

privileges; and he therefore expects to receive the eternal execration of the people who sent him to this House. He says that, to the credit of the hon. Senator of Prince Edward Island (Senator Haythorne), when the measure of 1874 came before the Senate, he rose superior to his party feelings and stood out like a man for the Province he represented. Will the hon. gentleman follow that noble example? Will he rise above party feelings? Will he, when he reads the amendment of my hon. friend from North Norfolk, which is a far better amendment than that moved by the hon. member for King's, which gives the same glorious privilege to all the Provinces, support that amendment and give to all the Provinces the justice which he demands for his own? Will he support that measure of justice which he demands for his own Province, or will he fold his arms and sacrifice the interests of those who sent him to Parliament? I fear that the last of the clauses which I have read will indicate that the hon. gentleman will do the latter. Why does he not rise in his might, like the hon. Senator whom he has praised, and burst the chains and fetters which bind him to his party, and, when he sees they are determined to force an obnoxious measure upon the people of his Province, why does he not stand redeemed and disenthralled and, as the immortal Curran would say, by the genius of self-emancipation? I have spoken to this amendment, because it involves the question of provincial rights. I think it may be fairly considered in connection with the claims made for Prince Edward Island. What those hon. gentlemen claim for that Province we claim for every Province in this Dominion, and, if their proposition be voted down, they are in duty bound to stand up manfully and support the Opposition and the amendment of the hon. member for North Norfolk (Mr. Charlton). I have heard it repeated that this is our own franchise. I do not know how Ministers may use that pronoun "our," but, if the First Minister spoke for himself and his colleagues, I think the Bill will meet what he wants and will create, a franchise for the Ministry. If the members of this House want a franchise of their own, they have one to day, because the provincial franchises were adopted by an Act of this Legislature. They speak of uniformity, but that means that the people of any one Province may be placed in a position to have forced upon them, at any time, the opinions and the prejudices of other Provinces. In the attempts to get uniformity you are paying altogether too dear for the whistle. If there is anything wrong in the provincial franchises the people of the Provinces must be held responsible, and they have the power to remedy it. This measure is unnecessary, uncalled for, and unjust. As to the expense, it must be borne in mind that this is not a Bill to be used only at election times. It is an annual expense for the preparation of these voters' lists, and involves five revisions for every general election under our Act. If, therefore, the cost of each year be estimated at the moderate amount of \$400,000, each election will cost \$2,000,000. There is no justification for that, as we already have lists which are prepared without any cost to the people, as represented in this Parliament. This discussion has given rise to a stronger argument in favor of manhood suffrage than any discussion which has ever taken place in this House. The very idea of a Dominion franchise gives us the idea of manhood suffrage. If we are to have uniformity at all, the only way in which it can be reached is manhood suffrage, and that fact will force itself upon the minds of hon. gentlemen in this House to such an extent that, before another year comes round, the opinion will be so largely entertained that an effort will be made to amend this Franchise Bill by giving us manhood suffrage, there is where I see the danger of provincial discord. If the Province of Quebec is not as far advanced as the other Provinces in regard to that question, what danger threatens that Province? One Province will be trying to force its opinion on another Province, and by

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the force of the majority the smaller Province will have to yield. It would be far better to retain our present easily worked and satisfactory system, and to leave the present Bill until the people demand it. In justification of the continued discussion which has been going on in this House, I will read the following extract from Bailey's "Political Representation":

"The peculiar advantages of oral discussion are that, from the number and variety of minds, simultaneously handling the subject, it is rapidly turned on all sides and scrutinised in every part; and, secondly that a state of clear-sightedness is produced in the understanding, which is seldom to be purposely created, and is only the occasional visitant of the closet. In the process of debate, the doubt which hung over the mind clears away, the information wanting and searched for in vain is supplied, the absurdity before unnoticed is made palpable, the fond conceit blown up by some partial experience melts into air, the attention is animated and the perception sharpened by the alternate exposition and reply, attack and defence."

I say that we should have alternate exposition and reply; we should have alternate attack and defence.

"It can hardly be questioned that if a number of men with adequate information come together and freely discuss a subject to the best of their ability, they will arrive at a truer conclusion than the same men could attain in the same time by any other means."

We have here the very strongest opinions expressed by this writer in favor of discussion. Now, Sir, as to the manner in which the people should be brought to an understanding of the provisions of this Bill, I wish to quote an expression of Hume:

"In all cases it must be advantageous to know what is most perfect in the kind, that we may be able to bring any real constitution or form of government as near it as possible, by such gentle alterations and innovations as may not give too great disturbance to society."

The author then goes on to say:

"If we narrowly examine the subject, we shall find that the condition required for the introduction of a measure, whether of abolition or positive innovation, may be comprised in two; 1st. That the measure shall be for the public good. 2nd. That the majority of the people shall have a clear and steady conviction that it is so."

Now, I ask hon. gentlemen opposite if they believe that the majority of the people of this country have a clear and steady conviction that this measure is in the public interest. I say we have no evidence that such is the case.

"The latter condition, indeed, is more than is absolutely required in all cases. To justify the introduction of some measures the negative condition might be alone sufficient; namely, that the majority of the people should be exempt from any prepossession against them. In laying down the second condition, therefore, in its positive form, we assume less than would probably be conceded. Either the absence of all obstacles in the way of introducing a measure is implied in these two conditions or, if there are, the absence of which is not implied, they cannot be obstacles of much resisting force. It is, for example, implied in the conviction of the majority as to the expediency of any proposed alteration that their feelings and prejudices, if they ever were, are no longer arrayed in opposition to it."

Now, Sir, we know from the opposition this measure is receiving in this House, and from the excitement it has caused outside the House, that a large number of people have feelings and prejudices against this measure.

"It is also implied in the conviction the people at large entertain of the expediency of a measure that they no longer regard it, if they ever did, as inimical to their interests. This statement of the matter, again, brings round to our view with more vividness, and in ampler magnitude, the importance of publicly discussing, incessantly repeating, and intrepidly urging, all great principles and measures of policy; certain as we are that a true knowledge of the measures will continually spread, and animated, as we cannot fail to be, by the consideration that all which is required to enable them to pass into laws, is that general conviction of their utility which public discussion will sooner or later inevitably establish."

Now, Sir, I ask hon. gentlemen opposite to assist in this discussion. If they have arguments to bring in favor of this measure, let the ablest men on that side of the House rise and explain its provisions, and show why we are called upon to pass this measure. We demand reasons, and no reasons have been given us, and because no reasons have been given in favor of this measure, the country is becoming aroused from one end to the other in such a manner as