

simply an appeal from the deputy returning officer, as in all the other provinces.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. My hon. friend is in error in thinking that the deputy returning officer in Prince Edward Island has discretion. It is not so. If a man comes and takes the oath, giving a description of the land which entitles him to vote, his vote must be recorded. Whatever theoretical difficulty may be suggested, there has been no practical difficulty in the matter. We have no more difficulties in Prince Edward Island than they have elsewhere. If anything can be suggested to simplify the matter, I should be very glad. We all desire to get at a simple means of testing whether there has been a bona fide and square election, and the question is, whether that can be achieved in a hap-hazard way by a rush, or whether or not due notice should be given to your opponent, you should file your particulars, have him file his particulars, and then try the issue. There must be ample time given to both sides. I have no prejudices one way or the other, but I have come to the conclusion that the proposition is workable.

Mr. McNEILL. It seems to me that in Prince Edward Island any one who chooses may come and cast a vote, if he is prepared to take the oath. When my hon. friend speaks so lightly of an election petition, he hardly realizes what it means. It means a deposit of \$1,000, and an infinitude of trouble and expenses.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. Not if you confine it to a scrutiny.

Mr. McNEILL. I have been advised that a scrutiny is a most expensive thing in the case of a controverted election. But this is a different thing. It is simply allowing the county judge of Prince Edward Island to do what the county judge does with us—say whether this man was entitled to vote or not. The only difference is that with us the county judge does it before the election, and in Prince Edward Island he will do it after the election. It need not be any more expensive than it is in our case, and is very different from a scrutiny under the Controverted Elections Act.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. I found that to work this out, you would have to draw a new Controverted Elections Act; and under that Act, you can do it as quickly as with any new machinery you can devise.

Mr. McNEILL. It does seem strange that we cannot get at a decision of this matter by a county judge after an election in Prince Edward Island, as easily as in Ontario before the elections. It is very dangerous as it is.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. It has not been found so in fifty or sixty years.

Mr. McNEILL. But we are in a very discreditable position regarding elections at present—a condition that is almost appalling.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. That does not exist with us at all.

Mr. McNEILL. Better adopt the suggestion of my hon. friend and prevent its coming in.

Mr. RUSSELL (Halifax). This is merely a Bill regarding the manner of voting at elections. I quite understand the difficulties in Prince Edward Island owing to the special circumstances, but the object sought to be attained by hon. gentlemen now is really a scrutiny of the vote, and not a mere recount of the ballots. Those two things are entirely different. This Bill merely provides for the conduct of the election, and not for the determining whether right or wrong things have been done with respect to voting. If something is required between this recount and the expense of controverted elections in Prince Edward Island, it would be far better to have a special Bill introduced to provide a cheap and summary way of testing the question as to the rights of voters who have taken the oath and been challenged, rather than intermix with these provisions regarding a recount such provisions as would be adequate to meet the case put by my hon. friend.

Mr. CASGRAIN. The other evening the Solicitor General said he would probably amend the Controverted Elections Act after we had got through with the Bill, and he will probably consider some amendments by which a simple procedure could be devised that would rectify this abuse.

Mr. MARTIN. I do not see that the difficulty can be so great. The votes in question would not be larger and could not go beyond a certain number—that is the number of initialled ballots. Those in every poll would be very small in number, and the candidates would only select those which he knew to be bad, and the investigation would be limited to those under the amendments I propose. The candidate complaining would have to furnish a list of those names when he makes his application, and could not go beyond that list. If the opposing candidate wishes to scrutinize the objected votes, he must also furnish a list, and cannot possibly go beyond that list. I do not think that the labour would be very great. The hon. Minister of Marine made a reference to the Controverted Elections Act. He said that under that Act, you might have a scrutiny without going into