

rural district has the right to go to the poll on election day and cast his vote. There is a perfect machinery for preparing of election lists according to the point of view of my hon. friend himself, without the intervention of the registrars. But this provision will give the hon. gentleman the right to appoint an army of registrars in order that this Bill—which we were told at the beginning was to be fair, and just, and generous—may be used as a partisan instrument. That is the object of appointing these registrars, that is what we are going to be up against.

Mr. A. B. COPP (Westmorland): I desire to endorse what has been so well said by my hon. friend from Shelburne and Queen's (Mr. Fielding) in regard to the lists prepared in the province of Nova Scotia. In the province of New Brunswick the lists are prepared almost in the same way; if it is possible for anything to be fairer we have it in that province. In the province of New Brunswick we make and revise our lists every year irrespective of whether there is an election or not. That revision is made by the county councillors elected by the people in every parish. Two county councillors and two revisers make up the lists. The appointments in the town are made by the town Council and the officials so appointed make up the lists in the different towns throughout the province; the remaining member of the board is appointed by the government of the province. In September a trial list is made up. That list is posted and every elector has an opportunity of going before the board and applying to have his name put on it. The lists are then posted in public places throughout the different parishes, and every person has an opportunity of examining it. Afterwards they have the privilege of going before the board and having their names added or struck off according to the evidence that is adduced. After the list is completed, it is deposited with the county secretary at shire town and in the month of December or in the month of January it becomes the official list for the year in which it is to take effect. Nothing could be fairer than a list prepared in that way. Yet my hon. friend insists that partisan registrars shall be selected to interfere with the lists that have been so carefully prepared by men who know the different voters throughout their parishes and after all inquiries have been made and everything possible done to give all persons in their parishes an opportunity of having their names placed

[Mr. Fielding.]

upon the lists, and to give them an opportunity of going to the polls and casting their ballots independently, for whoever they may wish, on election day. When the board of revisers of each parish—and these revisers are selected by the people—prepare this list it is prepared in an equitable and fair way, for all shades of politics are represented on the revising board. And I say to my hon. friend that he cannot get a fairer list under any act he may pass. That has been the practice in New Brunswick for many years; the electors understand it, and it works out very satisfactorily. But under this Act the people of New Brunswick will not know that when the registrars are going through the rural sections any elector can appear before them to have names stricken from the list or added to it. Therefore, I say, he is interfering with the rights of a province which has for years been in advance of the other provinces in the preparations of its voters' lists.

When this Bill was introduced by the minister (Mr. Guthrie) he promised that it was going to be a fair election law that would give everybody an opportunity to conduct elections in a reasonable and proper manner; but notwithstanding that promise, at the very last moment my hon. friend refuses to redeem it, and he now interferes with the people's rights by dragging the preparation of the voters' lists down into the hurly-burly of party politics by appointing partisan enumerators and registrars to frustrate the undoubted rights of the electorate. I warn my hon. friend that he is not doing justice to the people of New Brunswick or to the people of the other provinces when he interferes in this way with those election principles that have been in effect in this Dominion for so many years.

The House divided on amendment (Mr. Mackenzie King) which was negatived on the following division:

YEAS.

Messrs.

Archambault,  
Baldwin,  
Béland,  
Bourassa,  
Boyer,  
Brouillard,  
Bureau,  
Casgrain,  
Chisholm,  
Copp,  
d'Anjou,  
Déchène,

Delisle,  
Demers,  
Deslauriers,  
Duff,  
DuTremblay,  
Euler,  
Fielding,  
Fontaine,  
Fortier,  
Fournier,  
Gauthier,  
Gervais,