

ing they were driven into a corner were compelled to do something towards redeeming their pledge. They saw that the First Minister of the Dominion was determined to go on with the Franchise Bill; then those hon. gentlemen thought they must have a new Franchise Bill, and on the 5th of March, something like six weeks after the Ontario Legislature met, the Bill was introduced; it was read the second time on the 24th of March, and was passed on the 28th of March. So those hon. gentlemen were actually forced to adopt not only an extension of the franchise, so far as property was concerned, but they were compelled to reduce the income franchise and to adopt other liberal clauses which had been advocated year after year by the Conservative party in Ontario. We find to-day that Mowatt's Bill, instead of placing the franchise at \$400, has reduced it to \$300; and subsequently in the Legislature it was reduced to \$250. I think I have satisfactorily shown, by the record of the Reform party in this Dominion, that they have systematically opposed the extension of the franchise. We find that they never conceded one inch, until they were driven into the last ditch by the Conservative party. Now these hon. gentlemen have been discussing this Bill day after day and night after night, they have been declaring that it should not be passed because the people have not had time to consider it, that its contents are not known to the people. Well, Sir, we had a similar Bill introduced in 1869. That Bill is almost precisely similar to this, with the exception of the revising barrister clause. That Bill provided that there should be commissioners instead of revising barristers. The leader of the Opposition at that time strongly favoured that Bill, as mentioned by the First Minister to-day. On the 11th March, 1870, the leader of the Opposition said:

"The House must feel gratified at the full statement made by the hon. mover of the Bill, and also at the mode taken to discuss its provisions, as well as with the announcement that it was the intention of the Government to receive with consideration any suggestions which might be offered."

That Bill was fully discussed, it went to a second reading, it went into committee and was discussed in all its details. The *Globe* newspaper and other Reform papers, published an analysis of the Bill, giving all its leading features, and if the *Globe* had any circulation in the country the people must have been informed on the details of that measure. Yet we find hon. gentlemen still declaring unhesitatingly that the country do not know anything about the Bill; that the people are entirely ignorant of it; that the people have not had time to consider it. On the 20th May, 1869, the *Globe* referred to the details of the measure, pointed out its leading features and said it was similar to the Bill of the preceding Session, which was identical with the Bill of to-day, except as to the clause providing for revising barristers. The *Globe* said:

"The Premier's Bill proposes a franchise which, though a little complicated, and not altogether consistent, is on the whole liberal. It proposes a freehold franchise of \$200 in counties, \$400 in cities and \$300 in towns. A tenant franchise of \$30 in counties and \$30 in cities, and an income franchise of \$400. The income franchise is an excellent feature of the Bill."

Now, Sir, that Bill was introduced again sometime early in 1883. On April 16th, the *Globe* referred to it as a measure similar to the one introduced in 1870. When the Bill was before Parliament for a certain time the leader of the Government withdrew it, stating that he withdrew the Bill, and that it would now go before the country to be submitted next Session. Parliament was not taken by surprise, and hon. gentlemen must have known the principles of the Bill, for, as the hon. member for Bromes said a few nights ago, he had thoroughly discussed the measure before his constituents, and had come back for the purpose of opposing the Bill. The hon. member for West Lambton made a similar statement; he said the Bill was

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before the country for some time, that it was understood by the people, and yet hon. gentlemen say the Bill should not be passed because the people have not had an opportunity of considering it. Now, on the 19th January, 1884, at the opening of Parliament, to show that the Bill was fully discussed, Mr. Blake said:

"At the opening of last Session I pointed out what I thought was the true need with reference to the Franchise Bill. I don't intend to repeat those words to-day. The Bill has been before the House and country. It has not received the advantage of vindication by its proposer."

Then he found fault with the First Minister for not entering into the details of the measure, and said he recognised the fact that the Bill was fully understood by the country. He then goes on further to make some remarks which show that the leader of the Opposition was a little at fault—that he is troubled with a treacherous memory. He spoke about the Bill of 1883, that Bill having a clause providing for revising barristers, precisely as the Bill of the present time, but on the 19th January, 1884, he said:

"At the time I spoke I did not know and could not know that the Bill would contain so objectionable or unheard of a provision as it is proposed to have in it, which proposal I hope will not be carried out, of the appointment of revising barrister."

Now, in January 1884, he noticed that clause of the Bill, although he never noticed the previous Bill, and although, as I have shown you, he discussed that Bill in all its details, and said it was well known to the country, and yet I should like to know if the Bill introduced to the House was not understood by that hon. gentleman. Now, in order to show that the hon. gentleman was mistaken, I refer you to page 594 of the *Hansard* of January 1883, where you will find that the First Minister referred particularly to the clause providing for the revising barristers, and upon the 25th January, the *Globe* newspaper said:

"Sir John A. Macdonald has introduced the Franchise Bill. It is not his practice to introduce in the early days of the Session any measure to which he attaches any importance. This is almost exactly the same Bill as last Session. One of the most objectionable features of the Bill is that which provides for a revising barrister."

Still the leader of the Opposition says he knew nothing about it—that it took him by surprise. Now, this Bill has been denounced to a very great extent, but we recollect, as I said a few minutes ago, that the same Bill was introduced in 1870, and that on that occasion the leader of the Opposition declared that they were all agreed as to the necessity of an Election Act, and although he might oppose some of the details, he had no idea of opposing a second reading of the Bill. The *Globe* of the 16th April said:

"It will be noticed that the conferring of the franchise upon unmarried women is the only liberal feature of the Bill. As to this feature, it is, we are pleased to say, a truly liberal measure, but we shall be very much surprised if the majority of the present House do not take the opportunity of eliminating a proposition which seems really out of place amid its surroundings."

These gentlemen say that the Bill is an obnoxious Bill, and still you find the the same Bill approved by the leader of the Opposition. Now, I think this House must have come to the conclusion, after listening to this debate for something like three weeks, that the sole object of the opposition to this Bill is that there is a clause in it relating to the revising barrister. If that clause were eliminated from the Bill now, hon. gentlemen opposite would allow it to pass without a single word of opposition, although it is true hon. gentlemen have for fifty-seven hours fought upon the one word Indian. Would it not be well now to bring my hon. friend from Brant face to face with his own record on that question. I think it has already been published abroad, and no doubt the hon. gentleman has seen it, that the hon. member for South Brant and other gentlemen on that side who are now so strongly opposed to the enfranchisement of the Indians, were strongly in favor of it in 1876. I have in my hand the Bill which was introduced at that time by Mr. Laird.