

of Ontario, be struck out. There will then be no reference at all to Ontario.

Mr. MONK. I understand that in the counties of Gaspé and Chicoutimi and Saguenay elections are not to be held on the same day as in other counties.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. There is no change with respect to Quebec at all. We leave the law as it is, that is, it is optional with the returning officer to have the election on the same day or to defer it.

Mr. MONK. Our provincial elections are held on the same day all over the province. I am not quite sure as to Chicoutimi and Saguenay; but in the county of Gaspé provision is made for communication by telegraph between the Magdalen islands and the mainland. The means of communication are better than they were formerly, and if it is possible under the provincial law to hold the elections on the same day, it seems to me that it is equally possible under the federal law.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. The conditions are not at all the same. The electoral district of Gaspé under the provincial law does not include the Magdalen islands. They are a separate district, as are also the counties of Chicoutimi and Saguenay. There are four counties instead of two. Any one who knows the geographical conditions in the province of Quebec knows that in winter time it is absolutely impossible to hold the elections in Chicoutimi and Saguenay on the same day as in the other districts. It is impossible within the eight days after the nomination to deliver the ballot boxes and papers from Tadoussac to the straits of Belle Isle, a distance of 600 miles.

Mr. MONK. I do not think my hon. friend is right as to the extent of the territory. I understand that between the Magdalen islands and the mainland there is provision in the provincial law that the proclamation may be sent by telegraph.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. With regard to the districts in British Columbia, I understand that the general elections of 1896 in Yale and Cariboo were held at the same time as in other parts of the Dominion. Does the Minister of Justice know whether that is the case or not?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. My information is to the effect that in summer it is quite possible to hold the elections in those localities at the same time as in others, but that in winter it is a physical impossibility. It must be borne in mind that this is all discretionary with the returning officer. If the conveniences are such as to enable him to hold the election on the same day as in other districts, there is no reason why he should not do it; but if the elections take place in winter, we ought not, by any Act

of ours to deprive any important portion of the community of the right to vote.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. What does my hon. friend think is the difficulty in the way of holding the elections?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. The ballot boxes are in the possession of the returning officer on nomination day, and he has to distribute them and the ballot papers in the eight days between nomination day and the day of voting.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. It seems to me that the observations of my hon. friend the Minister of Justice are hardly pertinent. The only difficulty I can see is about the posting up of the proclamation. I do not think the polling box comes into it at all.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Why?

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Because section 29 says:

In the electoral districts of Algoma, in the province of Ontario, of Gaspé and Chicoutimi and Saguenay, in the province of Quebec, and of Burrard and Yale and Cariboo, in the province of British Columbia, the returning officers shall fix the day for the nomination of candidates, and also the day and places for holding the polls; the nomination in the said electoral districts shall take place not less than eight days after the proclamation hereinbefore required has been posted up,—neither the last day of posting it up nor the day of nomination being reckoned; and the day for holding the polls shall be at as early a date thereafter as possible, but not less than seven days after nomination, and at a general election it shall, if possible, be the same day as that fixed by the Governor General for the other electoral districts, but not sooner.

Is not the whole difficulty with the distribution of the proclamation? You go on apparently the same as in other constituencies, with some discretion, I admit, allowed the returning officer. If an election in Yale and Cariboo was held in 1896 at the same time as in other parts of the Dominion, surely we may conclude that the same thing can be done again. The very argument which the Minister of Justice used in answer to my hon. friend from Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) is a strong argument in favour of my contention now. Importance is attached by the minister to the fact that in the provincial election one of these counties is divided. Well, Yale and Cariboo are divided into two districts. If that is an important circumstance in connection with Gaspé or Chicoutimi or Saguenay, it is equally important in British Columbia. In other words, if you could hold in November, 1896, a general election for the whole of this enormous riding at the same time as in the other constituencies, is there any possible reason, when that huge constituency is divided into two, why you could not hold elections in the two subdivided ridings on the same day as in the rest of Canada, more