

strongly in favour of an extended franchise as any man could well be. We have nothing to complain of in our province. We have an extended suffrage there. Every man who is a British subject, who is over 21 and a resident of the district for 12 months, I think it is, has a right to vote. But suppose we do accept the hon. gentleman's theory and declare universal suffrage for the Dominion, the most objectionable feature of the Franchise Act still remains. What I complain of and what my hon. friends complained of when this Bill was passing Parliament and ever since it was enacted, was that the tools, the instruments, the partisans of the Government are revising officers in a great many cases, and we have got to fight them. In making up the provincial lists, the judges and the junior judges are revising officers. Most of these gentlemen are Conservatives. The Government has been continuously Conservative for eighteen years, and the judiciary has fallen into the hands of the Tories, especially in the local courts. We do not complain of that. The judges are men who realize their responsibility, and are independent, to a large extent, with very few exceptions of politics. They care but little what Government is in power. They have their fixed allowance and they draw their pay regularly and are independent of the Government. On the whole we have nothing to complain of. But I want no franchise, federal or local, under which there must be revising officers appointed by the Government, and I care not whether the Government is Liberal or Tory. If we were to act as human nature prompts, we would treat hon. gentlemen opposite to a good dose of their own medicine. But we do not do business that way. We want justice to all parties. We say: Abolish the revising officers, save an enormous amount of money to the Canadian tax-payers, and let those who are seeking to have their names put upon the voters' list and those who have a right to be there so placed that their claims shall be fairly and honestly treated. The First Minister and his colleagues have taken a step in the right direction. They are implementing their pledges. I had no doubt that in every respect those pledges will be carried out. But, in order to complete the work they have undertaken, they must do something more than abolish the Franchise Act; they must abolish a still more infamous Act that was placed upon the Statute-book by the Tories—I refer to the infamous Gerrymander Act. When the hon. the Premier has repealed the Franchise Act, when he has repealed the Gerrymander Act and reconstructed the counties, not upon party lines, but having due regard to the judicial and municipal boundaries—when he has done that he will have satisfied the great mass of his supporters, and I believe he will have satisfied the great mass of the people of this country. He and his

Mr. CAMERON.

colleagues will then have accomplished a task that will live in the memory of Liberals and of all honest and independent men long after they themselves have passed from the scene of action. I hope the hon. the Premier will very shortly introduce a Bill to repeal the Gerrymander Act.

Mr. CLANCY. Mr. Speaker, I will ask the indulgence of the House for a very few moments while I discuss the amendment moved by the hon. the ex-Minister of Finance (Mr. Foster). But before doing so I must pay some attention to the remarks of the hon. gentleman (Mr. Cameron) who has just taken his seat. The hon. gentleman complained that a good deal of time has been taken up in discussing a matter not at all pertinent to the question before the House. But the hon. gentleman himself has sat down without giving a single reason why this Bill should be proceeded with. The House, I am sure, was prepared to listen to any reasonable argument that might be adduced by that hon. gentleman to show why the Bill should be proceeded with now and why the Bill which is more important than all others, this session, the Bill relating to the tariff, should be delayed. Now, the hon. gentleman made reference to what he is pleased to call—I would like the hon. gentleman stay in his place and hear what I have to say.

Mr. CAMERON. I will come back and hear you; I like to hear you.

Mr. CLANCY. The hon. gentleman will have that pleasure if he will remain only a few minutes. We can quite excuse the hon. gentleman for leaving. A gentleman who dealt, to put it mildly, in such extravagant statements, might be expected to walk out before he hears the reply. The first thing we heard from him was a reference to the "infamous" Franchise Act. It does seem to me that no more extravagant and no more bald statement could be made. Yet it has been made use of until it has become a by-word of the Liberal party from one end of the country to the other, and they have come to believe that the Franchise Bill of 1885 was aimed at one political party and that its design was an infamous one. I challenge any gentleman in this House to show—independent of the defects incident to any legislation—and it is only by putting a law in force that we learn its defects—to show that it is a bad law and particularly to give the slightest evidence that the Conservative party had the slightest advantage in the administration of the law with regard to the voters' lists. Let me turn to the county I have the honour to represent. The judge there is a Liberal, a strong Liberal. I am bound to say here, in justice to that gentleman—and I think, on the broader ground, the same applies equally to every judge in Ontario, and I have no reason to think that it does not equally apply to every revising officer