

when the hon. gentleman says it is quite reasonable that the Government should take this power—if it be so, I say that we ought to challenge earnestly and scrutinise diligently the manner in which this power has been exercised. It is a power the most delicate conceivable. Who are they? and what are they called upon to do? They are those in control of public affairs, appealing to the great jury of the people, and themselves making provision for the record of the verdict of that jury. They are appointing the officers who are to exercise those great powers. What more delicate position can men be placed in than that, and of what conduct ought there to be a more vigilant, determined and rigorous scrutiny than that? I am sorry that the order of the House, as interpreted by you, prevents me from entering, on this occasion, into further details as to the unhappy results of the actions, however excellently well intended by hon. gentlemen; but I think it will be shown, and I hope before very long, that their conduct in the discharge of this delicate power has not been what it ought to be, and has been directed to the maintenance of themselves in power by virtue of the exercise of the rights they have obtained from the people. The hon. gentleman says he is not at all surprised at the temper which my hon. friend from Bothwell (Mr. Mills) exhibited in dealing with this question. Well, I did not observe that the hon. member for Bothwell exhibited any particular temper; but the hon. gentleman whose temper is so angelic, said that my hon. friend's temper was bad, that the temper of all of us was bad because of the great majority by which he was returned to this house. I do not know whether the hon. gentleman has analysed that return. I have analysed it to some extent. In the Provinces of Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island there were about 475,000 votes polled, and, as near as I can make out, out of those 475,000 the hon. gentleman succeeded in getting about four thousand more than the Liberal party, or about the return of one member. That was the popular verdict of those four great Provinces. It is quite true, that by operations which he has carried through this House, by powers which he has obtained from this House, and the exercise of those powers by his officers, that popular majority of one is represented by a Parliamentary majority of twenty-one. It is quite true that he has just twenty-one times the power in Parliament from those four Provinces that he got from the polls. But that is what the people said. It is true that one hundred and five votes turned out of those 475,000 would have taken away the hon. gentleman's twenty one; that it would have given a parliamentary return equivalent to the popular vote and balanced the return from those four Provinces. I have not so far analysed the returns from the other Provinces as to be able to speak with the same degree of positiveness as to them, but I believe the general return will represent something like three-quarters of a million, and I believe on that general return, if the popular voice were, as it ought to be, truly expressed according to its strength here, the parties would be found to be balanced, and that after all the influences which the hon. gentleman was able to avail himself of to produce a different result. The hon. gentleman has said that this particular question which has been brought forward is not one of any great consequence—that the state of things which has been alluded to might happen accidentally; and the hon. member for Richmond and Wolfe (Mr. Ives) said, that considering the larger number of Conservatives who were returned from the Province of Ontario than Reformers, it was quite natural and reasonable that more Conservatives should be gazetted than Reformers. Why, of course it was. If there were more Conservatives returned than Reformers, there must be more Conservatives gazetted than Reformers; but it would be natural to expect that the different returns which came out at different times should bear something like the proportion

of the gross returns. But when the hon. gentleman endeavors to induce this House to believe that it is a mere accidental and perfectly reasonable circumstance that the returns should be gazetted in the order in which they have been gazetted, I think he presumes on the simplicity of us young members of Parliament far more than he, with his large parliamentary experience ought to do. On the 5th of March, taking the Province of Ontario, there were eight Conservatives and one Reformer gazetted; on the 12th of March, twenty-eight Conservatives and five Reformers; on the 19th of March, fourteen Conservatives and three Reformers, so that the first three *Gazettes* after the election gave fifty Conservatives and nine Reformers. Then on the 26th of March there were two Conservatives to eighteen Reformers; on the 2nd of April, one Conservative to six Reformers; on the 9th of April, one Conservative to five Reformers, so that the three later *Gazettes* gave four Conservatives to twenty-nine Reformers. Is anybody simple enough to believe that that is an accident? We cannot tell yet where it happened, whether it was the returning officers that delayed them in some cases or that gentle pressure like that exerted by my hon. friend from North Essex (Mr. Patterson) expedited them in others; but that there was intentional delay in one case and expedition in the other who upon those figures can doubt, particularly when we learn that something like the same results—though I was not able to analyse them as definitely from the statements which hon. gentlemen made—happened in the other Provinces? The general result then is that the first three *Gazettes* after the election gave fifty Conservatives to nine Reformers, and the last three four Conservatives to twenty-nine Reformers. The hon. gentleman says, what is wrong about it—what does the matter amount to? You have thirty days, the hon. gentleman says, during which petitions can be filed, and we have thirty days during which petitions can be filed; and he actually expected his confiding followers to agree with him that it made no difference at all. The hon. member for North Essex (Mr. Patterson) knew better than that. All of us knew better than that. We know that the time for petitioning lasts from the 22nd of February, the day of the election, until thirty days after the *Gazette*, and we know that in some cases, therefore, there are forty days to petition and in others sixty and seventy days, and we know that those who expedite the *Gazette* as a rule have the advantage. This further we know, that what the motive may be or what the advantage or disadvantage may be, we may put to one side, because the law commands the returning officer at once to return his writ to the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery, and the law commands the clerk to gazette the return by the next *Gazette* after he receives the writ. Now, all these circumstances are such as must lead every man's mind to the conviction that, if that law has by one or other of these sets of officers been disobeyed, it is our duty to investigate it and ascertain why the law of the land, productive of those consequences, favorable to one side and unfavorable to the other side, has been disobeyed. That is the purpose of this motion, and I do not think it is at all a waste of time that we should discuss the evidence in order to get at the facts, and to ascertain how, practically, the laws the hon. gentleman has caused Parliament to pass, ostensibly to secure the freedom of election, are working, and what results they are really producing.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). The hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, commenced his speech by explaining an incident in the political history of this country which has been the subject of discussion on various occasions. We all remember that when he became the First Minister of the Province of Ontario he laid down a general principle with reference to the relation of the Provincial Governments to the Dominion Government. Before that time the late Hon. Sandfield Macdonald was Premier of the Province of Ontario,