

latures for adoption. The referendum could thus take all legislation from the Government and submit it to the people for their approval.

These are not the questions that I propose to discuss to-day but I intend to confine myself to the amendment to this section which I propose to introduce and which will deal simply with the question of the recall in so far as it may be made a disqualification for any candidate at an election. I think that the question of the recall, whether it may have justification, or whether it may have advocates, cannot be introduced into this country but when we get down to the scientific recall which has been adopted in a great many of the western states we find that the power which is given by the recall is not reposed in the hands of any individual, and it is not reposed in the hands of any committee which may be selected by any particular group, but the recall, no matter whether the percentage of those who are required to sign the petition for recall be large or small, is a power which, in theory, is reposed in the body of the electors and the electors as a whole are entitled to exercise it.

What do we find to be the system which is being adopted in this country? There is no pretence whatever to repose power in the majority of the people. There is no pretence to repose in the people, as electors, the right to circulate and sign a petition to recall a man from the legislature but the right is exercised as the result of a bargain. The man who is a candidate in many cases is asked to sign his recall before the people have even had a chance to vote whether he shall represent them or not. In the case which we have cited in this House by the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Gould), we find that an agreement is entered into between the candidate and a committee of fifteen men. These fifteen men are not the choice of the people of the country. They are generally men who are closely allied with a political organization and the object of the agreement is that that committee of men who are bound by party ties shall exercise a jurisdiction over the man who has been elected to represent the people in the House of Commons. As I pointed out before, I believe that any such method as that simply results in the stultification of the man who occupies a seat in this House. When he comes here he must realize that, if he is an honourable man and has entered into an agreement with these fifteen men, or with any committee, he is bound to obey the dictates of

[Mr. Tweedie.]

those fifteen men and if they say: "You shall vote for some particular piece of legislation," he must either violate his agreement and become a dishonourable man or follow the dictates or instructions which they give to him. It is fettering him in deciding the course that he shall pursue, and it is fettering him in the performance of the duty which he owes to the people as a whole. The results which were pointed out by Edmund Burke in a speech which he made to the electors of Bristol when he was withdrawing from the contest there, are working out in the same way in this connection. Mr. Burke says:

Let me say, with plainness, I who am no longer in a public character, that, if, by a fair, by an indulgent, by a gentlemanly behaviour to our representatives, we do not give confidence to their minds and a liberal scope to their understandings, if we do not permit our members to act upon a very enlarged view of things, we shall at length infallibly degrade our national representation into a confused and suffling bustle of local agency.

A man who signs any such agreement with a committee is simply a delegate to this House and not the representative of the people of his constituency or a representative of the people of the whole of Canada. If the people of this country desire the recall, I submit, it is their duty to bring about such a change in our constitution as will permit it but it is not their right to attack and subvert the constitution and try to introduce into our system something that is unconstitutional; or to try to defeat the ends of our constitution or to make the House of Commons which is supposed to be representative, unrepresentative. When they get the constitution amended so that the recall may be properly adopted under it it will be time for us to determine whether or not we shall have the recall in this country. Personally I think it would be a very unsafe thing to have brought into the political life of Canada. I submit that any of these agreements which are entered into at the present time, any recall which may be signed in advance, should be ground for disqualifying the man who signed it to hold a seat in this House because he does not come as the servant of the people as a whole but simply comes as the delegate or agent of a few people in whose hands he places his resignation, or with whom he has entered into such an agreement. I do not propose to take any longer time. I am bringing this before the House for the purpose of getting a free expression of opinion and I shall now read my amendment. I beg to move: