

the doings and sayings of the people of some other Province. I take it, Sir, that this attack on provincial rights—for I think it is nothing less—goes further and that it becomes an absolute insult to the people of the Province so attacked. If a popular franchise does not exist in the Province of New Brunswick, who are to blame for it? Are we in this House at fault? No, it is the people of New Brunswick, and are they not sufficiently interested in the welfare of their own Province to adopt a franchise which is best suited for themselves? Hon. gentlemen may say that the Parliament or the Government of that Province are at fault, but they are the representatives of the people of that Province just as the Legislature or the Government of Ontario represent the people of Ontario, and I say that anything that is said against the recent Act passed in that Province is an insult to the people of Ontario. Have the people of that Province ever asked us to take part in this Parliament in the conduct of their own affairs? No; the people believe they are competent to do so themselves and they do not ask us to interfere. They have the power to arrange the franchise for their own Province, and if the recent Act is not what it should be, the people of that Province will find it out and they will remedy the evil by the repeal or amendment of the Act through their own representatives. The hon. member for Lincoln, who seems to have Mowat on the brain whenever he speaks, has characterised that Bill in the most odious terms. But why does he not go to the people of Ontario, who have the power to say that the Bill shall be changed, and that their wrongs, if they have wrongs, shall be made right. But whether or not it is that the hon. gentleman's influence is declining in that Province, or that he thinks he has a better chance here to say harsh words against the Premier of that Province, I do not know, but instead of exerting his influence in favor of a just and righteous franchise Bill he comes here where he has no right to deal with provincial affairs, and he speaks of Mr. Mowat in a manner insulting to the people of the Province from which he comes. The hon. member for Westmoreland says:

"Then, Sir, another important feature of the present system is its uncertain and unchanging character, the constituencies which elected us may before another election may be entirely swept away."

Well, Sir, that is a very strange theory to be proposed by hon. gentlemen opposite. We know that fortunately it is not in the power of the Provinces to sweep away constituencies, but unfortunately it is in the power of this Parliament and Government, and if the hon. gentleman for Westmoreland had had a seat in this House, in 1882, he would have had a chance to see that under a measure proposed in this House it would not be impossible that before another election some of us would find that our constituencies had been swept away. He says further:

"I for one, Sir, feel that the present system is not calculated to preserve that harmony, but that it is calculated eventually to promote provincial discord and provincial strife."

And now I take issue with the hon. gentleman in that part of his remarks. I believe that the present system has been conducive to provincial harmony, and that the principle which is now sought to be forced on the people of this country will be productive of provincial discord and strife. He goes on to state, that under the existing system, members may be sent from the different Provinces, with particular parties, largely in a majority, by reason of franchise adopted to that end, and that therefore we may have parties in this House divided by provincial lines instead of on lines of public policy. Now, the very principle of our federal system is that we should have federal representation, and that the party which is in the majority in one Province should have the largest representation in this Parliament, and so on with the other Provinces. The reason why provincial discord will be produced by the measure now

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before us is, that it is not a measure of permanency. Before long we may have, and I believe we will have, in one Province or another, a strong feeling in favor of manhood suffrage or of woman's franchise. The feeling in favor of these measures in a particular Province, will find expression in this Parliament, and the result may be attempts to force the views and wishes of one Province on the other Provinces in the matter of the franchise; that is the manner in which strife and discord will be most likely to arise, and more strife and discord on this subject of the franchise than has existed from Confederation down to the present time. He says:

"In one Province, where one party has a large majority in the Local Legislature, an Act may be passed adopting a franchise which will give that party a large representation for that Province in this Parliament; in another Province, where another party may have a large majority in the Local House, a different franchise may be adopted, with a corresponding result; what have we then?"

I wish hon. members on both sides to listen to that remark; I am not sure that there is not something in it, and if there be anything in it so far as the Local Legislatures are concerned, what is likely to take place under the measure before us here? Is not the same thing being attempted in this Parliament? Here is an attempt made by a Government having a large majority in Parliament, to secure the adoption of a franchise that would give them more than their fair share of representation in this Chamber. Now, I do not think there is anything more in the remarks of the hon. member for Westmoreland to which I need address myself. The hon. member for Prince County, P. E. I., (Mr. Hackett) followed him a few days later, and I wish to make a few remarks concerning his address in the same manner in which I have reviewed the rather admirable address of the hon. member for Westmoreland. The hon. member for Prince says:

"It is of vital importance that this Parliament especially should not be subject to the whims and fancies of the Local Legislatures, and that we should take out of the hands of the Local Legislatures the right to fix the franchise for the election of members to the Dominion Parliament."

He strongly supports the principle of this Bill, that this Parliament should use the right of constructing its own electorate. Then, he says:

"Another reason why I support the Bill is that it provides for the registration of voters in all the Provinces of this Dominion."

That is another principle of the Bill he supports.

"Now, Sir, I ask what reason or right has this Parliament to provide for registration for the election of members to this House? If we want voters' lists, is it not the duty of this House to pay the expense of providing those voters' lists?"

That seems one of the strongest reasons the hon. gentleman gives for supporting this Bill—the fact that this Government will have to pay for the construction of the voters' lists in Prince Edward Island; for the sake of getting that small pittance from the Canadians, as I suppose he would term them, he is willing to forego the privileges and to sacrifice the franchise, which he says the people of his Province hold most near and dear to themselves. First, he says, he is in favor of the principle of this Bill, and a moment afterwards he expresses the hope that the principle of the Bill will not be applied to his own Province. Then he says:

"Another reason why I support this Bill is, that it extends the franchise in most of the other Provinces."

I daresay most of the other Provinces will be thankful to the hon. gentleman for making that discovery. Although supporting this Bill, he goes on to say:

"For the last twenty-five or thirty years we have had in the Province, Prince Edward Island, a system of manhood suffrage. Every man in that Province, twenty-one years of age, and a British subject, having paid a certain poll tax and performed a certain amount of statute labor, is entitled to a vote. That system has become very popular in the Province of Prince Edward Island; the people there have become very much attached to it; they have made great progress under it, and they