

many hundreds of good citizens if his proposition becomes law. The hon. gentleman says that the local authorities will make up the lists under the laws of the different provinces. The hon. gentleman nods assent to this and therefore agrees with me as to that. In several of the provinces, thousands of people, qualified in every respect from a property standpoint, are disqualified under provincial law and are not capable of voting at Dominion elections. Does the hon. gentleman propose that those people shall remain disqualified and disfranchised for Dominion purposes; and if so how does he reconcile that position with his idea of justice and fair-play and with the acknowledged right of every British subject coming up to the standard qualification to vote in the community in which he lives? In the province of Nova Scotia from which I come we have a severe disfranchising law. The Minister of Finance who now sits in this House will remember that the Act was introduced by the party of which he was a prominent member. The law was passed in 1871, before the hon. gentleman came into active political life; but it was perpetuated in a very energetic manner, as I may say, by him after he entered public life, efforts were made to repeal it by the Conservative party on several occasions, but the hon. gentleman stood by and defended the monstrosity. That law disqualifies very many worthy citizens of the province from voting at Dominion elections. The classes of those disqualified will be found enumerated in chap. 4, section 67 of the Acts of Nova Scotia, which reads as follows:—

Any one who within fifteen days before the election was an employee, or in receipt of wages or emoluments of any kind as such employee, in the post office, the custom-house, the Inland Revenue Department, the lighthouse service, on the Government railroads—

All these people designated in the Act would be prevented from voting, if we adopted provincial franchises, for members of the House of Commons. I ask the hon. gentleman on what ground of right or justice—of course I am aware that Parliament has the power and can pass any law—he can justify the disfranchisement of 3,000 or 4,000 citizens of the province, men who are discharging the duties of citizenship in a very admirable manner, who are contributing towards municipal taxes, but who, although they pay their taxes, and every other exaction imposed upon them or demanded of them by the municipal authorities, yet are not allowed to vote at Dominion elections because one may be receiving \$100 a year for keeping a lighthouse or \$150 for work done in the custom-house, post office or inland revenue service. On what ground can the hon. gentleman justify the disenfranchisement of such class I have mentioned? Time and again efforts were made in that province to repeal this very obnoxious and unjust measure. All those at-

tempts, however, were checkmated and met with defeat at the hands of the Liberal party, with which the Minister of Finance was identified before he entered this House. Laudable efforts were made by the Conservative Opposition in the local House on different occasions to secure the repeal of this Act, but the Liberal Government always voted on the other side and refused to repeal it. For the life of me I cannot understand why a dignified body like the House of Commons of Canada should give a power of attorney to the legislatures of the provinces to enable them to select the manner of men who should vote for members of this Federal Parliament.

Let me draw the attention of the House to the manner in which the lists are made up in the province of Nova Scotia, whence I come. The municipalities are incorporated as in Ontario; assessors are appointed in the different municipalities, and revisers are placed under them. The Act says that the polling sections of the different localities shall be collected in groups of from two to five in each municipality, and that each group shall have three revisers. In the county of Cape Breton, in which municipality I reside, there are twenty-four municipal districts, and five different revising courts, each comprised of three members, so that there are fifteen revisers for the whole county. These gentlemen meet and go over the electoral lists and compile a list. There is no provision made for having names put on the list, except in a round-about way, by giving notice, and so on; and the final court of revision is the sheriff. Now, Sir, the sheriff is an officer of the local government, and in too many cases in our province is very often a played-out politician who has done local service for years, and, as a last resort, he gets the office. This official is constituted the final court of appeal on those electoral lists. It is easily understood what manner of court it is which is presided over by a functionary of that kind. The Solicitor General is a good lawyer, and I ask him to consider well before he will constitute such a court as I have described, to make the lists that shall govern the election of members from the province of Nova Scotia to this federal House. After the sheriff does his work, the lists are then made up and returned to the clerk of the council, but they are written and not printed. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Fitzpatrick) will see what room there is for fraud under conditions of that sort. I am free to admit, that I believe the hon. gentleman is ready to meet such difficulties as that, and to make some effort to reform what would be an outrageous condition of affairs, if this Bill became law. I ask the hon. gentleman (Mr. Fitzpatrick), before he presses this measure to a conclusion, to pause and to ensure that protection will be given against the possibilities of such fraud. I say, Mr. Speaker, that the old Franchise