

member of this House would dare to face the public and defend the action of this officer. Gross injustice has been done and steps should be taken to prevent its repetition. I hope such an impression will be made on the people of the country that it will not be repeated.

Mr. BOWMAN. This discussion has revealed a very extraordinary state of affairs in regard to the gazetting of returns, especially those of hon. members on this side of the House. I do not propose to discuss the returns of other hon. gentlemen; I simply desire to state the facts in regard to my own case. When we consider the discrepancy which exists in the gazetting of returns, we must come to the conclusion either that the returning officers or the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery failed very seriously in discharging their duties. So far as the return of my own riding is concerned, I have a letter in my possession from the returning officer in which he states that he made the return on 7th March, and that statement is corroborated by the return laid on the Table by the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery, in which he acknowledges it was received on the 8th March; and consequently there has been no failure on the part of the returning officer to discharge his duties properly in that respect. Consequently the fault lies altogether at the door of the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery. The return was received on the 9th March. The next *Gazette* was published on the 12th. So there were three days for the return to be sent from the office of the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery to the office of the Queen's Printer. But for some reason or other it was not published in that number of the *Gazette*. The next *Gazette* was published on the 19th March, but although a week elapsed it did not appear in that issue. It did not make its appearance until the 26th March. So it took eighteen days for the return to get from the office of the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery to the office of the *Canada Gazette*. There is another feature in connection with this case. It is stated by that official, I understand, that in some cases it was necessary to have some correspondence, that in some cases the returns were so defective they had to be corrected. But in this case there was no correspondence and the return was accepted as sent in. It is important we should know the cause of the delay. It is too much to ask us to assume that these delays were the result of accident or oversight. If one, two or half-dozen cases had occurred, they might be assumed to be due to chance, but when such a large number failed to be gazetted at the proper time we must look for the cause elsewhere. We can only account for this state of affairs by assuming that the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery deliberately kept back the returns of members on this side of the House for reasons which are, no doubt, fully understood by at least some hon. gentlemen opposite. I simply desire to state the question of my own return in its true light and show that the returning officer, at all events, was not to blame.

Mr. TAYLOR. I am glad the hon. gentleman who has just taken his seat has followed in the wake of those who preceded him on that side of the House in making many general statements charging revising officers, returning officers, and all the other officials in connection with the elections, with being responsible for their being in the cold shades of opposition, on that side of the House. But there is not one of them so far who has pointed out any particular returning officer or revising officer, who has done an injustice to him personally. There is not an hon. gentleman on that side who has said: The returning officer in my county was a Tory, and he did me a flagrant wrong. Of what are they complaining? Simply that they have not been gazetted in time to suit them. Surely there must be something at the back of this—there must be something to fear. I can point to the election in Kingston, where the right hon.

Mr. McMULLEN.

the leader of the Government was elected. No doubt the returning officer there was a Tory—one of the worst kind of Tories, and no doubt his officials were Tories. But being honest, like all Tories, they counted up the ballots, and gave the opposition candidate, Mr. Gunn, the benefit of every doubt, and they returned the leader of the Government to this House by a majority of twelve. The friends of hon. gentlemen opposite opposed it; they said there was a dire wrong somewhere, and they applied for a recount, knowing that the judge was an appointee of their own, and not favorable to the leader of the Government, so far as politics were concerned. What did he do? He said: These corrupt Tory returning officers have not given the Premier a full count; I will increase it to seventeen, and he gave the Premier a majority of seventeen, where the corrupt Tory officials had given him a majority of only twelve.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). What about Mr. Dunn?

Mr. TAYLOR. Who is Mr. Dunn? Speak for yourselves; name your own returning officer; name the returning officer for Bothwell, or any other returning officer in Ontario. But they point to Mr. Dunn, whose case we have not investigated. Let them speak for themselves and bring a direct charge. The hon. member for Prince Edward (Mr. Platt), said he regretted very much that the motion placed in your hands was not for the dismissal of the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery. Try him without judge or jury; cut off the head of an old servant, who has served this Government faithfully for the last twenty years, served when my hon. friends opposite were in power, and no doubt as faithfully then as he has on this occasion, for there were no complaints from that side of the House. But this appears to have been the policy of hon. gentlemen when they were appealing to the electorate of this country. I know it was so in my own riding. I know there was not a public officer there but was threatened with dismissal when the leader of the Opposition and his friends returned to power, as they expected to do, and were sure they would do, on the 22nd of February. Every Custom house officer, every lighthouse keeper, every fishery overseer that took part in the elections was to be dismissed, and their places were promised for political support to the friends of hon. gentlemen opposite. Not only that, but the portfolios were distributed to hon. gentlemen opposite, and I am credibly informed that an hon. gentleman, occupying a leading position on the other side of the House, has received correspondence addressed to him as Mr. So-and-So, M.P., Minister of Customs. No doubt this hon. gentleman said to some of his friends, after the House meets I will be Minister of Customs, and when you address me, address me as Minister of Customs. The hon. gentleman whom I see laughing so pleasantly before me knows that is correct; and it proves conclusively that they fully expected to attain power; and that the portfolios were distributed. But a majority of forty-three on the other side does not give them much show of getting in. Now, I was elected on the 22nd of February with a majority of four hundred and sixteen. That was a majority that ought to have guaranteed that my name would appear in the next week's *Gazette*, or in two weeks at most, and yet my name does not appear until the 19th of March. But I am not complaining; I have nothing to fear. But hon. gentlemen opposite were in purgatory, and they wanted to get out; they wanted the ten days' rule to apply to them, and the thirty days' rule to apply to us. If hon. gentlemen opposite had nothing to fear they would not complain of their names not being gazetted for a week or two after being elected. A notice that the return of the hon. member for East Hastings (Mr. Burdett) was gazetted on the 19th March. The Minister of Customs, who was elected in the north riding with a larger majority, was gazetted on the same day.