

my hon. friend means. He means that the province of Quebec is different from the province of Nova Scotia in that in the province of Quebec the Dominion officials are not as Dominion officials disqualified; but he does not go so far as to say that there are not electors in Quebec possessing the franchise to-day and voting in Dominion elections who could not vote in Dominion elections after this Bill passes.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL. Oh, no.

Mr. FOSTER. There is no difference then between us on that point. Then, where is the rule or reason for disfranchising such gentlemen as these? Because a man in Quebec or in any other province happens to be the agent of a local candidate in a local election, where is the right or reason for depriving him of his vote for a Dominion representative in a Dominion election? And yet, if this Bill becomes law, every man who has been an agent for a local candidate is disfranchised because of that fact. Can anybody give a reason for it? These gentlemen are not connected with the Dominion Government in the least; they are simply agents for an entirely different election, and may be for an entirely different party, they are intelligent men and good citizens. By what right are they deprived of their vote? Then, we will come to the officers of customs. In some of the provinces the officers of customs are upon the disqualified list, so far as the provincial lists go. To-day these officers of customs, amongst the most intelligent classes of our people, vote for Dominion representatives. In that, they affirm their citizenship in the wide Dominion, they give emphasis to their intelligence and their moral worth, and they take a deep and abiding interest in the affairs of their country; but are you going to cut off from citizens of that kind the only effective way in which they can register their moral worth, their intelligence, their views with reference to their country's policy and their country's growth? Can any reason at all be given? Take clerks of the peace in all the provinces of the Dominion. What disability has a man, because he is a clerk of the peace in British Columbia or in Nova Scotia that he should be disqualified from casting his vote for a Dominion representative? Clerks of the peace in some provinces of the Dominion, I am not sure but all of them, have a legal training. In order to carry out a mere quixotic idea, which has no foundation in the constitution of this country, you are going to disfranchise every clerk of the peace in some provinces of the Dominion. Take the county Crown attorneys. They have no connection with the Dominion Government. They are the appointees or representatives of a certain power in the provincial legislature. They are disqualified by provincial enactments from voting for provincial representatives and there may

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be some reason for that; but what reason is there for depriving them of the right to vote for Dominion representatives? They have no connection at all with the Department of Justice or the Government here. Take registrars in the same way; take deputy clerks of the Crown; take agents for the sale of Crown lands and Crown timber agents in all the provinces. Because they happen to be agents of local authority, they are debarred from voting in another electoral sphere with which they have no official connection whatever. There might be a good reason why a Crown timber agent in a province, receiving his appointment directly from the Minister who is administering that department, should be debarred from voting in the province; there may be a reason; I do not admit it; but if there is any reason for that, there is no reason why such a man should be debarred from voting in the wider arena of the Dominion. Take postmasters, take stipendiary magistrates, take police magistrates, take district magistrates as a whole; if I am not misinformed, in some provinces they are put upon the prohibited list of the province. The magistrates of the country selected presumably because they are able and efficient—I am not going to say that that always holds good, but we are bound to stand to the theory that the dispensers of justice are men of intelligence, men of standing, men of general worth and good citizens—yet you are going to disfranchise them. They now vote, they will not be able to vote hereafter. Go through the whole list. The collectors of provincial revenue—how many are there? Why, they are legion, but no collector of provincial revenue in some of the provinces, if this Bill is passed, will be able to vote for a Dominion representative. The district magistrates I have already mentioned. Then there are the officers and men of the provincial police; and in Quebec, for instance, you disfranchise them. To-day they have the right to vote, the right to influence public opinion and public policy, and so contribute to the commonwealth and the progress and stability of the country, as a whole, but hereafter they will be deprived of that right. This is a segregated instance, but, at the same time, it is an instance of the rule of right that by this Bill it will be applied all through. The contractors with a local Government will also be disfranchised in some of the provinces. Wherever there is a contractor with a local government, in any line of contract, large or small, they are to be disfranchised under this Bill, in some of the provinces, because they are put upon the prohibited list, through having some connection with the powers that be in those provinces in the matter of bargain and sale, in the matter of contract work. These men are to be debarred from voting, on this ground, in an arena in which there is no such intimate relations between them and the Do-