

obtain from the officers who are the legal custodians thereof, or of duly certified duplicates, or copies thereof, such provincial voters' lists or such certified copies thereof or extracts therefrom.

Let the hon. Solicitor General see what he obtains. There will be placed in the hands of the revising officer voters' lists furnished to him by the proper custodian. Then the voters' lists for the different divisions will be handed to the different deputies, and every hon. member knows that every deputy is chosen by reason of his party affiliations. What would be the result? I have here the list of the township of Tay. I shudder to think, when the lists have been in possession of the deputies two or three days before the elections, how many Conservative voters will be permitted to remain on the lists up to polling day. I should equally shudder to think how many names of Liberals would be written in, in that same voters' list. Let me show to you one page that happens to have 37 names written in. When this list is placed in the hands of a partisan deputy, he is not required to change it at all; he simply may permit it—as it will be in his possession for a few days—to remain down somewhere, where a party friend can come along and score out the names of several men, and the result is that these men cannot possibly vote. I know that there has been that scoring out done in connection with the provincial voters' lists, and that men have been disfranchised in consequence. And if the fight is a little more keen and bitter, something better could be done. A friendly deputy could leave his list in an easy place of access, and a partisan—a designing scoundrel, because he would be such—could write in a number of names on the list. Consequently every semblance of fair-play will disappear by the adoption of the provincial voters' lists, which hon. gentlemen opposite now propose to the House. Here is the voters' list for the township of Flos, and on page after page there are names written in. Let the House recollect that this list remains in the hands of a friendly deputy for a couple of days preceding elections; the deputy need not make the changes at all; all he has got to do is to leave the list where the changes can be made. I say that the idea of putting such a law on the Statute-books of this country is simply a scandal and an outrage on all decency; when in the province of Ontario, and I am not going to discuss the other provinces at present, no man can know until the very moment that he tenders his vote whether he is on the list or not.

But, Sir, it is not only a question of saving expense, but the greater question of all should be this wrong that could be done, on the face of an Act which affords every facility for doing wrong. We are told that it is to be borne in mind that there is going to be a great deal of expense saved to the

Mr. BENNETT.

individual candidate. I deny that statement in toto, and I say that any man who knows anything about the revision of the voters' list in the province of Ontario, will find this out to his cost. He will find that it costs a great deal more money to revise the voters' list under the local Act than it does under the Dominion Act, and I will show some proofs in support of that statement. Under the old Dominion Act the voters' lists were publicly displayed, and if you had an objection to the name of the voter as being there improperly, you simply had to notify him by registered letter and then the appeal came on before the judge at the trial. That is not at all the principle in the Ontario law. If you find the name of a voter on the local list which you think is improperly placed there, you have got to bring that man to court and pay his witness fees. I ask hon. gentlemen on both sides of the House who are not conversant with the Ontario franchise law, to hesitate before making some of these changes and to not allow this Bill to go through as it is. So far as I am concerned, and I think most gentlemen will bear me out, the revision of the voters' lists in the province of Ontario has not been fought by the Conservatives with that vigour with which the Dominion lists have been contested, because the Conservatives were at the disadvantage of being in opposition in the local legislature. But let any hon. gentleman fight the local lists in the province of Ontario with the vigour that has been bestowed on the Dominion lists, and he will find to his very bitter cost, that the expense to him under the Dominion Act was comparatively nothing as compared with the expense which such a contest would be under the local Act. The right hon. the Premier fell into the error of stating that these local lists are already prepared, that all we have to do is to take advantage of them, and that no extra cost will be entailed on any one. The right hon. gentleman was wrong in that statement, because the county judges are paid in the province of Ontario, true, not a very considerable sum, but it amounted to some \$8,000 for the small number of appeals that were disposed of under the local Franchise Act. If there is that same vigour thrown into the revision of the voters' list, that has been the case with the revision of the Dominion list, that cost to the province will very materially increase. Again, let us remember that it is all rot and nonsense to state that it costs nothing to the municipality. I defy any of these gentlemen who are making these reckless statements, that there is no cost at all to the municipalities; I defy them to produce a statement from their own municipalities, and if they do, I will be bound to say that it will be shown that the cost to the municipalities will aggregate as much, if not more, than the revision of the Dominion voters' lists. In the first place it must be borne in mind that it is only once in three