

again they did not pay their members, and therefore it was necessary in a majority of cases that they should possess money.

He contended that the law relating to corrupt practices was quite strict enough, but the provisions in the proposed Bill were so severe as to be incompatible with our system of representation, and were sufficient to unseat almost every member in the House if carried out to the letter. In conclusion he expressed his approval of the principles of the Bill, and offered his humble services to perfect the measure in Committee of the Whole.

Mr. JONES (Halifax) said he quite approved of the abolition of nomination day, a measure to the same effect having worked very well in the Province of Nova Scotia. He also supported strongly the proposal of the Government to leave to each Province the fixing of its own franchises, but could not see that it was practicable to restrict the number of electors voting at one polling place to 300, assuring the Minister of Justice that it would be a very serious obstacle in places like Halifax.

With regard to the ballot, he feared that under the principle proposed there was not sufficient assurance of secrecy to the voter. He thought this would especially be the case where the voter had to ask the assistance of a friend or the returning officer in marking his voting paper, more particularly in rural constituencies; and he also feared that the deputy returning officer might mark each voter's ballot paper so that he would know exactly for whom he voted. He suggested that the ballots should be made official documents, that they should be sent to the candidates and their friends in official envelopes, and that the voter should have his paper marked before going to the polling place, when they could be dropped into the box.

Mr. TROW thought that three hundred voting at one place was too many, instead of too few as was the opinion of the hon. member for Halifax. He congratulated the Hon. Minister of Justice (Hon. Mr. Dorion) upon the favourable reception given to the Bill, the only objection of vital importance being, in his opinion, the abolition of nomination day. He was himself in favour of its retention, upon considering that it gave considerable *vim* to an election, and that it created a strong and healthy interest in the result of the contest. He hoped the Minister of Justice would consent to that portion of the bill being dropped.

He considered it somewhat anomalous that an elector should be required to have a property qualification while members of Parliament did not. It was quite true that it had been abolished in England, but the circumstances there were very different, and the change had been made chiefly to allow bankers and Jews, who did not own real property, to become members. In this country real property was easily acquired, and it could not fail to be a recommendation to a man who he went to seek election that he had been able by industry to possess a portion of the land for which he was to assist in framing laws.

He was opposed to the opening of the ballot boxes by Deputy Returning officers, which he thought would open the way in many cases to stuffing them. He thought the box should be of such a kind that when once the ballot paper was deposited in it there should be no possibility of taking it out until it came into the hands of the Returning officer. He thought the number of electors required to

nominate a candidate should be larger, and if increased from twenty-five to thirty, he would be more willing to give up the nomination day. He highly approved of the ballot, which, although it would not and could not prevent bribery and corruption, would at least prevent intimidation and coercion. Bribery to induce a voter to stay at home could not be prevented at all, he was afraid, unless by compulsory voting, which was a principle he greatly favoured. He was much pleased with the Bill as a whole, and congratulated the Government upon their success in dealing with a subject so difficult.

Mr. GOUDGE also complimented the Government upon their measure, but thought amendments might be made. He was opposed to the abolition of the nomination day, which he thought served many good purposes, and which would, to all intents and purposes, be retained, notwithstanding the provisions of this Bill. He objected to the disfranchisement of Dominion officials, not because he had ever received any benefit from their being allowed to vote, for on different occasions they had voted against him. He thought the system of registration of voters which was in force in Nova Scotia was a very good one.

With reference to the nominations he said that he did not believe they could prevent large crowds assembling on the day on which they were made, nor the speaking which had hitherto been customary. He approved of open nominations. In Nova Scotia the person making a nomination was obliged to deposit \$75 at the time as a forfeit in case the candidate did not run, and that sum was found to be sufficient to pay the expenses.

Adverting to the question of the ballot box, he said that in Nova Scotia they had not perfect secrecy, but he believed that under the provision of the Bill of the Minister of Justice (Hon. Mr. Dorion), it would be almost impossible to learn how any man had voted. He said that he would himself prefer open voting to the ballot, and so he believed would nineteen twentieths of the people of Hants. He did not think that the ballot was a preventive against bribery. He believed that one man would accept a bribe and another give one just as quickly under the ballot system as under the system of open voting. He thought the ballot rather tended to encourage deceit.

He was of opinion that if the determination of the franchise was left to the Local Legislature, the arranging of the polling subdivisions should be left to them also. With reference to the qualification, he said he thought that a candidate would have at least as much property as the elector who voted for him.

Mr. DAVIES said that he was not a lover of the ballot. He approved of open nominations, but he thought property qualifications for candidates should be done away with. He thought the country was prepared for universal suffrage, and that this franchise would work well.

Mr. FLESHER said that upon first reading the Bill he thought it entirely precluded the possibility of a person bribing an elector or knowing whether the person whom he has bribed had voted as he wished or not, but on a mere careful examination of it he thought it quite possible to show by a pre-concerted arrangement between the briber and the elector whom he had bribed how the latter had voted. For instance, this might be done by making the mark on the paper