

but I consider it to be a duty which devolves on me to read the Government papers as well as the Conservative papers, and I fail to find a single paper that approves of this Bill. I have failed to find any portion of the press to which this Bill apparently commends itself. In the Montreal "Gazette" and in the "Mail and Empire" I find the strongest possible objections raised to it not only on the grounds which I have presented to the House, but on the grounds of relaxing the penalties for offences against the law and threatening the purity of elections. Then I take the "Globe," which generally is able to give a tolerably hearty support to anything that emanates from hon. gentlemen opposite; but I find in that newspaper this statement:

The Confederation Act provided that the provincial franchises should be used until otherwise ordered.

Then it speaks of the change, and says:

The argument, that if we return to the provincial franchise, the law will be subject to the caprice of the provincial legislatures, is worthy of a little more consideration. The provincial legislation on the franchise has doubtless contained some faults, but none worse than the Franchise Act of 1885.

The best the "Globe" can say of this Bill, is that it does not contain anything worse than the present Act, which has been denounced in such round terms by hon. gentlemen opposite as being entirely indefensible. Then the "Globe" says:

Really, however, one of the gravest objections to the Franchise Act of 1885 was the unfair use to which it might be put by the Government and its friends, of whatever party they might be composed. Another was its expense.

I think I have proven to the House, that however open the Act of 1885 is to be made use of by the Government and its friends, this Bill would be a thousand times more open to that charge, because legislatures over which we have no control would be able to do in the Dominion elections, what I have already shown they have done in regard to the local elections. The "Globe," after having spoken in the most forcible manner in favour of manhood suffrage says:

The basis of the federal franchise certainly ought to be: one man one vote.

So, Sir, I find that even a paper so strongly supporting the Liberal Government as the "Globe" does is anything but satisfied with the character of this measure. Then, the Montreal "Star," an independent paper, under an article which is headed "It satisfies no one," denounces this measure which we are now considering and points out its grave defects. It says:

The "Globe" makes the boast that by the new law three-fifths of the people of the Dominion will elect their members of Parliament under

manhood franchise and one man one vote, and prophesies that before the next general election the remaining two-fifths will probably have fallen into line, and that we shall have a law that will give absolute equality in all the provinces.

I think, Sir, there is a great deal in that. At the present time a very large portion of the members in the province are elected under manhood suffrage practically. In the province of Ontario it is now practically manhood suffrage; in British Columbia, Prince Edward Island and Manitoba, it is the same, and with the exception of Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, you have manhood suffrage throughout. The tendency of all the local legislatures being to broaden the franchise, the probability is, as is indicated by the "Globe," that at a comparatively early date, within five years, we shall have practically manhood suffrage in the various provinces of the Dominion. If that be the case, it becomes worthy the consideration of hon. gentlemen opposite, as to whether they should not endeavour to obtain an easy worked and inexpensive law by which a franchise Bill shall be obtained that will be common to every part of this Dominion. In speaking of the expense of the Franchise Act, I may draw the attention of the House for a moment to the fact, that the operation of the franchise law in Manitoba is anything but inexpensive. The total cost to the province of Manitoba was as follows: Registry clerks' fees, \$6,284. Expenses for final revision, \$1,717. Cost of printing, \$6,227; making a total cost for that small province of \$14,228, or a little over \$355 for each constituency. In the courts of revision there were 1,955 names added, and 944 struck off, making the total vote 49,199, at a cost of \$14,288, or about 29 cents for each name. Printing the lists and a number of other expenses would devolve upon the Government here. Then, Sir, I find in the St. John "News" the following statement:—

But the proposed new Act, instead of being a simple measure, turns out to be a bulky Bill of 156 clauses, making 68 printed pages, and in many respects it is quite as complicated as the present law. More than this, the general principle of the Bill, which is the adoption of the various and divergent provincial franchises, is not to be commended. A man living in one province will be a voter who would not under similar conditions be a voter in an adjacent province. The principle that it shall be left to the local legislatures to say who shall and who shall not vote for members of the Federal Parliament, is decidedly wrong, and may lead to abuses and injustice. A Bill based on the principle of simple manhood suffrage, with certain necessary restrictions, would have been better and much more in consonance with the spirit of the age.

I find also that the Manitoba newspapers object to this Bill in the strongest possible language. They point out the extremely corrupt character of the franchise law in Manitoba and they object to having that applied to the Dominion. The Manitoba