

fairer parallel in that Province where the disparity between Tories and Reformers is not so great, unfortunately, as it is in Ontario, than he did. I do not think it is much to be wondered at that, in the Province of Ontario, where the difference is so great there should be so many more Conservatives gazetted than Liberals. If the hon. gentleman had classified the members from the Province of Quebec where there is less disparity, I think he would have found that the number of supporters of the hon. gentleman and those of the right hon. gentleman are more evenly divided in each issue of the *Gazette*. In almost all cases in that Province, as far as I know, the sheriffs and registrars were appointed returning officers. In my own constituency, one of the registrars was appointed returning officer. He is a friend of my party and a friend of my own, and, notwithstanding that fact, my name did not appear in the first list or in the second list. I was not gazetted until the 19th March, and it must be apparent to everyone that to have a friend in the returning officer did not ensure a prompt publication of my name in the *Official Gazette*.

Mr. BLAKE. It made an election.

Mr. IVES. The people decided who should be elected. Reference has been made to the partisan action in Nova Scotia and other Provinces. We have had an experience in the Province of Quebec which is something unique, and my object in rising is to give the House the benefit of an entirely new wrinkle, because I feel that it may be of use to hon. gentlemen opposite if they have to work the oracle again. The Premier of the Province of Quebec issued a circular to all office-holders instructing them to be perfectly impartial, and not to take part in any election for the Dominion. That was sent to every office-holder in the Province of Quebec, but, strange to say, partiality was shown in regard to a certain number of office-holders. When it was made to appear to Mr. Mercier that a second letter would be of use, informing certain office-holders that they might forget the previous letter, that letter was written, and those office-holders became the most efficient workers and canvassers in the constituency in which they lived. I had several of them in my own constituency, and they all received that letter. The friends of my hon. friends opposite said it would be well to advise Mr. Mercier to notify certain office-holders that they would not be discharged if they did interfere, and they did receive that notification. I thought it well to inform the House of this, because the Attorney General of Ontario may not have been in the habit of sending notices of this kind to one class of his officers and not to the other.

Mr. BEAUSOLEIL. I am surprised that the hon. member for Richmond and Wolfe (Mr. Ives) should have referred to the list of members from Quebec, because, if it is looked into, it will be found to be more outrageous even than the Ontario list. On the 12th March the *Gazette* contained the names of eighteen supporters of the Government from that Province, and only four Opposition. On the 19th March it contained the names of nine supporters of the Government, and three gentlemen who have been acting in the past with the hon. gentlemen on the other side but have cut loose from them, Mr. Bergeron, Mr. Amyot and Mr. Gaudet. So that, out of thirty-four who are gazetted, we have twenty-seven supporting the Government straight, four Liberals and three Nationalists, and I would like to know if there is any fairness in that. On the 26th March fourteen Liberals were gazetted and two Conservatives; on the 2nd April we find eight Liberals and no Conservatives gazetted; on the 9th April one Conservative, Mr. Joncas, was gazetted. So those gentlemen had two weeks the start over their Liberal opponents to make the contestation. Now, Sir, I am not surprised that the hon. member for Richmond and Wolfe (Mr. Ives) should be so pleased

Mr. Ives.

with the returning officer in his constituency. We know that there is a provision in the law that only one representative can hold a certificate and vote at one poll, and that one representative should be the *bond fide* agent of the candidate. It appears that the returning officer was pleased to give to the member for Richmond and Wolfe something over 200 blank certificates, so that 200 strangers were registered in two polls. Of course an officer so accommodating with the law cannot but be satisfactory to the member for Richmond and Wolfe. But I suppose that his opponent, Mr. Greenshields, who was deprived of his right, has no reason to be satisfied with the returning officer, nor the Government who appointed him. The hon. member says that the Local Government of Quebec interfered to a great extent with the Dominion elections. Well, Mr. Speaker, I happen to know a little more about that than the hon. member for Richmond and Wolfe, and I can state as a fact that the policy of the Quebec Government has been to prevent the interference of its officers with Dominion politics. I know for a fact that a gentleman holding office in the Quebec Legislative Assembly, and who ran as a candidate, against the order of his chief, was discharged. I know that during the last contest in Gaspé there was a pressing demand made upon Mr. Mercier to allow some of the officers of the Local Government to take part in the election against the present member for Gaspé (Mr. Joncas), and the answer was that they were not to interfere, that the rule was absolute, and applied to Liberals as well as Conservatives. Now, fault has been found with the returning officers who were registrars or sheriffs. In my county a Conservative registrar has been acting as returning officer for the last ten or fifteen years, and no complaint was made against him, but he was discharged and another gentleman appointed to his place who held no other public position. I do not complain, because I do not think that I was ill-treated. In the neighboring county of Richelieu, where the sheriff was also a Conservative, he was commissioned to act as returning officer and discharged his duty to the satisfaction of both parties. It is a wonder to me why the Government disregarded a good Conservative registrar in Berthier, who had experience, and who had given satisfaction to both parties, and took a man new to the duty, while they followed a different course in Richelieu. Certainly I think that gentlemen already holding official positions are better fitted to be returning officers, whatever may be their politics, than any partisan officer that the Government may select outside of a responsible public officer.

Mr. KENNY. My hon. friend, the senior member for the county of Halifax (Mr. Jones), referred to the recent elections in that constituency, and the appointment of the returning officer. I may say that he is much more familiar than I am with all that took place on that very interesting occasion. I only arrived in the constituency some three weeks before the elections, and was much surprised that I had been nominated as one of the candidates of the Liberal-Conservative party. As regards the arrangements which were made with the sheriff as returning officer, I do not know what they were. I can only say that I have no personal knowledge of any such arrangements as those referred to by my hon. colleague. As regards the returning officer, it is true he was a political friend of the hon. member opposite, but he was also one of the sheriffs who was appointed by the judge, as explained by my hon. friend from Pictou (Mr. Tupper). The hon. member for Halifax has also referred to the presence of certain members of the present Dominion Government in the local elections which took place in June last. My hon. friend must not forget that those gentlemen were electors of the Province of Nova Scotia, and that it was no ordinary question which the people of that Province had been called to pronounce upon. I think the gentlemen who sur-