

election was coming on, and it may occur that the revising officer is not accessible, or he may be out of copies of the list, and the Queen's Printer has to be sent to, and he should certify them, as he is the officer who compares them.

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) Does the hon. gentleman propose that they should be certified by the Queen's Printer, or that he should simply be a substitute for the revising officer?

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. I propose that they may be certified by one or the other. Then, I think the schedule of fees for returning officers needs to be revised in two or three particulars. The House has laid the duty on the deputy returning officer of returning the ballot box to the returning officer, but we have limited the fees to a certain number of miles, and I propose to allow the deputy returning officer for any actual travelling he may have to undergo under the Act, and, instead of the present rate, which I think is 10 cents a mile, to allow him 12½ cents a mile for necessary travelling. I think also there should be some addition to the remuneration of the returning officers, and in regard to this I am acting on information I have received from officers of the Government, not only as to returning officers in large communities, but also in regard to information furnished by the Auditor General, who has supervision over their accounts and is able to speak authoritatively as to the remuneration the law allows them. I propose therefore that, in addition to the present allowance of \$60, they shall receive the amount of \$2 a poll when there are more than thirty polls in the riding. In cities like Montreal and Toronto, where the ridings are very large, it is almost impossible to get returning officers to serve for the remuneration which the law allows. Of course, the returning officer has no power to increase his remuneration by increasing the number of polls, because that is regulated by the revising officer.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). I would ask the Minister of Justice whether he has considered the proposition as to the qualification of the returning officers? Of course, where the returning officer occupies an important official position such as sheriff or registrar, there is a guarantee for the discharge of his duties, but we know that many persons have been appointed against whom you might bring an action and get judgment, but they have nothing, and there is no means by which you can enforce the penalties of the law against them. I think, as long as the Crown has unlimited discretion in the appointment of returning officers, there should be some provision by which the person appointed should be amenable to the requirements of the law, and, therefore, some qualification ought to be required. It should be some person holding property in fee-simple to a certain amount, because it might be found very inconvenient to require the returning officer to give a guarantee for the performance of his duty. There should be some protection given to the public and to the candidates by providing for some qualification or other on the part of the returning officer. The Minister has proposed that the Queen's Printer may certify to the list instead of the revising officers. I do not see how he can certify to the list, especially he could not do so if the list was printed elsewhere than in the public department. In the County of Kent, my attention was called to the

voters' list in which whole pages were omitted. The names were not there. The revising officer said he did not know how or where the mistake occurred. He believed he had sent the list properly revised to the department here, but the list was not received back properly printed. There were whole pages of names omitted. How could the Queen's Printer say that was a correct list? The revising officer could make a statement of that kind; but I do not see what value the certificate of the Queen's Printer would have. I do not see how any one other than the revising officer or his clerk could certify to the correctness of the lists.

Mr. TROW. I hope the Minister will see that it is made imperative for the revising barrister to make these certificates. In reference to the additional sums to be paid to the returning officers of \$2 per poll, it seems to me to be a large increase, because in many ridings there are 60 polling subdivisions, and that would add 100 per cent. to the salary of the returning officer. In scores of instances there are at least 50 subdivisions, which at \$2 each, would make a very considerable sum.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. Only for the additional number.

Mr. TROW. Suppose there are 60 subdivisions.

Mr. CHAPLEAU. Then he is paid \$120 instead of \$60.

Mr. CHARLTON. The history of legislation in connection with the Franchise Bill, is a very interesting one. I do not know whether we will ever get done tinkering with it; but I hope the Minister of Justice will one of these days take the sensible course of consigning it to the limbo of useless things. Now, this proposition to give the Queen's Printer power to certify to the list, I believe to be a very objectionable one. Viewing the Bill in the light of all its antecedents, I am very suspicious of it. This Bill was introduced for the purpose of obtaining an unjust advantage, it was palpably an unjust Bill. After we had been fighting it three or four months, some of the more unjust provisions of the Bill were eliminated, but it is still essentially unjust, and unnecessary, and always will be. Now, the Government has control of the printing of these lists. It appoints the revising barrister who makes these lists. The revising barrister holds office during the pleasure, practically, of the Government, he is their appointee and their creature. He makes these lists which are sent to the Government printing office at Ottawa, and there is no safeguard, no check that can be imposed by the public in the public interest. If that list is to be revised and certified by the Queen's Printer, the whole machinery in that case is in the hands of the Government. The Opposition literally and absolutely are at the mercy of the Government.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. Will the hon. gentleman let us go into Committee?

Motion agreed to, Order discharged, and House again resolved itself into Committee.

(In the Committee.)

On the second schedule,

Mr. TROW. I think the mileage allowed seems to be excessive. There is one item in which I hope the Minister will make a little change, that in