

costliness may be emphasized. Yet the English system has its demerits. One of these, as pointed out in a recent debate in the Imperial House of Commons, is the fact that it does not give the elector a sufficient guarantee of the safety of his vote. Unless a person has lived for a full year in the district in which he wishes to be enfranchised, he cannot appear on the voters' lists. The result is that the householders or lodgers who move—and as we know removals among these classes are very frequent—are invariably disfranchised for at least eighteen months and sometimes for two years although they have been continuous residents in the United Kingdom and are as much entitled to express an opinion on matters of public policy as the electors who, because they have not passed from dwelling to dwelling, or from lodging to lodging, retain their position on the register. This is an unfairness much resembling one of several concerning which complaint is made in Canada. The second demerit pointed to in England is the prime objection urged in Canada against the Dominion system, namely the expense thrust upon the treasury and upon private individuals through the working of the law. The Solicitor General of England says it costs the boroughs \$140 for every thousand electors whose names appear on the lists, and the country parishes \$260 for every thousand. As there are 4,560,000 voters in England, the public cost of registration is no less than \$700,000 a year in that part of the United Kingdom. But as the system works unsatisfactorily, the politicians in each constituency have to spend enormously in order to secure the proper representation of their respective parties on the register. Sir John Gorst estimates that the sums collected from private sources for this purpose aggregate as large an amount as that derived from taxation for the official work. If this statement be correct,

\$700,000 a year is spent by the English politicians, and the total cost of the franchise in England alone is \$1,400,000 annually. There can be no question that the perfecting of the register is a serious source of outlay to both parties. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain in a late speech before the Liberal Unionists of Birmingham said: "We have had the registration to look after, and you will understand that a great deal of money has been expended. For this purpose we established a special fund and up to the present time we have received £750 towards it; but we want £2,000 and I have no doubt we shall get it." Here is a sum of \$10,000 required by one party in one constituency in one year for registration purposes.

Yet the English system is, if anything, less complex and less open to complaint on the ground of governmental or one-party control than ours. Here, one officer, an appointee of the Government of the day, prepares and revises the lists, adjudicating upon the claims of those who want to get on, and of those who want others to be put off. Here, too, for economical reasons, the lists pass to a printing office under Government supervision to be put into type for use when the contest comes. It has been charged that the system has bred injustice. But leave this accusation out of consideration and the fact remains that the process is of such a character as to necessitate extreme watchfulness on the part of the minority, whether it be Conservative or Liberal. The English lists, on the other hand, are prepared in their preliminary form, not by Government appointees, but by the overseers of the poor, men whose political complexion is not necessarily that of the Government of the day and who in few constituencies are unanimously attached to one party. From the overseers appeals are made to revising officers who sit as judges; but these officials again are not chosen by the