

they are in every way, in the older Provinces, just as fit, as far as intellect goes, as far as education goes, as far as having an interest in the prosperity of the country goes, as their white brethren. Mr. Chairman, I can remember the emancipation, the forced emancipation, of the negroes in the United States. I can remember how the benevolent abolitionists brought the uneducated slaves from the Southern States by the underground railway into Western Canada, where they got homes. And those men, although unaccustomed to freedom, although just emerging from serfdom, when they came to Canada and had lived here three years, in the portions of Canada where they are chiefly found, such as the counties of Essex and Kent, they had their votes; no one objected to their having a vote, and yet they came from a foreign country, they came from a servile condition. They were uneducated, having no traditions of freedom, having none of the independence of free men; but at the end of three years they took the oath of allegiance and became voters, and they are voters, and they have a powerful influence in Western Canada in electing some of the members that sit in this House at this moment. And here are Indians, aboriginal Indians, formerly the lords of the soil, formerly owning the whole of this country. Here they are, in their own land, prevented from either sitting in this House, or voting for men to come here and represent their interests. There are one hundred and twenty thousand of these people, who are virtually and actually disfranchised, who complain, and justly complain, that they have no representation. And they are to be put down because it is supposed that the head of a public Department, or the Government of the day, may, under the regulations of the Indian Act, perhaps influence some of these men towards voting one way or the other. I said, however, that when putting in the word "Indian," I had reference altogether to the Indians which I believed had shown themselves qualified to act as electors and be elected; and when we come to the proper portion of the Bill, as the hon. gentleman called it, I had intended, and do intend, to move an amendment by which it shall be applied only to the older Provinces. Now, the hon. gentleman says that the Indians on the Brant reserve, who have been continuing their tribal relations, are fit for freedom. I quite agree that they are fit for freedom, I quite agree that they are fit to exercise the noblest evidence of freedom, that is, the right of voting for representatives; and I think it is an injustice that these men should be prevented from exercising the franchise when, as I said before, they do all that citizens do. As regards serving on juries, the practice varies in the different Provinces. I understand in some of the Provinces Indians sit on juries, and that in others of the Provinces, unless they are assessed, they do not sit on juries. I therefore could not answer that question. As regards Indians serving in the militia: I do not suppose that question has ever been raised. Why? Because the inherent loyalty of the Indians has been such in all cases that they have come forward and volunteered. There was no necessity for conscription among the Indians for passing a law. They have some little pride in calling themselves allies. The hon. member for one of the Hurons said that whether as subjects or allies he would very gladly see a system of representation given to the Indians in this Parliament. He would be glad to see them get a system of representation. If it be their right, it may be that this is not the proper system by which to give them that right. I contend, however, it is the right system. It is the only way we can give them the electoral system on an equal footing with the white man. This is the only way of doing it. The Indian prides himself very much on his tribe being an ally of the Sovereign of Great Britain and Ireland; and that pride ought to be encouraged. I should be very sorry to see strict rules of any Militia Act—even if they were liable to it—enforced, because by admitting that they are, and have

been from an early time in the history of this country, allies of the Sovereign, they felt proud to come out and fight by the side of their great ally, their Great Mother. But with all that, I am quite sure that if we choose, if it was a matter of expediency that they should be included in the Militia Act, why, of course, they would be included, and service would be obligatory on them as British subjects. They are proud to call themselves British subjects as well as allies. It was in the capacity of allies they became British subjects. They are British subjects now; they desire to remain so, and as British subjects they have the same rights as the white man. With the right of the ballot the Indian is as fully protected and is as independent as the working man of the factory. He is as independent in every way; and the Indian cannot only make his mark, but he can write his name in the older Provinces. He is quite as independent, and if the hon. gentleman, who speaks of the Indian's want of independence, knew as much as I do of one tribe of Indians, the Indians of Tyendinaga in East Hastings and the western portion of Lennox, he would know that they are as much divided in political opinion as are white men. I know the largest and most influential family of the Mohawk Indians in Tyendinaga call themselves Grits, and one of the chiefs, who was here the other day, told me he was a Grit. I said: "Your father was not a Grit." He replied, "But we are all Grits, all the Culbertsons are Grits." The Indians belong to different churches, to different religions; they have different political opinions; and as regards intelligent opinions, they are equal with the white men who surround them. It may be that it is the character of the Indians, or some of them, not to be prudent in taking care of their worldly goods. But there are some civilised races who are more prudent than others in this respect. There are not only races, but there are individuals who are intelligent in the exercise of the political franchise and who yet are foolishly reckless in husbanding their worldly resources. We might quote some of the greatest men in English history who were utterly incapable of attending to their own worldly affairs; yet were the greatest statesmen in Great Britain. I would ask the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills) if he has read the private and personal life of Charles James Fox, a man who could not keep any money.

Mr. MILLS. He lost it in gambling.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Yes; and perhaps the Indians are liable to loose their money in gambling. Then there was Sheridan and William Pitt, and other great men, who not only exercised the electoral franchise but governed nations victoriously. They were incapable, however, of attending as individuals to matters of their own concern. And so it is with particular races. In my own country there are two great nations, the Lowland Scotchmen and the Highlanders. The Lowland Scotchmen are known to be saving and industrious. The Highlanders are impulsive, not so industrious and certainly not so saving; but equally intelligent, equally possessing a right to vote as freemen, and equally exercising that right. So I say that the Indians living in the older Provinces who have gone to school—and they all go to school—who are educated, who associate with white men, who are acquainted with all the principles of civilisation, who carry out all the practices of civilisation, who have accumulated round themselves property, who have good houses, and well furnished houses, who educate their children, who contribute to the public treasury in the same way as the whites do, should possess the franchise. They do not, certainly in the Province of Ontario, and I believe in the Province of Quebec as well, I cannot speak confidently as to the other Provinces, contribute to the general assessment of the county in which they live; but they have their own assessment and their own system of taxation in their own reserves in those portions