

that there should be an election at an early date, owing to the change in public sentiment, or to the circumstances which have occurred since the beginning of the session; or does it mean this, that, seeing the change in public sentiment, the Government are anxious that the young men of the country shall not have an opportunity to vote at the coming election, as they have not had an opportunity at the election of 1891? It will be remembered by hon. gentlemen, that in the session of 1890 the House of Commons was given to understand that there would not be an election until the voters' lists had been revised, and notwithstanding that, the election took place before there was another revision. I hope that the Government do not intend to repeat the injustice of 1891, when no man under 24 years of age really had a right to vote, although every man over 22 at any rate should have had that right. The election of 1891 was run on voters' lists three years old, and if the Government should, as they did in 1891, spring an election on the country before next session, the result will be that we shall have the same scene enacted—an election run and all the young men under 24 excluded from the right to vote.

Hon. Mr. KAULBACH—I think my hon. friend need not fear such a calamity occurring to his own party. At the last election they thought they were going to take the field and capture the Government. Every by-election held since then shows that public opinion is in favour of the present Government and their policy. I hope the Government may have a revision of the Franchise Act and that there will be a more liberal one given to us. It is more liberal, I know, than the Franchise Act of Nova Scotia—in fact, it is so very near manhood suffrage that I think we could fairly adopt it now.

Hon. Mr. BOWELL—I may compliment my hon. friend from Halifax on his facetious speech. We have heard the allegation before that there was a great change of sentiment—a change which he says prevails throughout this continent and more particularly on the northern portion of it. If we refer back to the ante-election speeches, in the House of Commons, we find that the hon. gentleman's friends have been indulging in these prophecies for about fifteen years.

Every year we have been assured, public sentiment has been changing so rapidly that scarcely a man bearing the name of Liberal-Conservative would dare to present himself to any constituency. We may be very much like the boy who was constantly crying "Wolf" when there was no wolf—the change may come some day—when the hon. gentleman and his friends will cross the floor. It can scarcely be expected that a party can retain power for ever, although Canada can present a record, so far as the party which now controls the destinies of this portion of Her Majesty's dominions is concerned, that is scarcely to be found in any other part of the world. As the hon. member from Lunenburg said a moment ago, an attempt was made to capture this country in 1891. After the general election the courts opened a very large number of the constituencies. Certainly it could not have been through the sins of the hon. gentlemen opposite or their friends, because they never carry on an election except upon the purest possible principles! But for some reason or other, 30 or 40 of the successful Opposition candidates were unseated, and the result of the by-elections has been that a majority of about 30 after the election has been swollen to about 65 all told. If that be an indication of a rapid change in public sentiment, I do not think we need fear appealing to the electorate at any time. I have no recollection that any promise was made, such as that to which the hon. gentleman referred, in Parliament.

Hon. Mr. POWER—It was made by the hon. gentleman who was then Secretary of State.

Hon. Mr. BOWELL—Where was it made?

Hon. Mr. POWER—In the House of Commons, in the presence of the leader of the Government.

Hon. Mr. BOWELL—Perhaps the hon. gentleman's recollection is correct. When the hon. gentleman attains the height of his ambition, which I suppose is to be leader of the Government, he will find that he may with all honesty and sincerity make a statement in the House one year, that he may find it impossible to carry out the next year; or he may often find that it is not in the interests of the country that it should be