

the Prime Minister concerning universal suffrage in certain provinces, there is much to be said. We all know that in the province of Quebec the words "universal suffrage" brought to our minds for a long time, and they do to-day, the tendencies of revolutionary France, for which tendencies a very large part of our population had no sympathy, indeed I may say the whole of our population, with very few exceptions. But when it comes to extending the suffrage in other provinces, which will take place as an effect of this Bill, then we claim for the province of Quebec the same privileges as those which are enjoyed in the other provinces. It is well known that universal suffrage as it exists in France is removed in a very small degree indeed from what we have here, under the Franchise Act which we are about to repeal. It is well known that the suffrage as it exists in England is removed in an imperceptible degree from the suffrage as it exists in France. If my right hon. friend will consult with those French authors who have written, and some of them have written admirable works, upon the suffrage as it exists in England, he will find that they all agree that it differs very slightly from the universal suffrage of France. Franqueville, for instance, who has devoted a great deal of time to the study of the British constitution, and who has made a careful examination of the electoral franchise in England, declares in his work on the British constitution that the difference is imperceptible. As a matter of fact, it is a more difficult matter to be inscribed on the lists in France and to secure the right to vote, than it is in England. Now, if the result of this legislation is going to be the admission to the suffrage in the other provinces of persons who will be unrepresented in our province, I, for my part, think that the province of Quebec will be unjustly treated. We will have this anomaly, for instance, as regards the province of Quebec, that there will be in this House a set of men who, when a certain class of legislation would come up, will have the right to claim that they represent an electorate far more extensive than we do, and that in regard to certain laws they have a right to speak with more authority than we have. In other words, we will find here representatives elected by a different set of 'mandataires' in every province of the Dominion, which I think would be a step backwards, as was stated here yesterday. But when we come to the details of this legislation, the anomaly comes out still more strongly. Now, with regard to the province of Quebec, what did the right hon. the Prime Minister say? He argued that the provinces formed distinct and separate communities, and to those communities should be left the right to fix the way in which they should choose representatives to this Parliament. Proceeding upon that prin-

ciple, what do we find as regards the province of Quebec? In 1892, the franchise law of that province excluded the following persons from the right to vote: Judges of superior courts, judges of sessions, district magistrates and recorders, all customs officers, clerks of the Crown and clerks of the peace, registrars, sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, deputy clerks of the Crown, officers of the provincial and municipal police, all agents for the sale of Crown lands, all officials employed to collect dues belonging to Her Majesty, all excise officers, and all collectors of revenue, whether provincial or federal. That was the condition of the provincial law in 1892, it excluded a number of officers, both federal and provincial. In 1897 that law was altered, a change evidently had come over public opinion in the province of Quebec, and by a statute passed in 1897, it was decided that disability as regards public officers should be confined to public officers of the province only. Now, what was the proposition laid down in this extension of the franchise which obtained in 1897? It was the principle that the province considered that federal officials, not being in any way dependent upon the local power, should be admitted to the franchise. Therefore, there was an extension of the franchise. What is the effect of this section as we find it now? It is to establish an absolutely different principle. If this section were passed in its present form, we would disfranchise the officials of the local government; contrary to the principle laid down by the province in 1897, these officials would not be admitted to vote. In this respect, therefore, the Bill in its present shape militates against parts of our population in the province of Quebec who were enfranchised by the enactment of 1897. There is, therefore, in this Bill a violation of the principle which obtained in our province by the law of 1897. Here is another anomaly. Under the laws of our province the official who prepares the electoral lists is obliged to omit from those lists two classes of voters who would be otherwise qualified, that is to say, those who have been found guilty of corrupt practices under the Quebec election law, and also candidates who, in the conduct of an election, have been found guilty of violation of the electoral law.

The law as we have it before us would have for an effect to give those parties found guilty and deemed incompetent and unworthy to vote under the provincial laws the right to vote under the federal statute, they would be admitted to vote for representatives in this House; whereas, as the committee will readily perceive, those found guilty of a breach of one of our own privileges, of the privileges of this House, if found guilty of corrupt practices under our own legislative enactment as to the conduct of elections, would be admitted to vote freely. There is nothing under the law to prevent their names being placed on the electoral