

can it be a freak of the imagination when they were not permitted to vote, as we have been saying all the time since this Act was passed. Section 4 expressly says that if, by any manner of means, they get on the list, they shall be struck off. Well, my hon. friend did not stop there. He went a little further and said:

Hon. gentlemen have heard the statement, and I challenge contradiction of it—that the names of Dominion officials were never left off the lists under the provincial law, and the names being on the lists the parties were entitled to vote in the Dominion election. There was never any need for the passing of the Act of 1882

Now, I need not labour that part of the question any further, because I think I have completely met the position taken by the Minister of Finance on that occasion. And, having done so, if he has any sense of justice, and I am sure he has, he will acknowledge it. I should gather from the position that he took on that occasion that if these people were to be disqualified in any way and forbidden to vote under the provincial laws, he would be inclined to look upon it as a grievance. I think the hon. gentleman went even that far. Let him go to the law as it is at this very moment. The disqualifying clause that I read to you, that was passed in 1871 is as I have said, the disqualifying clause that is on the Statute-book to-day. What does it say about the making up of the lists? I will read the law as it is at this very moment:

The revisers, when making up the lists, shall include the following persons, if of the full age of 21 years and subjects of Her Majesty by birth or naturalization, and not disqualified by any section of this Act.

Now, I have read the disqualifying section of this Act which provided that if a man is employed in any way by the Federal Government that disqualifies him, and provides even that if he is "otherwise by law prevented from voting" be excluded from those entitled to have their names entered on the lists of the electors. Now, by law the Dominion officials are prevented from voting, and, therefore, Dominion officials cannot be included in the lists that are made by the revisers as prescribed by this section. I, therefore, say, and in this I fully agree with my hon. friend from West Lambton (Mr. Lister) that it is a most retrograde step to take, once a body of men is enfranchised, to disfranchise them. If this is a hardship as affecting the Indians of his constituency, how much more is it a hardship as respects the white men of Nova Scotia. They were disfranchised under the Franchise Act of 1871. The Dominion Parliament came to their relief by the Franchise Act of 1885. From that time until now they have been exercising their right to vote for candidates for this Parliament just the same as the Indians in the constituency of my hon. friend. We now propose to take away this

Mr. GILLIES.

right by enacting this clause. Heretofore the franchise law of Nova Scotia was applied to the election of members to the House of Assembly of that province. That Franchise Act disfranchises a large number of white men in the province of Nova Scotia.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. My hon. friend (Mr. Gillies) probably did not hear the Solicitor General state that the Government were considering the propriety of amending the Bill so as to maintain this right.

Mr. GILLIES. I am aware of that, and I am arguing this question on a similar line with my hon. friend the Solicitor General who has studied the Act and knows its genius very much better than the Minister of Finance. He admitted that these people were disqualified under the franchise law of Nova Scotia. What I wish to impress upon the committee and particularly upon my hon. friend from Lambton is, that if it is a hardship for the Indians of his constituency to be disfranchised, if it is a retrograde step to deprive them of the right they have enjoyed for thirteen years, he will surely agree with me, and his friends associated with him also, that it is a much greater hardship and much more a retrograde step to disfranchise the white men in Nova Scotia who have been enjoying the rights of voting for members of the House of Commons.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. On one point the hon. gentleman has shown that I was inaccurate as to something in the law of Nova Scotia a quarter of a century ago. One does not care to admit that he remembers so far back as that. If the hon. gentleman has quoted correctly, I am bound to admit that I was inaccurate. But when he went further and stated, in answer to the question, that that was the law of Nova Scotia to-day, I think he is mistaken; and for all practical purposes, as bearing on the point before us in the previous discussion, my hon. friend was wrong and I was right. What was the question? After all we only deal with the Act of 1871 as a matter of history, which is interesting, but we are more concerned in the Act of 1888 in Nova Scotia.

Mr. MILLS. You mean 1889.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. The law as it is to-day is the one we are concerned in. We propose that the franchise lists of Nova Scotia shall be the lists for Dominion elections. My hon. friend (Mr. Gillies) found fault with the provincial lists and said they were bad for our purposes because they excluded Dominion officials. I submitted to my hon. friend that he was wrong because the lists did not exclude the names—

Mr. GILLIES. That is the provincial lists?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. The provincial lists of to-day.