

mander, then there would be some point to his argument.

Mr. POWELL. I would suggest to the Solicitor General that this section stand over. My hon. friend the Minister of Railways and Canals will bear me out in the statements I make, in so far as this clause relates to New Brunswick. I do not blame the Solicitor General for not being acquainted with the local conditions in New Brunswick, but the law is inapplicable to the province of New Brunswick as it now stands. Our method of voting at the local elections in New Brunswick is not the method adopted in Dominion elections. There a man may prepare his own ballot, and a dozen, or two dozen, or as many as the returning officer will allow, seeing it does not interfere with the proceeding of the election—a crowd of men can go into a polling room and the ballots are placed in the box as fast as the returning officer can receive them out of their hands and his clerk record the voters. The result is that our local polling divisions frequently include a population of several thousand, whereas in the Dominion elections they can in no case contain more than sufficient to afford at the most 200 voters. Now, to give an illustration which is within the knowledge of the Minister of Railways and Canals, who knows pretty well the condition of affairs. Take in New Brunswick, the old election Act, which is on page 49 of the Acts of New Brunswick, 1889. Under this Act which regulates their size, the parish of Shediac is divided into two polling districts. I will not read the particular divisions, but those of us who are familiar with the locality know the size of the parish of Shediac. There are no less than 1,200 voters in that parish, and at the present time I feel safe in saying in fact that at least there are more than 1,200, as the Minister of Railways and Canals knows. The heavy poll is in the Barachois district, where there are fully 800 voters, and it is absolutely impossible in a Dominion election that those 800 people can poll their votes, especially if there is any swearing to be done. I have no doubt that in the county of Queen's the same difficulty will occur. And in the larger parishes throughout the different counties in the province, the same difficulty will occur. Take the parish of Dorchester, another very large parish in the electoral district of Westmoreland. There are 1,100 voters in that parish. There is one very large poll and two smaller ones. At the McGinley poll, I suppose there are 600 or 700 voters. There is another very large parish—Sackville, in which there are only three polling places. In one poll there are 800 voters on the list, and it is impossible for these votes all to be polled in one booth under the Dominion law. If there is any swearing to be done or objections taken, fully one-half the voters at least will be denied the privilege of voting. It is

Mr. MACDONALD (Huron).

so to a less extent in the remaining parishes of Sallsbury and Moncton where the voting lists are too large for practical purposes.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL. I would draw the attention of the hon. gentleman to sub-paragraph b, of section 5, which I think will be the clause that will require to be amended in the case of the difficulty he suggests.

Mr. POWELL. That does not provide for it.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL. But that is the place where we should discuss the subject when we come to it.

Mr. POWELL. There may be a little collision between the words in this section and the paragraph the hon. gentleman mentions. Now, I am not finding any fault at all, because as between the two methods, federal and provincial, of making up the voters' lists, there is about as much dissatisfaction under one as under the other. I may say that throughout our province, and the provincial members will substantiate what I say, there has been no well-grounded complaint against either the Dominion election law or the local law, so far as the evil of intentionally denying any person the privilege of voting is concerned. Under our law, three men are selected as revising officers. They revise the assessment roll for the parish, and have the privilege of putting on the names of any additional parties who acquire the right to vote, or whose names do not already appear. Now, there should be some way of appeal from the action of these parties. If a man is not placed by them on the roll, he should have the privilege of appealing to the county court judge and have his name put on. I have known several cases where people have complained, rightly or wrongly of unfairness on the part of the revisers. If these men, who are men taken at random and know nothing about the principles of law, in some cases, have done wrong, even if I acquit them of improper motives, I would ask the hon. gentleman to make some amendment, or to add a section, allowing the privilege of appeal. The point I wish to make is, that if this subsection is to apply to New Brunswick it will be necessary to add words such as the following:—"Official lists such as adopted by the judge on appeal."

The SOLICITOR GENERAL. I do not see that I can very well adopt the suggestion, so far as giving a right of appeal. If we interfere with the machinery of the local legislature of one province, we may be asked to similarly interfere with another province. I would suggest that this point be left over, and, with the assistance of the Minister of Railways, I shall probably be able to devise a scheme to meet the case of New Brunswick, because a difficulty might occur which must in some way be overcome.