

friend is quite mistaken in ascribing any information that they had to the government or any member of it. I am quite satisfied that no member of the government has communicated anything of the kind, and in fact I might go further than that, though it is difficult to speak at large in the matter, lest I should say more than I am authorized at the moment to state, from what they have done must have been from their own conjecture as to what was likely, the newspapers have been saying and what has been said in public discussions. Any one who reads the public newspapers knows how frequently some of them tell what is going to happen. They do not know but they guess, judging from what seems probable; and very often their guesses are right and sometimes they are wrong. Well if the guesses of speculators in regard to cotton duties and whisky duties are right, this shows their wisdom and good fortune in guessing right. If it was not their own guessing, it may have been the guessing of friends. But I am not saying now that they guessed right. Newspapers guess wrong often, as well as right, and whether this is one of the wrong guesses or the right guesses I am not going to say.

Hon. Mr. MACDONALD (B.C.)—Almost right I should think.

Hon. Sir OLIVER MOWAT—The hon. member next, I think, referred to the subject of the franchise and took the opportunity of expressing a strong opinion that there should be separate voters' lists for the Dominion, and that we should not adopt the local voters' lists under the local franchise. I think my hon. friend on that question is in opposition to his whole party. In every constituency in this country, those Conservatives that have to do with preparing and settling the voters' lists recognize the enormous expense of the Dominion voters' lists, where they are fair men and have no bad purpose to serve; they feel the enormous expense of getting out these lists, and they are very anxious to get rid of the expense, and they hail the adoption of the provincial lists as a reform of a very great grievance. My hon. friend seems to treat the two franchises as if they were wholly different, as if one set of people are voting under the one, and another set are voting under the other. But there is

really very little difference. There is a small percentage only in regard to whom there is any difference—a small percentage only that can vote at provincial and not at Dominion elections, or that can vote at Dominion and not at provincial elections, and the difference is not worth taking into account, in view of the immense gain there will be by the adoption of one list of voters. These are some of the reasons why we should adopt the provincial franchise. But then another and very serious reason—and which one should and does commend itself to every fair man—is that the Dominion franchise is in the hands of the government of the day, and that the provincial franchise is not in the hands of the government of the day at all. I know more about my own province than I do about other provinces, though I have been studying them too, but in my own province the provincial government has nothing whatever to do with the preparation of the voters' list. It is all done outside of them and outside of their jurisdiction. They are prepared by the municipal authorities, some are Conservatives and some are Liberals. Any appeal is to a county court judge not appointed by the provinces and for the last 18 years appointed by the party in opposition to the provincial government of Ontario. It is entirely different as we all know, in regard to the Dominion system. The Dominion government appoint the revisers, and they may appoint and they did appoint great partisans, men who had been actively engaged in party politics up to the last moment. That is a bad system, and no fair man will say that it is a system which should stand. I expect to find the great majority of the representatives of the people of all parties in the other House and the whole of this House, supporting the principle of the Franchise Bill when it is introduced. My hon. friend then attacked us because the Speech alluded to the cold storage matter and to the enlargement of the St. Lawrence Canals and yet had not originated those things. We do not say that we originated those things. It would be absurd for us to say that we originated them. The hon. gentlemen opposite and his party did not originate them. The statements in the Speech were merely informing parliament and public, what had been done in regard to a great many things where there is no pretense whatever of any credit being claimed, so far as origination is concerned;