

would not apply to us. It is only the franchise vote which would be polled in accordance with the electoral law of the Dominion to elect one man for each electoral district, and not put a minority man here. That argument does not apply, and cannot apply. And the same answer may be given to his suggestion that possibly the province of Ontario, singled out here again as perhaps the most advanced province of the Dominion, might confer the franchise upon females. Well, Sir, supposing it did. This Parliament might be perfectly well satisfied to adopt that, perfectly well satisfied to let it be. But if Parliament was not satisfied, the remedy would be in their own hands. The argument which the hon. gentleman suggests, that we are parting with our powers in this matter, is altogether inaccurate, because we are simply adopting the franchise as it at present exists, we claim the fullest and amplest power to alter, revoke, or modify it from time to time, as the circumstances of the case may call for.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. My hon. friend will probably allow me to ask him a question, because I do not read the Bill as he does. I understand him to say that this Bill proposes that we should take the franchises as they exist now in the various provinces, and make them the basis of the Dominion franchise. But that is not the Bill. The Bill reads :

Subject to the provisions hereinafter contained, the qualifications and conditions necessary to entitle a person to vote at a Dominion election, shall be those entitling a person, at the time of such election, to vote at a provincial election in the electoral district for which the Dominion election is being held, or any part thereof.

So that whatever the law may be in the province at the time the Dominion election is held, shall be the law for the Dominion.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. Precisely, the hon. gentleman is perfectly correct. He has read the Bill just as it is, and just as I read it. But I was addressing myself to his argument that Parliament was parting with its right of declaring how its members should be elected, and I was showing him that while we are adopting this system of provincial franchises which are to apply to the Dominion for the time being, we do not part with our powers; we can retain and recover those powers at any moment we like to exercise our privilege.

The hon. gentleman quoted with approval a speech delivered by the hon. member for Brockville (Mr. Wood) the other day. That hon. gentleman presented a well-reasoned argument against the principle of this Bill. He argued that one vital defect in it was, that while in Ontario there was the principle adopted of one man one vote, that principle did not apply to the province of Quebec, and one man there if he possessed half a dozen qualifications for votes in different

electoral districts could deliver as many votes as he could visit different electoral districts on election day. The hon. gentleman seemed to think that that was an extraordinary position and might result in an extraordinary state of facts; indeed, he more than broadly hinted that underlying it was the awful question of French domination, and he told this House that the province of Ontario would never submit to anything of the kind. One would suppose from the hon. gentleman's argument that some special advantage was being conceded by this provision to the province of Quebec. No one knows better than the hon. gentleman that the province of Quebec sends to this House a fixed number of representatives. It does not matter whether one man votes in two or half a dozen places; it does not alter the representation in the House, and if the province of Quebec in its wisdom seems to think the better plan is to give property the right to vote through its owner in every place which he can visit on election day, it is the business of the province itself: it does not alter the representation in this House, nor does it give the province of Quebec a scintilla of advantage over Ontario.

Mr. WOOD (Brockville). Yet the "Globe" hopes that the province of Quebec will change its present system to one man one vote.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. I am not surprised that the "Globe" should advocate the one man one vote principle, and that it would like to see it extended to the province of Quebec. But the "Globe" does not pretend to dictate to Quebec. The "Globe" knows very well that in the matter of provincial franchise the people of the province of Quebec are supreme, and if they choose to retain the principle they now have, the "Globe" will not complain, much as it may argue that the plan of one man one vote is a better one. But my hon. friend is a veritable Rip Van Winkle. The hon. gentleman was a member or leading supporter of a Government which distinctly admitted its adherence to the principle he now condemns. Does the hon. gentleman remember when he sat on this side of the House what Sir John Thompson, his leader, stated? Did he not say that in order to achieve simplicity and avoid the enormous expense of a Dominion franchise, the Conservative party had solemnly agreed to accept as the basis of a Dominion franchise the provincial franchise of the Dominion?

Mr. WOOD (Brockville). Sir John Thompson never at any moment declared or expressed the opinion that this Parliament should depart from the principle of governing its own franchise. Once you depart from that principle, it is no longer a Dominion but a provincial franchise.