

papers which have been filed here by the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery, I suppose we shall discover that in many instances he acted in the same way. If he did not act under special instructions, there is no doubt that he did not carry out the law as contained in the Statute-book, and the sooner we know it the better, so that such amendments can be made in it as will make it bear equally on the members on both sides of this House. If we were allowed to refer to the Local elections which took place in the Province of Quebec, on the 14th of October, 1886, and to the returns as they were published in the *Official Gazette*, we might discover that this plan of publishing the returns of the greater portion of the members on one side first, and the greater portion on the other side last, so as to allow a longer delay in the one case than in the other to contest the election, has not been invented by this Government or this Clerk of the Crown in Chancery, but was invented in the Province of Quebec after the last Local election. Certain members of the Local House were threatened with election petitions because their returns were not made until after a great delay. Well, that course had no great effect after all, as everyone knows by the result. This matter, so far as it concerns the members of the House of Commons, is one of the greatest importance. I do not stand here to lecture anybody, but rather as a new member to be lectured; but my hon. friend from Argenteuil (Mr. Wilson), with whom I sat as a member of the city council of Montreal for many years, will allow me to remark that he departed widely from the subject when he brought the Riel question into the discussion, for it has no bearing whatever upon this simple motion of the hon. member for Bothwell. What concerns this House to-night is whether the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery, who is under the control of this House and not of the Government, and is bound to carry out the law, acted upon the advice of someone else, or whether he acted on his own authority. If he acted on his own authority, it will be for this House to declare whether he acted according to law. Before I take my seat, I wish to mention a fact in connection with the elections in my county. Another proof that there is not one law for everybody in this House or every citizen of this country, was given by the first election that took place in the county of Chambly after last Session. It had been stated in the press, and on the floor of this House, that the election in the county of Haldimand could not take place until the new lists were in force. My friends in the county of Chambly were aware that the former member for the county was about to secure an office, and to a certain extent we depended on this declaration of the Government, although we had no great confidence in them, and therefore folded our hands and waited until the new lists should be completed. Well, in the county of Chambly the application of the law was different from that in the county of Haldimand. In Haldimand the election could not take place until the new lists were in force; in Chambly the Government were bound to have the elections under the old lists, and the polling day was fixed just the day before the new lists came into force. The election took place on the 30th of July, and the new lists were to come into force on the 1st of August. We tried to get an explanation of the matter from the Government candidate, but could not get any. Perhaps we may get one during the course of the Session. At any rate this is another fact showing how the law has been administered in different cases.

Mr. BRIEN. At this late hour I will not detain this House any great length of time. Somebody is to blame in this matter, either the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery or the returning officer. But I rise especially in defence of the gentleman who occupied the position of returning officer in my constituency. He has occupied that position for sometime, and is a man who is perfectly conversant with

his duty, and I have evidence here to show that he made my return on the 12th of March, while I was not gazetted until the 2nd of April, so that the blame does not lie at his door. The hon. member who represents West Assiniboia (Mr. Davin) says the hon. leader of the Opposition failed because he did not chalk his cue properly. I presume he had not the right kind of chalk for his cue. I understand the game of billiards somewhat, and presume that had the leader of the Opposition good seed grain to chalk his political cue with, he would have been more successful. I am glad to see that the hon. gentleman is so sympathetic with the officials of that country that although they voted against him he will not see one hair of their head injured, for he knows the difficulty of the lack of that same material himself. The right hon. the First Minister found a great deal of fault with the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills), because he thought fit to call the attention of the House to this matter. The First Minister pooh-poohed the remarks of the hon. member for Bothwell, but no one knows better than he the value of these things. The *Mail* once said, when the notorious Gerrymandering Act was passed, that, if four or five, or seven or eight, Grits perished it did not matter; and so the First Minister can afford to say that if the naming of partial returning officers would have the effect of cutting off a few Grits, that was not any great matter. The hon. member for North Essex said the Government were not afraid of the Opposition; but if we look over the record we cannot fail to see clearly that they must be afraid of the Opposition or at least of the people, because they are never willing to go fairly and squarely before the people on political issues, they must always have the Grit party tied hand and foot in some way or other. I have no objection to being called a Grit myself, although I presume it is an equivalent to Tory. This is the first time I have heard that the Conservative party were ashamed of that name, but I presume there are many things connected with that name in history of which they may well be ashamed. I believe if we had an opportunity of going before the people without any Franchise Bill, and without any Gerrymander Act, without seed grain and open voting, the leader of the Opposition would return with the majority of votes in his favor. The hon. member for North Essex (Mr. Patterson) referred to the religious cry brought against him. I am sorry to see there are any parties in this country who would raise such a cry, but hon. gentlemen opposite are the men who must bear the responsibility. As the evening is now late, I may say, in conclusion, that I have evidence showing distinctly that in my case the returning officer is not to blame for the fact of my not being gazetted for nearly three weeks; but there must be some one to blame, and this motion is made in order that we might find out where the blame lies.

Mr. MILLS. I understood the leader of the Government to say he agrees in this motion, substituting the word "tomorrow" for "forthwith." I am quite ready to accept that amendment. I will not detain the House by any observations in reply to what was said by hon. gentlemen opposite, further than to call the First Minister's attention to the fact that, notwithstanding the extreme charge he made against the Local Government of Ontario, that it so controlled, bullied, and coerced its officers that neither the sheriff nor registrar could be trusted with the duties of returning officer in the elections, he himself selected sheriffs and registrars for the discharge of these duties. I think the hon. gentleman will have some difficulty in reconciling his charge against the Administration that has long had control in this matter, with the fact that he selected officials of the Local Government to be returning officers, which he would not have done had he not felt assured they would act in a manner, at all events, not detrimental to the party he leads. The hon. gentleman, in making the selection of certain officials of the