

Williston in 1858, and my mind is still unchanged. I am thoroughly in favor of responsible Government as any man in this country, and it is the ruling principle in my mind; but I do not see that it at all bears on the placing the members of departments out of the House. It is more dangerous to the liberties of the people to have those salaried officers in the House, because when a man gets one of those offices he will struggle for life and death to hold it; he will go round soliciting votes here and there, and resort to many things he otherwise would not, in order that he may not lose his salary. When we have three paid members of the Government on the floors of the House, we have as many as we should have. The Attorney General, I think, is the best paid man in the country, as in addition to his salary, his office gives him a status in the profession, while it does not interfere with it, as it does not take the whole of his time; but it is necessary for his salary to be high to secure the most talented men to fill the office. In regard to the office of Post Master General, I am prepared to vote for removal of the office, even if there is no saving to be effected by it, for the office is merely local in its character, and is not one of much importance, as is the case in England, where they keep a correspondence with all parts of the world. I do not think it is necessary to have an inspector appointed, for clerks can often be sent out of the office to inspect the different Post Offices without interfering with the duties of the department. There has been a cry raised that this was preparatory to a removal of the seat of Government to St. John. I do not think removing a couple of clerks to St. John will have any influence in moving the seat of Government. If the question of removing it to St. John came up, and I voted against it, I do not think there would be five of my constituents would find fault with me. The resolutions which I have placed before the House, will be the means of perpetuating the seat of Government here, because the difficulties in getting to Fredericton will not be so great as they have been. This system of railways will prevent the necessity or desirability of removing the seat of Government. If a city is in a position to go vigorously into manufacturing and trading operations, the accumulation of public offices and idlers will weaken and destroy the business habits of young men, and they will not acquire the habit of application necessary to put them forward in the world.

Mr. WILLISTON.—It is unnecessary for me at this stage of the proceeding to say much on this subject; but I feel bound by the position I have taken in reference to this subject, to say a few words before the vote is taken. You must remember in 1858, after the office of Post Master General became political, I felt bound to bring in a Bill to repeal that Act. I have been Post Master for some years past, and am pretty well acquainted with the routine of duties which he has to perform. I felt satisfied that eight or nine heads of departments in a House of forty-one members were more than was required, and I felt it my duty to do all in my power to bring about some reform. Mr. Howe, having been educated at his father's office, who was a Post Master at Halifax, has thorough acquaintance with the duties of the office, and could perform them much more satisfactorily than a person who knows nothing of the duties, but is appointed because his party has come into power. I have been here for seven years fighting against political influence. I thought

that the Government had too many political heads on the floors of the House, and I for one was determined that I would do all in my power to lessen the number of them. In 1859, I brought in a Bill to repeal the Act making this office a political one. I found my hon. friend from St. John, (Mr. Codrill) who was a prominent member of the House, voting with me, although we numbered but ten. It is gratifying to me now to find members who opposed me on that occasion, when endeavouring to effect that wholesome reform, have changed their minds, and are now introducing this as a Government measure. It is a proud satisfaction to find of us who voted on that occasion, to find of public opinion so changed that the Government now comes forward to effect that change which the exigencies of the case require. I was sorry to hear my hon. friend from Carleton (Mr. Connell) deny a case where he ignored the decision of the Council. The case was the loss of a money letter sent by "Elijah Clark," and the Postmaster General himself, without the advice of his Council, paid that claim. (Mr. Connell.—"I deny the accusation.") He did that without the advice of his Council, and against the advice of his predecessors. (Mr. Connell.—"Bring forward your proofs.") I can bring forward the proofs. It has been said that if we abolish the office of Postmaster General, we should have to appoint a Post Office Surveyor to inspect the Post Offices. This is unnecessary, as the work could be done by the head Clerks in the St. John office. The Postmaster General receives £200 a year, besides his travelling expenses, which amounted last year to \$548; the public has to pay those travelling expenses, even when incurred on an electioneering tour. I am happy to see the day when the President of the Council, after seeing the necessity of the case, has the correctness to come forward and propose a measure of this kind, which I, an humble member of this House, advocated some years ago.

Mr. NEEDHAM.—I confess my mind is not made up on the same grounds as the hon. member who last addressed you. I do not think because he entertained an opinion that was wrong, and the President of the Council now entertains an opinion that is wrong, that he should keep that opinion. If the arguments, which appear to have borne very heavily upon the mind of the hon. member who last addressed you, are sound, then no political office ought to be sustained. If the head Clerk in the office can bear the responsibility, then abolish the whole of them. There is not a question that has come before the Legislature at this time that has occupied so much of my thoughts and attention, and to which I have given so much serious consideration as this subject. I stand in an anomalous position; here is a Government measure brought down by a Government I was sent here to sustain—in whom I have confidence both financially and politically, and whose acts in this House I am prepared to support so far as I can consistently with my own responsibility to the people that sent me here. They sent me here to support that Government, or a Government formed on Anti-Confederate principles. Unfortunately for me, I took a different view from the Government in reference to this question. I was here in 1854, when a resolution was introduced by some hon. member of the House, in order to make the Surveyor General's office, and the Postmaster General's office political. At that time, I opposed making the

Surveyor General's office a political one, because I believed that the head of that office ought to be a Surveyor himself, and understand his business, so as to know when his subordinates did right or wrong. Unless we got a political man on the floors of the House who understood all the operations that belonged to an office of that kind, I did not think it right to make it a political office. I opposed it then, and if there was a question of that kind before the House now, I would still oppose it; for I believe the office of political Surveyor General to be useless. With regard to the Post Master General's office, I say this: If the Government can show that by making the office non-political the country is going to save a great deal of money, that they can save twelve or fifteen thousand dollars, I am prepared to go for it, however inimical it may be to the interests of my constituents; but they have not done it, and cannot do it. (Hon. Mr. Smith. We will save \$3,000.) Have they shown it? They have not, and cannot show it. They cannot get along without more clerks, and they will have to increase the salaries of the officers they now have on account of the increased labour and increased responsibility. With regard to my own private views about all these officers being on the floors of the House, I think in a House of only forty-one members, the fewer political officers on the floors of the House the better for the country; but that is not the reason why I oppose the Bill. I oppose it because the Government do not show that it is going to benefit the country by saving any money. Another ground is, because by late arrangements the Post Office Department has almost become a banking institution. I saw an account that an increase of \$24,505 in money orders over six corresponding months of last year, had passed through the Post Office since the money order system had been introduced by the late Government. Now I ask is this House prepared to put this into the hands of irresponsible men? If the Government appoint a man to a situation, and that man does wrong, I hold them responsible for his acts. If they choose to make an office non-political that is political, and put a man in that office, I hold that, according to true, sound political principles, the Government is answerable for the acts of that man if he has done wrong; otherwise, let that man be a political officer, and alone be responsible for his own acts when on the floors of the House. It is perfectly absurd to talk about Responsible Government, if we say the Government can appoint a man to an office where such a large amount of money is at stake, and that man becomes a defaulter, that the Government is not responsible. There is no necessity for abolishing this office, for the Government cannot show that there will be any saving in money to this Province to justify them in throwing to the winds an office that is so much needed at present, when there is such an amount of money passing through the Province. You allow every man in this country, Nova Scotia, and Great Britain to issue money orders, and give them the guarantee that they have got the Government responsible, and where is it when the head of the department is a non-political officer? If you do what is right now you will abolish your money orders, unless you tell the people that they issue those money orders under a man who is not responsible. [Mr. Smith.—There is no political office of this kind in Nova Scotia.] We have nothing to