

cers, their powers and duties, the proceedings at elections, the periods during which elections may be continued, the trial of controverted elections and proceedings incident thereto, the vacating of seats of members, and the execution of new writs, in case of seats vacated otherwise than by dissolution—shall respectively apply to elections of members to serve in the House of Commons for the same several provinces.

The local franchises, we thus see, were entirely provisional. That being the text of our constitution, if we are following out the genius of the constitution, we should have our federal franchise independent entirely of the local franchise. But this is a matter, not so much of constitutional right, as it is a matter of expediency and regulation under the circumstances of the case, as it is a matter of broad national policy. That being so, what do we find the most advanced political thought of the world to be in this matter? The most modern instance of a federation like ours is the federation of the German Empire. What was done in its formation? Men untrammelled by state jealousies, under the guidance of great masters of political principles, like Bismarck and those associated with him, went to work and build a great imperial fabric. Did they incorporate the ideas of the United States, or adopt the ideas that were embodied in the constitution of Canada? We find that twenty-six states comprise the German Empire. They have most diverse and complex franchises. In some cases, the individual states elected representatives to their local parliaments by direct, and in other cases by indirect electors; in other cases, representatives were sent to the different Houses by electors whose franchises were based on qualifications of rate-paying and other qualifications.

Now, in the German Empire we find that they have adopted one great uniform federal franchise, and that federal franchise is manhood suffrage and manhood suffrage alone. They did not act upon any such idea as the leader of the Government is disposed to have this House follow. It would be antagonistic to the idea of an imperial, national unity.

I come now, Sir, to consider very briefly the great desirability of having uniformity, because every man who is a Canadian citizen should know, wherever he goes, what the requirements of fellow-citizenship are from the Pacific to the Atlantic; we should all exercise our franchise on precisely the same basis. By doing so, we are firmly establishing that which in the United States was their great want; we are building up a strong federal and national sentiment, and a strong federal and central sentiment should under our constitution exist. The evolution of all the United States constitutional history is simply the broadening, and the deepening, and the intensifying of the

Mr. POWELL.

federal sentiment, the working out of a grander federal amplitude. I recognize that the federal power should not entrench on the local, nor the local on the federal; but the maintenance of the federal in its integrity is as much an essential to the existence of any lasting federation in Canada, as is the maintenance of the local. This brings me now to the last point I shall consider, and that is the old Franchise Act. Well, Sir, the old Franchise Act was expensive; there is no question about that, and in my judgment it could have been rendered inexpensive in a very simple manner indeed. But what about the principle of the old Franchise Act? Remember the franchise was adopted by following the precedents of that nation to which we all look as the most highly evolved political society in modern history; I need not say that I speak of Great Britain. We followed the action of the English Parliament in adopting that Franchise Act. Without discussing details of our local Franchise Acts, I will point to the fact that in the local franchises, in the maritime provinces, no matter how one of these revisers, who is generally a fair-minded but legally uneducated man, no matter how he may blunder there is no provision made in these laws to rectify that blunder. He may leave a man off the list who is entitled to get on, and there is no way to get him on; he may, in his honest judgment by taking a cranky view, deprive a man of the franchise, a most serious infraction of a man's rights, but there is no way of rectifying that error. In Great Britain where they realize that every man should vote who has the right to, they guard sacredly every man's right of franchise and provide methods of appeal, but in the maritime provinces under the local Acts, there is no provision for appeal—there is no sufficient protection to a man in the right of franchise. In the province of Prince Edward Island there is not even an election list, and in every other of the maritime provinces the electoral list is only written, not printed. When this matter comes before the committee for discussion of its details I will be able to point out to the Solicitor General—for I will consider it then my duty to assist in perfecting the law so far as the maritime provinces are concerned—I will point out to the Solicitor General certain ways in which this Bill can be improved in respect to matters wherein it is not now workable at all. The amendment, Mr. Speaker, which I shall move is as follows:—

That the Bill shall not now be read a second time, but that it be resolved: That this House, while desirous of reducing the expense of the preparation of the lists so far as may be practicable, considers that no system of franchise will be satisfactory which does not preserve federal control over both the basis of suffrage and the voters' lists.

It being Six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.