

theory and reprehensible in practice, that the political heads were to throw themselves on the deputy heads and make them the measure of their consciences, their judgment and their responsibility. It was quite evident from the immense number of references that additional burthens were being thrown upon the Department of Justice unnecessarily, but he had heard no complaint during the present or the last Session the work of the Minister of Justice had been in arrear. His hon. friend (Mr. Laflamme) was satisfied that he had done all the work of the Department, and out of eighty or ninety notices of motion in every Department with reference to some neglect or another, there was not one motion with respect to any delay or any injustice in the Minister of Justice's Department. He had been able to do all the work, and had gained credit for his infinite capacity, political and professional; and at the same time, while he had so satisfactorily discharged those duties, he had found time to carry out a political arrangement for his own Province of Lower Canada. And yet there he sat comfortably, exhibiting no symptoms of over-work, physically or mentally, at the end of the last Session of Parliament, and it might be—though he (Sir John A. Macdonald) hoped not, for the sake of the country—it might be the last Session that the hon. gentleman would sit as Minister of Justice, and yet he asked for another gentleman to be appointed in his Department. He was, perhaps, anxious that his successor, who might not be so capable as himself, should have some assistance. Perhaps his successor would be a Conservative, and then, of course, he would not be so capable. The hon. gentleman did not ask for this assistance last year, and his predecessor, the hon. member for South Bruce (Mr. Blake), did not ask for it, but the coming man might not have such professional judgment as they had, and, therefore, he must have assistance. He had been asked if he did not know that there was a strong move in England to have a Minister of Justice. There had been a strong opinion expressed in that country in favour of having a Minister of Justice, especially appointed to per-

form the political duties of the office, to be also a Minister of the Cabinet. It had never come to any practical solution, never been adopted by the leaders of either party, Mr. Gladstone or Lord Beaconsfield, or by anybody likely to have practical influence on the future of England; but even those men who advocated the establishment of a Minister of Justice, did so because they felt there was an anomaly in the English system that ought to be done away with. This anomaly had grown up, like many anomalies in England, because of the usages of antiquity. The Lord Chancellor was not much of a Judge in days gone by, he had very limited authority; but by slow degrees this anomaly had arisen that the Chief Judge of England should be a political officer and preside in the House of Lords as a member of the Administration. The reason why it was argued and pressed upon public consideration that a Minister of Justice should be established was, that the Lord Chancellor should be relieved from his political duties as much as possible, and relegated to preside over the Courts of Chancery in the first place, and the House of Lords and the High Court of Appeal, and other high Courts that might be established. He did not mean that they would go so far as to say that the Lord Chancellor should be no longer a member of the Cabinet; they did things by slow degrees in England; but that he should be relegated to matters connected with the Courts, and that the Minister of Justice should take his place in all political matters. As regarded the Bishops in the House of Lords: although they had the same rights as other Peers, it was understood that they were not to exercise their power to vote for any criminal law or any political party question. That was so well understood that the Bishops did not do so, and in the same way the Lord Chancellor, after the appointment of Minister of Justice, would revert to being the Chief Judge in Equity. The present state of things was an anomaly, which was only held up by the sanctity of antiquity. When Lord Ellenborough was put in that position by the Whigs, he himself stated that it was an anomaly, that it was the