

hand, a court of revision was held before the lists were printed and distributed, much against the protestations of the Conservative candidate who desired that the court of revision should be postponed in order that the electors might see if their names were on the list. This was refused, and the court of revision was actually held before the lists were printed and distributed. These, Sir, are a few of the instances which prevailed throughout the length and breadth of Manitoba. Is it any wonder that Conservatives hailing from the province of Manitoba should view with alarm the substitution of such an Act as that in place of the present Dominion Franchise Act? The franchise is the whole basis of constitutional freedom. If we have cooked lists prepared by partisan officials the liberty of the people is gone. Now, Mr. Speaker, we have heard a good deal about hon. gentlemen opposite fighting for civil and religious liberties. They say they want to make this a great issue. Now I ask those hon. gentlemen: Are these the kind of weapons they desire to fight their opponents with? You might as well tie a man's hands behind his back and then wade into him a la Corbett. Which is the greater evil, to threaten a man that unless he votes for such and such a candidate, pains and penalties will be inflicted upon him, or to refuse him the right to vote at all in this free country, although he may be fully qualified? I think the latter is much the greater evil, for in the cases I have cited the registration clerks do as they please, while in the former case, in spite of all threats, a man may vote as he pleases and no one can know how he voted. I am but voicing the sentiments of every Conservative elector of Manitoba, yes, and of the independent and fair-minded Liberals of that province, who are certainly disgusted with the methods followed by those registration clerks at the last two provincial elections, methods which are also condemned by the independent press. If hon. gentlemen opposite are bound to push this Act through and make it the law of the land, let them at least exempt the province of Manitoba from its operation until such time as the leader of the Government can use some of his powers of conciliation and sunny methods on the leader of the Government of Manitoba, so that the latter may give it an Act that will allow a Conservative resident of that province to have an equal say in provincial elections with a Liberal elector. Before taking my seat I wish to revise the figures given to-night by the Minister of Marine and Fisheries with reference to the Colchester election:

9.50 p.m. Latest corrected returns give Muir, Conservative, a majority in Colchester, N.S.

Mr. RICHARDSON. It is not my intention to reply at any length to the remarks of the hon. member for Marquette (Mr. Roche). I fancy the House will be disposed to agree with me that if he had con-

fined his speech to the announcement he made at the close, he probably would have accomplished all for which he rose. Now it has been the custom in the province of Manitoba for Conservatives to denounce the Franchise Act. The reason for that is that the Conservatives of that province have had some such reason as the Conservatives of Nova Scotia have to-day, to find an explanation for the reception they have met at the polls, when they went before the electorate. That explanation is found in the fact that the Conservative party of Manitoba does not stand well with the people of the province; it is because we find in the legislature, composed of 40 members, there are only five or six Conservatives. It is in consequence of facts of this nature that Conservatives find it necessary to denounce the Franchise Act of Manitoba. That Act has been criticised adversely from time to time, but it provides for one man one vote; and I am free to say, because I have observed it for years, that any person who desires to have his name recorded on the list, can have it so recorded. One reason why they find so much fault is because they have been so badly defeated for a number of years past that many of them do not care to have their names placed upon the voters' list at all, and have practically allowed the preparation of the list to go by default. The manner of preparing those lists, as I say, is perfectly fair, and all residents of Manitoba who are entitled to vote, can have their names placed on the list if they so desire. In regard to the insinuation about registration clerks having left the country for the country's good, I may say that I am not aware of any cases of that kind. There was one young man appointed as registration clerk who left the country for another cause altogether. It was not because he had done anything wrong in connection with the preparation of the voters' list, and no insinuation has ever been made against him on that account. The history of the preparation of the voters' lists may be searched, and I am satisfied that in every case it will be found that they have been fairly well prepared, and I think the Manitoba Franchise Act will stand a fair comparison with the Franchise Act of any other province in the Dominion. Suppose we compare the Franchise Act of Manitoba with the Dominion Franchise Act. We have, as I say, in Manitoba the principle of one man one vote. In the city of Winnipeg, Judge Ardagh, who revised the Dominion list, denounced it as one of the worst lists he had ever had anything to do with; he said it was almost impossible to prepare a correct list with the material before him. Why, there is scarcely a man who has died in that country for the last ten or fifteen years, and whose name was on that list, whose vote was not polled in the election when the election day came