

SALARIES OF JUDGES

Hon. Mr. DORION moved that the House go into Committee tomorrow to consider the resolution on the subject of salaries of the Lieutenant-Governor, and the Judges of Prince Edward Island, and the Judges of New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario.

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THE ELECTION LAW

On the orders of the day being called,

Mr. MILLS resumed the debate on the Election Bill. In opening he said he did not desire to detain the House with many remarks upon the principle of the Bill, but he thought it necessary to reply to some of the arguments of the hon. member for Cumberland (Hon. Mr. Tupper).

The objection taken by the hon. gentleman to allowing the Local Legislatures to fix the franchise he described as very absurd, and in all the experiences of a similar provision in the United States not a single instance of corrupt practices of the kind mentioned had occurred. He commented upon the hon. gentleman's want of consistency in insisting upon a uniform franchise for the whole Dominion, while he did so much to destroy the uniformity after Confederation by insisting on the enfranchisement of Government officials in the Province of Nova Scotia, when similar officials throughout the other Provinces had been deprived of that privilege.

He characterized as extraordinary the hypothesis that gentlemen elected to the House of Commons by constituencies having a different franchise should not be on an equal footing. The result of a system which recognized differences of franchise, as was the case in counties and boroughs in Great Britain, proved exactly the contrary, where all who were elected were upon just the footing which their intelligence and ability entitled them to. Fox, Burke, and Pitt each entered Parliament as the representative of rotten boroughs, and their position in the House of Commons was in no way influenced by the fact. The same was equally clear in the United States previous to the general adoption of universal suffrage, and the prominent men during that time came equally from States having a low franchise and those having a high one.

So far as the Government had it in their power, the principle of simultaneous polling was adhered to at the last general election. The hon. member for Cumberland complained that the Nova Scotia elections were left over till later than the others; but relatively they were earlier than in either 1867 or 1872. He (Hon. Mr. Tupper) also complained that it was a violation of the principle of responsible government to appoint Returning officers by statute. In his (Mr. Mills) own election in 1872, a Returning officer was appointed who was a well known partisan of the then Government. That officer, in order to manipulate the election in favour of the Administration, brought every one of his deputies from outside the county, and over them under the writ he could have exercised no power had they chosen to violate the law.

The position of the hon. member for Cumberland reminded him very much of that of the Hebrew prophet who mourned because he alone was left; and he was not sure that the hon. member felt very

secure even in his loneliness. (*Laughter.*) The hon. member complained that the election of this year was brought upon the people at an improper time, but for the sake of being consistent he should not have omitted to mention that he (Hon. Mr. Tupper) had himself brought on the elections in 1867 when nearly all the fishermen were out at sea, and were therefore deprived of the opportunity of voting. Such, at least, was the charge which had been made, and the hon. gentleman had not as yet denied it.

Returning for a moment to the subject of the appointment of Returning officers, he said there were some powers of which it were better to divest any Government, and this was one of them. Where an election took place this year, an other might take place next year, and in the meantime issues might arise where important principles were at stake, and where a party, for other than personal considerations, might be desirous of success. The government would have great temptations in such a case to make such an appointment as would be most likely to forward their own interests. Therefore, when it was possible to make such appointments by Act of Parliament, it should be done.

With regard to simultaneous elections, the hon. member had stated that the principle had been adopted in his own Province, and was a borrowed one in the Dominion. However that might be, the hon. gentleman had not been an ardent admirer of it, for in 1871, when a resolution affirming it was laid before the House by the hon. member for Waterloo South (Mr. Young), the hon. member for Cumberland voted against it. Sir George-Étienne Cartier upon that occasion stated that the thing was impossible. He (Mr. Mills) then proposed that they should be simultaneous in each Province, but the hon. member for Cumberland voted against that too. (*Hear, hear.*)

The hon. gentleman told the House that the principle of vote by ballot was embodied in the Election Bill of the right hon. member for Kingston (Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald); but when Mr. Tremblay (Charlevoix) moved a resolution affirming the principle, last year, the hon. member for Cumberland and the right hon. member for Kingston both voted against it. (*Hear, hear.*) When the hon. member for Bruce South (Hon. Mr. Blake), some sessions ago, moved a resolution affirming the necessity and expediency of a judicial trial for controverted elections, the hon. member and his colleagues voted against that also; and, in fact, to each one of these great principles they were steadily opposed to up to the last moment that there was any possibility of opposing them with success. (*Hear, hear.*)

If the hon. gentleman had proposed to place the uniform franchise which he advocated upon a proper basis, he (Mr. Mills) would have been in favour of it; but while a property qualification continued to be exacted, uniformity was impossible. He (Mr. Mills) believed in a uniform franchise on the basis of manhood suffrage, accompanied, of course, by the principle of residence. Manhood suffrage, he contended, engendered a spirit of self-respect and self-reliance, and taught rich men to have great respect for their poorer brethren. He quoted the opinion of Lord Holland in proof of the assertion that nothing caused dissatisfaction among the poorer people sooner or more effectively than enfranchisement, which gave them a direct interest in anything which tended to the improvement of the condition of the country. In opposing manhood