

Chamber for any length of time and has noticed the Bills coming before the House and observed the analyses and criticism to which each measure is subjected, will have seen that senators vote in nearly every instance without regard to what might be called a strict party line. I do not know how it was before my time, but I believe it was much the same as it is at present. The usefulness of the Senate is evinced very strongly in the amendments made to Bills coming before the House. Scarcely a Bill comes from the House of Commons but what is scrutinized very carefully by the Senate and a great many important amendments are made. Take for instance the case of the Railway Bill we had here two years ago. We made from 90 to 100 amendments to that Bill, and when it went back to the House of Commons they adopted from 70 to 80 of that number. I think I am within the mark, and I believe that senators sitting about me will agree that that Bill was very much improved indeed by the amendments which the Senate made to it. Some of the speakers on this subject, particularly the hon. gentleman from Marshfield (Hon. Mr. Ferguson) took a great deal of credit to the Senate—and I do not say that he was not right in doing so—for throwing out several important Bills. One Bill he mentioned in particular, the Franchise Bill of Prince Edward Island. When we entered into confederation the laws of Canada were made applicable to our island. Among them was the Franchise Act, and as the hon. senator said, we had at that time an elective legislative council. We had £100 qualification for electors in connection with elections to the legislative council, and it was during the reign of the Mackenzie government that we were applying this Bill to our island, and they adopted this £100 qualification as the qualification for voters in Prince Edward Island in the election of members of the House of Commons. In the Senate at that time there was a representative from Queen's county, Prince Edward Island. He moved that the Bill be rejected. It would have been quite easy for that senator—he was a man who understood the condition of Prince Edward Island very well—to have moved an amendment giving us universal suffrage in Prince

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON.

Edward Island as we have it for our local election, and I think if he had done so it would have been adopted both by the Senate and by the cabinet, but in place of that he moved that the Bill be thrown out. This senator made a great ado about disfranchising the young men and the poor men of Prince Edward Island. That was a little bit of partyism, the like of which I have rarely seen exhibited here since. It was not the intention of the government of that day to disfranchise the young men, or the poor men of Prince Edward Island.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—Senator Haythorne, a Liberal, took the same position.

Hon. Mr. ROBERSON—I am surprised he did not read the Bill a little better. Party capital was going to be made out of this in Prince Edward Island, and was made out of it. I had to meet it, and the hon. Secretary of State, who was in this House at the time, can put me right if I am wrong. At the foot of the Bill was a clause to the effect, namely, that the franchise provided in the Bill by the Dominion government was only to be in existence until such time as the local government would provide a franchise for the people of Prince Edward Island. The local government was in session at the time, and in 48 hours could have adopted a franchise suitable to Prince Edward Island but they neglected to do so. Then, of course, the Bill was thrown out here and we went back to universal suffrage.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—The hon. gentleman is in error in this respect; the alternative in the Bill was, not that the local legislature should furnish another franchise, but that they should provide a registration of voters.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON—And a franchise. Probably the hon. Secretary of State, if he remembers anything of it, will put me right. The proviso at the bottom of the Bill was that this qualification should only be in existence until such time as the local government would provide a franchise and a list of voters to prepare for the Dominion election. The hon. senator, perhaps, did not remember this at the time he was speaking, but he left that portion of it out; therefore,