

be given to so and so, and when a few repudiated this instruction, the hon. gentleman is obliged to say it was only a suggestion.

Mr. CHAPLEAU. So it was.

Mr. BLAKE. It was an instruction.

Mr. CHAPLEAU. It was not.

Mr. BLAKE. The language of the letters in which he communicated with the newspaper officers is, that "the revising officer has been instructed to send you the papers." Now the hon. gentleman says they were not instructed, and that the statement is about as accurate as many others the hon. gentleman has made. Most of the revising officers obeyed his instructions, and few repudiated them. When an Act of Parliament is passed, that Act ought to be obeyed by the Government, and the hon. gentleman has no right to take a power or to assume an authority in carrying out an Act which Parliament has not given him, and which he assumes because he thinks that the Act should have provided differently. He has no right to assume to himself an authority which Parliament did not clothe him with. He has no right to arrogate to the Government an authority which Parliament did not clothe them with. He ought to have left this entirely to the control of the revising officers. What he might have done was this: He might have issued a circular to the revising officer saying that he had enquired and had found that such and such rates ought to be maximum rates; he might have issued a circular for their information, suggesting that the principle of tender ought to be applied, but merely as suggestions. Even these would be acts of interference which would be entirely questionable, but of that character that they could be acts of interference in respect of which nobody could say that the Government was animated by anything else than a consideration for the public service. But, when you find that their act of interference is one directed to the support of their own party papers, declaring that the printing is to be given to persons whom they nominate and appoint on considerations of party favoritism, then you find interference which, of any description whatever, would be questionable, but in this case is more than questionable, is grossly improper.

Mr. CHAPLEAU. I maintain that the Government had a right to make a suggestion. If the argument of my hon. friend was correct, the revising officers might have told the Government that they had no right whatever to fix a rate for the cost of printing and might have said that the Statute gave them a right to print at a dollar, when we said they should print at fifty cents, and we would have been called impudent for endeavoring to save the public money. This question of patronage which is put as a condemnation against the Government is not an act of patronage or favoritism, inasmuch as the rate was fixed and was to be followed, and what was to be given was not to be given more to one than to another, but was a regular price; and I state again, without fear of being contradicted by the fact, that, in regard to what my hon. friend has stated to be a proof that we have paid more for the printing than should have been paid, that the Ontario lists did not cost so much, if it is with such an argument that he wants to ask the country to go with them and condemn the Government, he is asking the condemnation under a false pretence, because in making the comparison with the lists of Ontario, he is insinuating that these lists are the same, should be printed in the same manner, and could not cost more, list for list, than the others; whereas there is a wide difference, if not of a half certainly of more than a quarter. The comparison is calculated to deceive the public, and I state again, in the face of my hon. friend and of any of the printers on that side of the House, or outside of the House, the Grit printers, that

the rates for printing which were given as absolute rates, are low rates for printing such lists.

Mr. DUNDAS. I am not going to argue the constitutional principle as to whether the Government is right or not in dispensing the patronage to those papers which support them and approve of their policy. I would only say that they have the precedent of the hon. gentlemen opposite to follow in this matter, if that precedent is of any value. But I beg to take issue at once with the position that the hon. member for Brant (Mr. Somerville) has taken, that is, that the Government and the members representing the constituencies have all through dictated to the revising barristers as to how they should have the printing done. I know in the constituency which I represent there was no interference of any kind with the revising officer, and the result is that the printing was done by the Reform paper of that town, notwithstanding that there was a paper in the town representing the principles of this Government. There was no interference in any way either by the Government or by the representatives to prevent the revising officer from giving the printing to whom he chose, and he gave it to that paper which is noted for its consistent opposition to the Government.

Mr. SOMERVILLE (Brant). Because the other could not do it, perhaps.

Mr. DUNDAS. The other paper could do it, and is as respectable a paper as will be found in any town of its size in Ontario. The assertions made by those gentlemen are too sweeping, and I regret taking up the time of the House at this period of the Session in order to give this contradiction, which I am sure could also be done by members representing other constituencies.

Mr. SOMERVILLE (Brant). It was stated by the Secretary of State that it was merely a suggestion, and no dictation was intended to the revising officers. I will read a telegram which will throw some light on that point:

"Arrangements have been made for printing, under Franchise Act, in your district, being done at the office of the *Hamilton Spectator*."

That is not a suggestion; that is a dictation. The same was sent in reference to the *London Free Press*, the *Chatham Planet* and other newspapers. In regard to the cost of the printing, I say most emphatically, and I know of what I speak, that the price paid for the printing of these lists was an outrageously high price, and, if the Government had not fixed the rates to be paid, and the revising officers had been allowed the opportunity of asking for tenders for printing these lists, it would have saved the country a great deal of money. It is fair to compare these lists with the Ontario lists, and, if they are compared, it will be found that the Ontario lists do not cost one-half what the Dominion lists cost, as ordered to be done by the Government.

Mr. CAMERON (Middlesex). The statements received from the clerks of the municipalities in the west riding of Middlesex show that the total cost to the municipality of the voters' list for 1885 foots up to \$179.65. I had these in my possession and have added the figures myself. There were 4,972 names on these lists. I have counted the new voters' list and it contains 5,126 names, which, at 12 cents a name, half a cent less than the amount allowed by the Government, would amount to \$621.12. If there is a comparison instituted between the two lists as to the amount and character of the work, the quantity of paper required, and their relative value in other respects, the municipal lists will be said by printers to have been most expensive, because every one of them except one has a four page cover, stating what is contained in the document, and there are other conditions which would make the list much more costly than the one prepared under the Dominion Franchise Act.