

the contrary, our five million inhabitants are scattered throughout the half of a continent. Our national domain, with its immense wealth and possibilities, requires life-giving capital, property owners who will occupy and till the ground, thrifty and intelligent workmen whose labour will give paying returns. Can there be a sounder and more patriotic policy than that of dividing the national sovereignty between those useful citizens who contribute by their capital, their property and their labour towards the wealth and prosperity of the country, while excluding parasites and hangers-on of every description? For my part, I would be in favour of giving the right of suffrage to all those who need it and use it for the good government of the country, and denying it to all those who make it a matter of vile barter. Now, I must say that I was greatly surprised to hear, at the very outset of the session, the hon. leader of the Opposition (Sir Charles Tupper) advocating universal suffrage and suggesting its adoption in our country. Several other hon. gentlemen opposite, I see, have also given expression to the same views in the course of this debate. Have, then, the hon. gentlemen opposite come to such a pass, after having boasted for sixty years past, of being the pillars of order and good government? Have the last champions of the great Conservative party in Quebec reached such a depth, after having, for over half a century, held up to public execration, the red flag, and preached the holy war against the subversive tenets of the Liberal party? Are we, then, to agree with sceptics that all parties are, by the very essence of things, Conservative when in power and Liberal when in opposition? It may, perhaps, be objected that the majority of the provinces, with the exception of Quebec, have adopted manhood suffrage and that, when inveighing against that policy I am also declaiming against the policy of several Liberal administrations. I have given expression to what I believe to be the prevailing sentiment in my own province in that regard, a feeling which is also shared by several political men in the other provinces, who have grown rather cool, I think, with respect to manhood suffrage. However, I respect the contrary opinion which seems to be shared in by the majority of my fellow-countrymen in the English-speaking provinces, and I believe this difference in opinion may be accounted for by the difference in our mental constitution. The Anglo Saxon race may adopt, without great inconvenience, political measures, apparently very radical, which they enforce with judgment and moderation; while the French people, who are more logical and more impetuous, cannot, with impunity, go beyond certain limits. Let, therefore, the provinces of Ontario and Manitoba adopt the franchise which suits them best, but I also claim for the province of Quebec the

right of choosing the system which suits her best. Now, that variety of mental constitutions and ideas offers, I think, the best answer to the strongest of all the objections raised against the Bill introduced by the hon. Solicitor General (Mr. Fitzpatrick), and as to which both parties seem to have taken a position which tallies perfectly with their instincts and traditions. I mean the uniformity of the Dominion franchise which is swept away under the provincial control. This objection is seemingly logical, because as the powers delegated by the people to their representatives in the Dominion Parliament extend to the whole nation, and as the laws enacted here apply to the whole country, those powers ought to issue from the same elements, that is to say, from electors having uniform qualifications throughout the various provinces of the Dominion. As I said, there seems to be logic and reason in this objection. But we must bear in mind that the only logical policy in the government of peoples consists in giving to each people such a constitution as is best adapted to their wants and in applying that constitution according to its fundamental spirit. Now, the principle of the British North America Act, by which we are governed, is essentially a provincial and decentralizing principle. The federal power is but the necessary cement that gives cohesiveness to the various materials entering into its structure. I am quite aware of the fact that the Conservative party did never make a secret of their centralizing and federative tendencies. Only the other day we heard the hon. member for North Bruce (Mr. McNeill) telling us that, in his opinion, this Parliament was the supreme authority and, therefore, that we should have a uniform franchise for the election of the representatives to whom the people delegates the power of exercising that supreme authority. I know that it has ever been the policy of the Conservative party to advocate the principle of centralization, and perhaps also to lead us to legislative union. The Franchise Act was not a solitary nor inconspicuous instance of their attempts in that direction. The Conservative Administrations that have succeeded each other have always done their best to take away from the provinces the control of a portion of their legislative power, as shown by the License Act, which was enacted by a Conservative Government with a view to depriving the provinces of a considerable portion of their revenue. We have another instance of the same policy in the Streams Act, by which a Conservative Government sought to deprive the province of Ontario of a considerable portion of her territory. I could cite many other instances to show that ever since confederation, and prior to it, the Conservative party have always favoured centralization, if they did not openly make it a plank of their political platform. The Liberal party, on the other