make this body a mere grand jury or something less important. I trust the time is far distant when the power and dignity of this House will be altered as it is proposed to be done.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—We are not discussing the policy of the law. If it were the most impolitic law in the world, the hon. member for Halifax would be doing wrong to rise in his place in this House and palliate or encourage its deliberate violation. Such an attempt is unworthy of the hon. gentleman and of the position which he holds in this House and country. He can introduce a bill for the purpose of repealing this act which he considers so obnoxious, but because it does not meet with his approval, is he to say that every subordinate officer has a right to violate the law? I take issue at once with the hon. member, as to the fact that a majority of this House were not in favor of this bill. The difference of opinion was not with respect to the principle, but rather with reference to the time in which it should come into operation. In the Legislative Council also, I believe, there was a large majority in favor of the principle, and the ob-