

April 7, 1874

in force in his Province had been thus properly brought forward by the Government. He congratulated the Government on adopting the system of ballot which they had, for it would be found on the whole to be more adapted to the general standard of the voters in the Dominion than the English system.

With regard to the abolition of property qualification for counties, there did seem something anomalous in the fact of property qualification not being necessary for a candidate, while it was for his electors. The simultaneous election question had been happily illustrated by the elections which had just terminated throughout his Province. In Nova Scotia simultaneous elections had been attended with perfect satisfaction, and they often pitied the state of the other Province whose elections were often held from week to week, and sometimes from month to month.

He (Mr. Jones) congratulated the Government not only on the bill, which would be considered more in detail in Committee, but on the promptitude with which it had been brought forward.

**Mr. PALMER**, who was almost inaudible in the gallery, was understood to confess that the bill met his views quite as far as he expected the bill could. It altered the proceedings in New Brunswick very little but it did away with the nomination, which, so far as New Brunswick was concerned, he would prefer they had left out. He understood that it did injury to other Provinces. With regard to absolute secrecy, however, unless the law was to be different from that in force in New Brunswick, they could not have that, for it was entirely at the option of the voter to declare his vote or not if he pleased. His hon. friend from Châteauguay (Hon. Mr. Holton) was mistaken when he said that he (Mr. Palmer) had opposed the Ballot, for he had always advocated it.

**Hon. Mr. DORION**, in reply to the suggestions which had been made, said with regard to simultaneous elections that it was the desire of the Government to have as many elections on the same day as possible, and he would be glad if members who represented constituencies which had been excepted from the general rule, but who were ready to state how their constituencies were all to have their elections on the same day, would do so.

The question of the fee to the Returning Officers had attracted a great deal of attention, and although a fixed remuneration would certainly take away any inducements for a contest, yet it would considerably increase the cost of an election.

As to the number of electors for nomination, he thought with the member for Quebec Centre (Hon. Mr. Cauchon) that it would do very well to increase it in the cities and large constituencies, but in some there were so few voters that it would be almost impossible for one hundred voters to nominate a candidate. A hundred voters in several constituencies of the Dominion would be an absolute majority in the constituency. The hon. member for St. John (Mr. Palmer) had said that the ballot did not secure absolute secrecy, but he (Hon. Mr. Dorion) had of course only meant it secured absolute secrecy for those who wanted it.

**Mr. DYMOND** hoped the election law would contain a clause against bribery, et cetera, in which respect the New Brunswick law was admitted to be exceedingly defective.

**Hon. Mr. DORION** replied that two-thirds of the bill contained the most stringent provisions against the danger which the hon. member for York North (Mr. Dymond) had mentioned. The defect in the bill might be found perhaps in there being too many provisions of that nature. He had endeavoured to meet almost every case that had presented itself. (*Laughter.*)

The bill was read a first time.

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#### STANDING COMMITTEES

**Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE** moved concurrence in the report of the Special Committee appointed to prepare and report lists of the Select Standing Committees of the House. He explained, in the absence of the Leader of the Opposition, that the lists had been prepared as agreed to by him. He had made one change which was really the rectification of an error, having substituted the name of Mr. Wood (Hamilton) for that of Mr. Irving (Hamilton) on the Committee on Banking and Commerce. He moved the resolution tonight, as it was desirable that the Committee on Standing Orders should be organized tomorrow so as to proceed immediately with the consideration.

The motion carried.

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#### ORDER OF PROCEEDING

**Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE** suggested that it would be convenient for Mr. Speaker, in putting a question, to designate the movers and seconders simply by their names, without prefixes. This would save some trouble, and would be in accordance with the plan previously adopted in the House. He presented the official return of the distribution of the Statutes, as ordered by law.

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#### CANAL DE LA BAIE VERTE

**Mr. PALMER** enquired whether it was the intention of Government to construct the Canal de la Baie Verte, and if so, when the work would probably begin.

**Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE** said the hon. gentleman would see that it was stated in the Speech from the Throne that the report of the Chief Engineer of the Department would be laid before the House. He would also see when the estimates came down that there was a sum mentioned, as there was in the estimates last year, for the purpose of commencing the work upon the canal. The Government as yet had not been able to determine the route, as the report had scarcely been printed and that question had to be determined before the latter part of the question could be answered.

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#### THE THOUSAND ISLANDS

**Mr. BROUSE** asked whether the survey of those Islands in the St. Lawrence known as the Thousand Islands had been completed; if not completed, what progress had been made; also what policy