

a Conservative is just as much a partisan as a Liberal; I do not see any difference. But I do not think that we have had very strong complaints against the election officers and that is what Mr. Biggar wanted. He wanted these officers given permanent appointments in order to increase the efficiency of their services; but he did not lay much stress on whether they should be chosen from one party or another. Every man in Canada belongs to one party or the other; how could you choose officers who would not be Conservatives or Liberals? So far as Quebec is concerned that would be difficult.

Mr. LADNER: May I ask this question on that point? Certainly if they appointed 50 Conservatives and 50 Liberals, or rather if they appointed all Conservatives or all Liberals, it would be the same as if they were partisans. It would appeal to one's common sense that it would be as well to have some of each.

Hon. Mr. CANNON: Now you are talking about enumerators.

Mr. LADNER: Yes.

Hon. Mr. CANNON: I was not speaking of that. In Quebec I think the returning officers have proven satisfactory. Most of them are officials, or professional men of high standing. I might say to my friend from New Brunswick that I know of one returning officer in the province of Quebec who was appointed by the sitting member and who was pretty high up in the Tory organization.

Mr. Boys: That is the one you referred to?

Hon. Mr. CANNON: No, another. One of the members is right here in this room. And I am not kicking about that. But why should we sit here in this Committee criticizing Mr. Castonguay about one or two incidents when the very same thing is done by other members. Let us be frank and open about it.

Mr. RYCKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I want to say just a word to carry the matter a little further if I can. We all admit that we are partisans. There is no doubt about that. But we are like young men at college in a football game; we want to know that the referee is all right and that the umpires are all right, and then the game can go on and the side that loses can take its defeat in a sportsmanlike manner. If that is done there cannot possibly be any complaint: there will be no ill feeling and our country will be healthier. I have had no objection to the returning officers appointed in my constituency. I was not consulted. If I have been correctly informed, I do object to the manner in which he was appointed, but there is not a word to be said against the gentleman, and I have nothing to hope from him and neither would any Liberal candidate in my constituency have anything to hope from him, and we will have a fair election. But let me take issue with what the Minister has just said. I will say to the Minister that *res ipsa loquitur*; 245 members and 30, Mr. Boys says; I say, less than 30—

Mr. Boys: I say, less than 30.

Mr. RYCKMAN: Less than 30 Conservatives. Therefore, you are 215 and we are 30. Now then I say that that speaks for itself.

Hon. Mr. CANNON: I am not speaking for any other province than my own. You take the list in Quebec and the great majority of the returning officers you can speak of as being out of politics altogether. They are officials and have been out of politics for years.

Mr. Boys: 31 out of 65.

Mr. RYCKMAN: I am speaking of the figures, 215 to 30. But let us pass from that. Why should there not be a recommendation from this Committee that the electoral officer shall instruct the returning officers and deputy returning officers to divide the appointments as equally as possible—always having competent men—but divide the appointments of the men who control the elec-