

aries were broken up simply for the purpose of giving a political advantage to one party over the other. The advantages that any Government have of going to the people are always strong enough without seeking to increase them by unfair advantage over their political opponents. The Government of the day at present have the appointment—and my hon. friend from Charlottetown drew my attention to the fact of the great success the Government are having at the present moment—of the returning officers. It is very easy to understand it. The Government have practically the arrangement of the lists. It is done by officers appointed by the Government. The lists are printed here. I suppose I have no right to throw out any insinuations, but with the strong political feeling prevailing at times throughout the country, you cannot expect people to be at all incredulous to the belief that the lists are tampered with. No doubt my hon. friends have advantages in the preparing of these lists. The friends of the Government have the advantage of securing them at an earlier moment than their opponents. The Government have the advantage of appointing the returning officers and of fixing the day when the election shall be held to suit the convenience of their candidate. Will hon. gentlemen say that with all these circumstances in their favour they cannot influence from fifty to one hundred votes in every constituency of the Dominion? I feel that the advantages are very much larger numerically than I have stated, and I think it is an exceedingly unfortunate thing in a country like Canada that either side should take advantage of the other in the extraordinary manner that this Administration has in the last ten years taken advantage of its political opponents, in practically securing the control of the elections. That is what it is. It is not consistent with the freedom of election and not consistent with the views our forefathers held, at all events, on the important principles involved in responsible government. The practices that prevail here and control the elections are not those that prevail and would be approved of in the mother country. Both sides there are placed on a fair and equal basis. It would have been only just and fair that when a considerable number of elections were to be held that they should be held on the same day, according to the spirit of the constitution of this country

and the law on our statute book. We all know that the spirit of the law has been violated; one excuse or another has been found to avoid holding the elections simultaneously. It is presumed the lists are not ready, or the writ for the election was not ready to go. Fifty reasons can be given which, in the opinion of the friends of the Administration, are amply sufficient to justify the course taken; but when an appeal is made to fair-minded men, men who are free from political bias, they will say that it is not a good thing in a young country that one of the political parties should be handicapped in that manner—that the Government should be able to take control over the elections and make such a great difference in the success or defeat of any particular candidate. That is the growing feeling in this country. My hon. friend opposite no doubt will deny it, and perhaps will deny it honestly from his own standpoint; but there are the circumstances, there are the facilities at hand to avail oneself of the advantage that the control of the lists, and the control of the day of election, and appointment of the returning officer, has given one party over the other. These are salient points that cannot be gainsaid, and it is apparent to my mind at all events that the mere fact of having the opportunity of deciding these elements of the election must give one political party a very decided advantage over the other.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—I have much pleasure in uniting with those who spoke before me in congratulating our hon. friend from Stadacona on the able manner in which he has moved the Address. I can also express my regret that Mr. Dobson, from the town of Lindsay, has not been present to assist in seconding the Address. From my personal knowledge of that hon. gentleman I am sure the House is to be congratulated on his taking his seat on Monday. I also unite with those who have spoken in expressing our great sorrow at the misfortune that has befallen the Royal Family in the death of the Duke of Clarence. Her Majesty the Queen has reigned long and well over us, and an affection, not only for herself but for every member of the Royal Family, beats in the heart of every Canadian, and when the news of the sudden death of the Duke of Clarence was wired through the length and breadth of Canada an emotion went up from