

Parliament is asked to say that that is a perfect law, or is as nearly perfect as we are capable of making it. We cannot do it. Then, as to Ontario; those who are familiar with that province can point out innumerable defects in its election laws; yet the qualifications for voters, and, I presume, all the other machinery, are to be the same, or practically the same, for this House as those that exist for the local legislature. We ought to adopt the principle, that if the franchises of any of the provinces suit us, and are found the most admirable for the purpose, we shall adopt their good qualities—those portions which may be adapted to our circumstances and conditions; but we should not hand over the control of these voters' lists to assessors or other officers over whom we have no control whatever. Hon. gentlemen say that they are under the control of the local legislatures. Well, my experience, where I live, in the township of Vaughan, during an experience of twenty years of revising voters' lists, both for the province and the Dominion, has been, that we have no confidence in the voters' list until it gets into the hands of the judge; and you have to bring witnesses there at great expense to spend one or two days waiting until their turn comes to give evidence, to correct the defects of the voters' list, as made out by the assessor. We have to fight against these difficulties in the province, and now we are asked to have them introduced here. The most serious point of all is, that we shall have a most imperfect list. The most important consideration in framing a voters' list is, that no man who is entitled to have his name put on shall be deprived of his vote. But you cannot find anything like a perfect list in the local elections. That is proved by the fact that, although it professes to be a manhood suffrage, yet the number of votes polled has always been far less than the number of votes polled in the Dominion election, where the franchise is more restricted, showing that it leaves off many men who are entitled to be put on. We found that, in the last local election, although the revision took place only a few months before—in September, October or November. We found, when we came to the elections, that, although both candidates had taken a great deal of pains to get it perfected, the list was a very bad list indeed, and that bad list you are trying to force on this Parliament. I can only utter my strongest protest against so utterly unfair and unjust a measure.

Mr. POPE. I find in the Quebec Election Act, that it is provided that, as soon as the list of electors has come into force, it shall be the duty of the secretary-treasurer of the municipality to certify it in duplicate, and place one duplicate in the archives of the municipality, and transmit the other to the registrar of the registration division in which the municipality is situated. That, I deem, would be the official list, and we pro-

pose to do away with the word "poll-book," and leave the official list of persons entitled to vote at a provincial election. Would the hon. Solicitor General say that this is the list that would be found at every subdivision, or is the list to be found at the subdivisions a list prepared by the deputy from this official list of the people entitled to vote at that polling subdivision? So far as I can see, by the Quebec Act, the only official list would be the one deposited with the registrar.

Mr. HUGHES. Inasmuch as it is possible that there may be some changes made in relation to the voters' lists used in the provinces, why not let this section stand over?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL. For what reason?

Mr. HUGHES. Because if the hon. gentleman proposes to adopt the suggestion I took the opportunity of making the other day, the term "voters' lists" would have to be changed.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL. I see the hon. gentleman's point.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). It seems to me there is much to be considered in the remarks of the hon. member for West York (Mr. Wallace) with regard to the effect of this subsection. It is proposed to make the voters' lists in the different provinces the lists upon which the Dominion elections shall be run. In listening to the discussion of this Bill, and more particularly to the discussion in committee, I was very much struck with the fact that we are asked, to a very great extent, to vote it through without knowing exactly what it means. When we find that the hon. Solicitor General, with his very great ability and the great amount of time and attention he has devoted to this Bill, is not very sure himself, how can members of this House, who have not the time and a great many of whom have not the technical knowledge which the hon. Solicitor General possesses, be expected to understand what they are doing? We are asked to vote that certain enactments in the provincial legislatures shall form a proper basis for the voters' lists of this Parliament. I as a member of this Parliament, am called upon to determine what shall be the voters' list in the province of Ontario for an election to this Parliament. I must confess that although I have bestowed some little attention to the debate, I have a very hazy idea about that matter, and the learned Solicitor General, to some extent, has to depend upon the views which hon. members from Ontario give in regard to it.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL. I do not conceal that, and if the hon. gentleman will take the schedule I have printed and attached to the Bill, he will find all he wants.