

answer the charges and statements made by the hon. member for West Assiniboia (Mr. Davin). But instead of that the Minister of Marine and Fisheries gets up and says we must pass this Bill through to-night; we must finish a job which should take months for its consideration. That is no answer to the objections of the hon. member for West Assiniboia, though I am free to confess that the hon. gentleman who has the Bill in charge (Mr. Fitzpatrick) is manifesting the most courteous demeanour towards those who are discussing the Bill, and he misunderstood me a while ago when he took it for granted that I said that he was in a humiliating position because he did not know the law of Ontario. I wish to explain that he entirely misunderstood me, because I believe that he is the only member of this House to-day who does understand the laws of the various provinces; he is the only one who has made a study of them. The hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries is familiar with the law of Prince Edward Island, but I am sure he is not with any other franchise law in this Dominion. The Solicitor General does know the laws; he has made a special study of them recently.

There was reference made this evening to the tendering ballot in the province of Ontario. There was never a bigger fraud committed on the people, because I am told that though that law has been in force something like twenty years, authorizing the tender of a ballot, no tendered ballot has ever yet been counted. Yet that useless tendered ballot, which has utterly failed of having any effect in any elections, but has simply deprived the voter of his vote, is retained in this Bill. I know of a dozen tendered ballots, tendered at an election by men entitled to vote, but which were not counted. These men went to vote and were told that their names were not on the list. They showed that they were on the assessment roll and had all the qualifications, and were told to put in tendered ballots, which they did. But no tendered ballot in Ontario has ever been counted for a candidate. The only time an attempt was ever made to count them was in the case of the county of Lincoln election, which after three or four months continuous trial and scrutiny was dropped, as one of the candidates was running for the House of Commons. In this case we are adopting that tendered ballot. What is the use of it? It is simply a fraud. It prevents an elector having his vote recorded as he should. As I pointed out the other night, this Ontario franchise law, instead of giving every opportunity, puts all the obstacles possible in the way of a man voting, and that is one of the reasons why I oppose the very idea of its being adopted by this Dominion Parliament.

Well, as has been stated here, no objection would be made to taking the Ontario voters' lists and making that the basis of a

Mr. WALLACE.

list, as Sir John Thompson has proposed, and these hon. gentlemen quoted approvingly. But why do they not adopt his plan, if they approve of it, to make the Ontario voters' list, or assessment roll—the list of voters, perhaps, would be better—as the basis, and from that make a voters' list? There are many methods that may be adopted. A registration before election has many advantages. It gives a list that is up to date, and gives every one an opportunity of being placed on that list, and thus makes the voice of the people heard in the elections. I think that this clause, No. 3, that is now before us, is one worthy of careful consideration. It is now near midnight, and I do not think the clause should pass to-night, because, although the Bill has been up on a previous occasion, I think it can fairly be said to have been rather sprung upon the House. I do not blame the Government in any way for that, but, as a matter of fact, we have been engaged very constantly in the Railway Committee and other committees and in the work of the House, and so we have not been able to consider the details of the Bill as thoroughly as we should like to have done. I think the Government should be satisfied with the discussion that has taken place on clause 3, and that they could fairly leave it over for consideration when the committee meets again, when further suggestions can be made. Most of the members have gone home, as is usual on Friday night. I hope that the Solicitor General will consent to a postponement for further consideration of this very important Bill. I would, therefore, move that the committee rise, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Mr. INGRAM. If it is the intention of the committee to rise, I would defer my remarks.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL. Before we come to an agreement on that, before the committee rises, at all events—if it is the intention that we should rise now—I would like to call attention to an amendment to the first section which I shall propose, to meet the difficulty in Prince Edward Island, where there are two separate classes of voters. I mention it now so that hon. gentlemen may have an opportunity to consider the matter. I propose that voters there shall include those who have the lower franchise, that is, those who vote for the legislative assemblyman.

Mr. HUGHES. I might point out to the Minister of Marine that there was a misunderstanding on his own side, because the Solicitor General did agree, deliberately agree, to hold the clauses over for another day.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. If the Solicitor General agreed to hold over clauses, I do not wish to press them forward. I did not know that that