

to take the local subdivisions for Dominion elections, how are you going to get 900 or 1,000 voters to vote at one poll in one day? How can we suppose, therefore, that the former Attorney General of New Brunswick, with the circumstances in his mind that I have just mentioned, has had this Bill under his consideration, and has approved it? I do not believe that this Bill has ever come before Council for their serious consideration at all. Now, when the Liberal party went to work to repeal the Franchise Act, I would have imagined that they would have gone in a forward direction instead of taking a backward movement. I would have imagined that the Liberal party of Canada, having in its ranks such men as the Minister of Railways and Canals, having in its ranks such men as the present Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, who was until recently a member of the Government, having in its ranks such men as the Minister of Finance and other eminent gentlemen from the various provinces who have in days gone by enacted manhood suffrage—I would have imagined, I say, that a Liberal Government composed of such men, would have brought down some enlarged measure, instead of bringing down a measure to restrict the franchise, such as this measure undoubtedly does.

Why, Sir, with such men in the ranks as the hon. member for St. John (Mr. Ellis), who as long ago nearly as I can remember him on the floor of the local legislature of New Brunswick raised his voice in season and out of season, session after session, in favour of manhood suffrage, how comes it that the Liberal party, instead of adopting the principle of manhood suffrage, should have brought in such a piece of legislation as this, which restricts the franchise of the people. It does not restrict it, I hear some one say.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL. It extends it.

Mr. McINERNEY. Is the franchise of the province of Quebec as broad locally as the old Franchise Act of the Dominion?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL. Yes.

Mr. McINERNEY. It will be open to the Solicitor General to prove it. But, at all events, there are many other provinces in which the local franchise is not as broad.

Mr. LISTER. Not at all.

Mr. McINERNEY. The hon. member for Lambton (Mr. Lister) has argued against one restriction.

Mr. LISTER. Simply as regards the Indians.

Mr. McINERNEY. That is one restriction. Non-residents are cut out, Dominion officials and local officials are excluded from voting in many of the provinces. Take these three pages of disqualified persons in the different provinces, attached to the Act by

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the Solicitor General, and ascertain what they mean. They mean that a large number of the most enlightened citizens are excluded from the franchise by this new piece of legislation, introduced by the great Liberal party. I am amazed that a party claiming to be a party of progress has not, instead of introducing this restrictive measure, brought in a Bill broadening the franchise of the people; and I am more than astonished that the hon. Prime Minister should, in the face of the constitutions of all the federated countries, South American, and others, and in the face of the principle, which is the basic principle of our constitution, which retains to the federal authorities all powers not given specifically to the local legislatures, have declared that as a matter of principle and law the local authorities have a right to control the franchise. I am more than amazed. I am astounded and surprised that as a question of party policy the hon. gentleman should declare that he will hand over to the local authorities the preparation of the lists and allow them as they please to regulate the franchise on which the members representing both political parties in Canada will be elected.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Campbell). Amendment lost.

Mr. FOSTER. I am not yet ready to vote, and two hon. gentlemen were on their feet. The Chairman must cast his eyes around the Chamber.

The CHAIRMAN. I looked around.

Mr. FOSTER. I must protest against the amendment being declared either lost or carried.

The PRIME MINISTER. There is no objection to my hon. friend going on. The Chairman did not see anybody rise.

Mr. FOSTER. We saw them.

The PRIME MINISTER. Then I hope the hon. gentleman will proceed.

Mr. FOSTER. I was going to rise to my feet, but I did not like to take the place of the Solicitor General or the member for Halifax. I kept my place, thinking the Chairman would look around the Chamber.

The PRIME MINISTER. The hon. member has no right to speak in this way about the Chairman. He acted in good faith. There is no intention whatever to curtail the discussion. I hope the hon. gentleman will proceed, and I shall be glad to hear him.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. There is no desire to intimate that the Chairman did anything but discharge the duty, but it is absolutely necessary while discussion is going on and two hon. members on their feet, that a motion should not be declared lost or carried.