

But the Attorney General had not hesitated to touch on it, and even go so far as to charge a person outside the house, and not there to defend himself, with the crime of swindling. Now, if no other gentleman would undertake to say so, he (Mr. Clarke) would undertake, in behalf of Mr. Hammond, to deny and repudiate that statement. There was nothing whatever in the pointed evidence laid before the house to show that the man had been guilty of swindling.

Mr. BLAKE rose to point out that the result of the alteration in the clause acceded to by the Attorney General was, that any attempt to affect the existing case, to which so much allusion had been made, was obviated. All Registrars appointed up to this time, and those to be appointed, would be placed on the same footing. The merits or demerits of the particular case to which allusion had been made, were not at that moment material. In his humble judgment the facts disclosed in the papers before the House were such as to justify the Government in removing an officer who by the terms of his patent held office during pleasure. These officers, every one of whom accepted commissions to hold office during pleasure, should undoubtedly be put under the power of the Government who would be responsible for the act, if any such officer were wrongly dismissed, and were responsible to the country if he were wrongly retained in such office. There was not, in his opinion, the slightest danger of their exercising such a power rashly, hastily, capriciously or wrongly. They had not done so in the past. On the contrary, he made bold to say, without desiring to make charges against any public officers—and he said it with reluctance—there were men now holding public offices in the country, who, if past Governments had discharged their duty, would have been removed long ago; and concerning whom the present Government would not discharge its duty if it did not speedily remove them from office. His opinion was, that every Registrar in the land, by whatever tenure holding office, should be put on the same footing as those hereafter to be appointed, and that all public officers should be in the same category in relation to their retention of office. He felt persuaded that no Registrar, conscious of being at all able to faithfully discharge the duties of the office—whether he held that office during good behaviour or not—need complain if a Responsible Government got the power to dismiss him when he did wrong. (Hear). He (Mr. Blake) hoped the hon. member for Grenville would not press his amendment. The clause, as the Attorney-General proposed it should now stand, would not interfere with the rights of Mr. Hammond, except that it would give the power to dismiss him hereafter; and he did not see why Mr. Hammond should be exempted from a rule which would apply to all other Registrars. On the other hand, if Mr. Hammond's claim or the verdict in his favour should be sustained by the Courts, it would be a question if it would not be the duty of the Government—he did not mean this Government—to indemnify the man who had been *de facto* Registrar. The honour of the Crown would require such a course. At present the County of Bruce was placed in a most embarrassing position, in which it should not remain much longer. Whoever was Registrar, the registrations should be legalized, and he hoped the next session would not terminate without an Act being passed with that view, if the matter should not then have been otherwise finally disposed of.

In reply to an observation by Mr. Pardee;

Hon. J. S. McDONALD said that so long as he (Mr. McDonald) held the position he did, he could not say that any person guilty of the crime referred to, should hold an office of trust under this Government.

Dr. MCGILL approved of the proposition that Registrars should hold office during pleasure, although he regretted that it should have come before the house complicated by its connection with a particular case. He hoped the Attorney-General would exercise the same "pleasure" as he had exercised in Mr. Hammond's case, in some localities down east. Many localities were now suffering because Governments had not had the courage to do their duty.

Mr. SHAW said the amendment offered by the Attorney-General, in a large measure, met the objections which he (Mr. S.) had entertained to the clause. He did not wish, as regarded the future, that any Registrar, although now a litigant, should be put on a different footing from other Registrars. As the seconder of the amendment moved by the hon. member for Grenville, he hoped his hon. friend would withdraw it.

Mr. CLARKE stated his willingness to withdraw the amendment. He must say, however, that he expected the Government would not avail themselves of the advantage given them by this Act so far as the Registrar of Bruce was concerned. He would hold the Government strictly accountable for the use of the powers which this Act placed in their hands.

Hon. Mr. WOOD—It must not be supposed that the amendment is withdrawn on any understanding with the Government.

Hon. Mr. CAMERON begged to make a few remarks before the amendment was withdrawn. He said that a gentleman who held his commission under the great seal, declaring that he held office during pleasure,