

voters' list or anything else, it will cost the province something.

The cost to the municipalities of the getting up of these lists has been urged by some speakers against this Bill. That is entirely beside the question, because that cost is incurred annually by the municipalities for their own purposes. It does not cost us anything if we choose to use the same lists, and it does not matter whether it costs the municipalities \$100,000 or \$1,000,000; that is their own business if they choose to go to that expense in compiling the lists. What we have to decide is: whether we shall use these ready-made lists prepared in the fairest manner known to us, or whether we ourselves shall proceed to prepare lists of our own, imperfect and partial in their nature.

The hon. gentleman (Mr. Clancy) thought he made a point when he urged that the registration which takes place in the cities and towns of Ontario was a process of a very different kind from the municipal compilation of lists, on which so much stress has been laid. Now, Sir, I do not see that there is any difference in the system. This registration does not supersede the municipal compilation of the lists in Ontario, except in regard to two classes of voters, namely, those whose qualifications are "income" or "manhood suffrage." That registration is specially intended for those who claim to be registered under the manhood suffrage clause, and it is to enable the lists to be made up to date. The registration is conducted by certain named officials not appointed specially for that purpose by the Government of the day, and there is no partiality in the constitution of the board. It has not been complained of by anybody as an unfair arrangement; its working appears to have been fair to both parties, and I do not think either party can claim to have benefited specially by the result, in the cities and towns. One of the best features of the provincial Act, and one of the best features in the proposed Dominion Bill, is, that under that system we shall have a registration which will bring down the voters' lists in our cities and towns to the latest possible moment before a poll is taken.

The hon. gentleman (Mr. Clancy) makes another difficulty out of the fact that the constituencies are different for the federal and for the local Parliaments. I do not see any trouble in that. The constituencies are as a rule composed of municipalities—at this moment I do not know of any municipality which is split in two, and part in one constituency and part in another—and the lists being made for municipalities, the fact that these municipalities are differently distributed between different constituencies creates no trouble in using the municipal lists. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Clancy) urges that this proposed law will disfranchise a great many people on the ground of

residence, and so on. Well, Sir, I know it will do one thing; it will prevent what we have seen year after year in Dominion elections, namely, the importation by hundreds and thousands into Canada of people who have gone to live in the western states years ago, but whose names still remain on the Dominion lists, and who have been brought into the various constituencies simply for the purpose of voting for their party at election times. It will very properly prevent that. It was one of the greatest grievances in the past that the party with money, the party that could obtain passes from the railways, the party in power, in short, had the great advantage of being able to import a number of non-resident voters who had no further interest in the country, but who were simply drawn up like so many soldiers sent to battle to fire their one shot at the enemy and then retire. This very fact, that the non-resident vote will be disfranchised goes a long way to explain the alleged difference in the numbers on the provincial and Dominion lists. It is highly probable that two lists, even under the same franchise, the one including votes of non-residents, and the other on the principle of one man one vote, and giving no vote to non-residents; it is highly probable that as between these two lists, the stricter one as respects the question of residence would have a smaller number of names on it. But when it comes down to the real voting power of the country, to the representation of men who have the right to vote, I say that the list which only includes the residents and which only allows a man to vote once where he has a residence; that list more truly represents the real voting power and the public opinion of the country. On all these points, the proposed Bill will be a distinct improvement over the Dominion Franchise Act. But, Sir, even were I not satisfied that the provincial list of my own province is in all respects superior to the Dominion lists; even then, from the point of view of provincial rights and for the sake of preventing governmental interference with the compilation of the lists, I would vote, as I am going to vote, for the Bill proposed by the Government.

Mr. POUPORE. Mr. Speaker, I propose to say a few words on the question before the House, and to define my position in regard to this Bill. During my election in the county of Pontiac in the election of 1896, I found that a number of responsible electors were by some means or other left off the voters' list. I had a great deal of trouble to explain this to my friends—in fact I could not successfully explain it to them—but I did offer the explanation that there was no intention on the part of the revising officer, or on the part of any one I knew connected with the revision of the list to leave their names off. I then promised positively, that, on the very