

tolerably fair play; but immediately afterwards the returns begin to change. On the 1st of January one Reformer was returned and no Conservative; on the 3rd of January three Reformers were returned and no Conservative; on the 4th of January, one Conservative and five Reformers; on the 5th of January, five Conservatives and ten Reformers.

Mr. LANDERKIN. Was it a daily *Gazette*?

Mr. BOYLE. If the hon. gentleman knew what he was talking about he would know that these returns were made to the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery from day to day, and they were published in the *Gazette* at the end of the week. We find, therefore, that in the first week eight Conservatives and twenty-one Reformers had been returned to the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery as elected. In the second week they received fair play; but that was the average week, and it does not count. In the third week the returns were as follows: On the 17th one Conservative and no Reformer, on the 18th three Conservatives and one Reformer, on the 19th one Conservative and no Reformer, on the 20th no Conservative and one Reformer, and on the 21st one Conservative and one Reformer; or in all for that week six Conservatives and three Reformers; so that the deficiency which occurred in the first week's returns was made up in the last week. In other words the injustice which has been charged against this Government is also chargeable according to the *Ontario Gazette* against the Ontario Government.

Mr. BLAKE. Take the numbers for the second week.

Mr. BOYLE. That is the average week, and, therefore, it does not tell. The point I wish to make is this, that in the first week eight Conservatives were gazetted and twenty-one Reformers; in the second week eighteen Conservatives and twenty-nine Reformers were gazetted—that is the average week; and in the third week six Conservatives and three Reformers, thus showing that an undue proportion of Reformers is included in the earliest returns and an undue proportion of Conservatives in the latest.

Mr. WILSON (Elgin). I think it would have been better if the hon. member for Monck had left the question of the fairness of the Ontario Government alone. We find by his own statement that the gazetting in that case was fair and honest. Can we say as much for the conduct of hon. gentlemen opposite? Can we say that their conduct was above suspicion—that they acted fairly in dealing with the members of the Opposition? The hon. member for Monck ought to have known that in the Local Legislature there is a very large majority of Reformers, and had it not been for the iniquitous gerrymandering of this Government we would have had the same proportion of majority here as we have in Ontario. I have no grievance to offer against my returning officer. He is a fair, straightforward man; but what I do complain of is the delay, for which he was in no way responsible, in the gazetting of my election. I was not gazetted until the 9th of April, and in fact I and some others who had started on our way down here, did not know whether we would be permitted to enter the folds of this Parliament or not. But I found after I started that I was gazetted. I was one of those held over eighteen days after the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery stated he had received the certificate from the returning officer of the 12th March declaring me elected. Why this long delay? Why did it occur? There is no doubt that a gentle hint had come from my opponent in the county of Elgin. Hon. gentlemen opposite thought they were going to carry that riding without any difficulty. One of the members of the Government said: Be sure and defeat that Wilson; we do not want him down here, he makes too much noise. No doubt the desire was expressed by an opponent that my gazetting should be delayed as long as possible, because we knew well that I was one of those who

believed in running an election purely, fairly and honestly, and that he would have great difficulty in finding even that any of my supporters had done anything that they ought not to have done, and that he would probably be unable, under any circumstances, to petition against me. It has been said by the First Minister, and by hon. gentlemen opposite: Oh! it is better to be late; while the heat and excitement of the election are great, you will have more protests perhaps than now. Do hon. gentlemen opposite preach and practice alike? Do they act upon what they recommend to be the best course? Not at all. They preach one doctrine and practice another. I have no hesitation in saying that if hon. gentlemen opposite would pursue the course laid out by my hon. friend from Bothwell, they would pursue the right one. The hon. the First Minister has a good deal to say in the Committee on Privileges and Elections. Why does he not take the opportunity here of saying that this committee is the proper tribunal to try this case, and that we should not make a charge against a servant of the House without giving him an opportunity to vindicate his character? Is he going to allow that servant merely to send in the reason why he acted in this matter without giving him the opportunity of going before the Election Committee and explaining everything connected with the matter. Or, is it possible this servant of the Government knows more than the leader of the Government desires should be known? Is the First Minister afraid that a cross-examination would bring out something which he is anxious should not be known? Is there a sinister motive behind his conduct? If there be not, the hon. the First Minister will at once, as it is his duty to do, give that servant an opportunity to show that he, at least, is not responsible for the wrongs afflicted on the members of the Opposition. Why should the First Minister have any fear if the Government has done nothing wrong? If it is purely by chance or by accident, as the First Minister states, that these delays in gazetting occurred, why should the Government hesitate for a moment to allow the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery to go before the committee composed of a majority of their own friends. Their hesitation will produce the impression from one end of the Dominion to the other, that it was not all by chance this gazetting took place. If the Government refuse to allow a fair investigation to be had into this matter, they will lead the country to believe that they have been using loaded dice, and were bound to be sustained by means foul or fair. What statement can be expected from the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery? Supposing he sends a statement here, I must say that I, for one, judging from the manner in which he gazetted my return, could have no confidence in any statement he would make. It is only in a fair, careful, thorough investigation that I could have confidence. Should the Government persist in refusing an investigation, the country will feel that the acts of the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery will not bear light. The country will hold them responsible for striking below the belt, and taking undue advantage of their opponents. Such conduct is un-British, I was about to say cowardly, on their part.

It being six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

#### After Recess.

Mr. McMULLEN. The hon. member who brought this matter before the House mentioned North Wellington and the action of the returning officer in connection with that constituency, which I represent. Personally, I have no complaint to make with regard to the returning officer. I believe that he endeavored to discharge his duty faithfully. I hold in my hand a certificate he gave me after the close of the election: