

a particular feature of this debate. We have, on the part of hon. gentlemen opposite in this discussion, a dead set against the Ontario Government, against the appointment of their officers and the conduct of their officers. I do not know about these transactions, and I shall not discuss them, but I say it is most extraordinary conduct to impugn a Provincial Government as their conduct has been impugned in this House. It is a course which has never been taken before with reference to any Provincial Government; and whether the Ontario Government be right or wrong, hon. gentlemen should remember that it commands the esteem, the respect and the confidence of a large majority of the people of Ontario, and I believe Ontario will resent such conduct on the part of hon. gentlemen.

Mr. GIROUARD (Jacques Cartier). I am surprised that the hon. gentleman looks at this provision of the Bill as a new one, and when I say it is not I will not speak on my own authority, but I will give an authority which I believe is worthy of the respect of hon. gentlemen opposite. I look upon the old law—the one passed by the late Administration—as not being imperative. It was not imperative on the part of the Government to address the writs of election to the sheriff or registrar. In 1878, in a contest which then took place in my own county, the writ was addressed, not to the sheriff or the registrar, but to a notary of the county. The sheriff, it is true, had sent a letter to the Government saying he would not act, but the registrar did not do so and he was willing to act. This was done under the authority of the then Minister of Justice, who is an able lawyer; so that I do not regard the principle of the Bill as a new one.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I wish to make another amendment, providing that the elections in Muskoka shall take place on the same day, as in other parts of Canada. This change is made at the request of the hon. member for Muskoka (Mr. Cockburn), and I think it is a proper one, as there is no necessity for having the elections on a different day than in the case of the Province.

Mr. BLAKE. I agree that this change is quite correct, and I believe that Mr. O'Brien, the opponent of the hon. member for Muskoka (Mr. Cockburn), agreed in that view. I would ask the hon. gentleman whether, in the present state of things, Manitoba might not also be brought within the same provision, as we are now within three and a-half days of that Province, and it is quite as accessible as many points of the Dominion. It is nearer in fact, than Cape Breton or the Island is.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I do not know how it would affect the outlying districts, but I will consider it before the third reading.

Mr. BLAKE. Even if exceptional time were given for the return of the writs, there would be no reason why the elections should not be held on the same day.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. DESJARDINS. I wish to allude to an anomaly which exists in the Dominion Election Law, and which has been complained of almost every Session since the law has been enacted. The law imposes a tax of \$50 upon each candidate, the object being to prevent bogus candidates from interfering in an election contest. But this amount was not deemed a penalty to a man who would put a constituency to the trouble of an election uselessly; and there was a Bill proposed this Session by my hon. friend from Richmond and Wolfe (Mr. Ives), who is unfortunately absent, and I think the present occasion is favorable for introducing the provision of his Bill as a new section in this Bill.

I will therefore move that the following clause be added to the Bill:—

Section 19 of the Act last cited is hereby amended by striking out all the words after "nomination paper," on the fifth line of the said section, and by substituting the following:

Nor unless a sum of \$200 be deposited into the hands of the returning officer at the time the nomination paper shall be filed with him. And the receipt of the returning officer shall in every case be sufficient evidence of the production of the nomination paper, consent of candidate and of the payment herein mentioned:—The sum so deposited by any candidate shall be returned to him in the event of his being elected or of his obtaining at least one-half of the votes polled in favor of the candidate elected, otherwise it shall belong to Her Majesty for the public uses of Canada; and the sum so paid and not returned, as herein provided, shall be applied by the returning officer towards the payment of the election expenses, and an account thereof shall be rendered by him to the Auditor-General of Canada.

Mr. BLAKE. This amendment has taken us very much by surprise, and I regret that the hon. gentleman has not seen fit to have given some notice of it; and I invite the attention of the Government to the fact that this very important question was postponed at their own suggestion at an early period of the Session, in order to give us an opportunity of considering it. It does not seem to me that there is now an opportunity of debating it. I myself stated my views at that time, and they are not at all changed. I have never very much favored a deposit at all. I have never very much favored the view that if a deposit is put in, it should be irrevocably lost to the candidate, and I so far agreed with the views of the hon. member for Richmond and Wolfe as to assist him to secure a change in the law by which the deposits should be returned. But to increase that deposit may place a very serious practical check upon the freedom of the people in the nomination of the candidates. I object to increasing it to a substantial sum like \$200. I believe we never had any deposit at all until it was proposed to substitute a written nomination for an open nomination. In the open nomination there was nothing to prevent a bogus candidature and that sort of public opinion which gathers around the hustings; and when it was proposed, on the adoption of the election by ballot, to substitute written nominations for oral nominations, it was said: "You have not got the check of that public opinion which surrounds a public nomination on the hustings, and, therefore, it may be, if the nominations are to be made privately by a written paper, that bogus nominations will be put in." Then it was said that the number of voters required might be increased, and it was increased, I think, to twenty-five. It now requires twenty-five electors to sign and file a written nomination paper, and the consent of the candidate, if in the country, shall also be filed. I am also inclined to think that an ample security, quite as good without any deposit, speaking for the feelings and social action of the people of our Province with whose political modes of thought I am more acquainted, without anything more. But it was proposed to do something more to prevent a few persons eager for a contest from embarking in it—to put a legal check upon them, this deposit of \$50 came into the Bill as a further security. As I said already, I do not admire very much that principle, and now to increase the amount to \$200, I think, would be a great mistake. But to provide the \$50 deposit shall be returned in the event in which the hon. gentleman proposes the \$200 should be returned, seems to me not unreasonable. It seems to make the law less absurd than otherwise it would be and to place less of a restriction to people who nominate candidates. I therefore propose to amend this clause by substituting \$50 for the amount of \$200.

Mr. BUNSTER. Early in the Session I announced my wish to amend the clause by proposing that the sum of \$250 be deposited by each candidate, the successful candidate to receive the money. I would like now to make the deposit