

simplify matters a good deal. I would suggest that, instead of a revising barrister, the Government should simply appoint my opponent—if I should happen to meet one at the next election—and allow him to make the list. It would save trouble and expense. He would do the work for nothing, and no doubt would make a list to suit himself, at all events. I cannot see that there is very much difference between allowing him to revise the list and the proposition now before the House. Some hon. gentlemen opposite have tried to assure us that they did not want to take any advantage of the Bill in the appointment of revising barristers. Well, that may be so, but we cannot see it in that light. However, I can tell the hon. gentleman that it is a game two can play at. If the hon. members opposite who come from New Brunswick are so anxious to take the power into their own hands, in making the lists to order for the next election, it is just possible that in the Local Legislature next year another Franchise Bill may be introduced there, framed upon the same principle and adopting the same tactics as are employed here, and that it will have the same effect that is anticipated from this Bill. I do not believe in that kind of thing, however. The hon. members from Ontario who sit on the Ministerial benches seem to carry the idea that this is a fight between Ontario and the Dominion Government, and that the Maritime Provinces and Quebec have nothing to do with it. But I must say that we do hope, in the Maritime Provinces, that at some day a change of Government will take place—or at all events, that a change of policy may be brought about, and such a change of policy can only be brought about by putting the Liberal party into power again. But if this Bill strikes a blow at Ontario, it strikes a blow equally at the Maritime Provinces, and our people will look at it in that light.

Mr. BOWELL. I merely want to say that in the remarks I made a few moments ago I was in error in saying that the postmasters in towns are not disqualified. I find that in the Ontario Act, postmasters of cities and towns are disqualified, but not country postmasters.

Mr. CASEY. I have waited two or three times for some of the hon. gentlemen opposite to rise in support of this measure. I could scarcely believe that it would be allowed to go through, without some further explanation from its author. It is usual, even on an ordinary Bill, to give more than eight minutes of explanatory statements regarding it, and I am quite sure that the right hon. Premier, who has such a capacity for explaining things that he himself has created, is quite able to give us more than eight minutes of reasons why we should pass this Bill. If it is customary to make explanations in regard to an ordinary Bill, how much more so should it be when we have a revolutionary Bill—for I can characterise it by no other term; it is a revolution in the whole practice and theory of our constitution hitherto in regard to our franchise. When we have a revolutionary and radical Bill brought down by a Conservative Premier, I think it deserves more explanation than he has given to us.

Mr. LAURIER. It is a conspiracy Bill.

Mr. CASEY. I do not know how far we could prove the conspiracy, but I am quite sure that if the right hon. gentleman wished to create the impression that this was a conspiracy Bill, and that he did not wish it talked about, on the theory that the least said the soonest mended, he could not have taken a better course than he has done. We have been told no reasons at all why this Bill, which has been hanging fire for eighteen years, should now be pressed to a decision. It is true that the right hon. gentleman, in his prelude to the discussion—for it was not a contribution to the discussion—gave a hint of certain reasons that might have influenced him to propose the Bill on former occasions, to carry

it a certain distance, and then to drop it; but he gave us no reason why the hankering, which he confesses to have felt for a Bill of this kind, which he has manifested for so many years in introducing and then withdrawing it, is only now to be satisfied by pushing this Bill on to its final passage. He told us merely that we had undoubtedly the power to pass such an Act, but not why it is to be pushed through now. Since we have not been told, we are compelled to guess. And I do not think it is very difficult to guess. This Bill has been kept in reserve in the arsenal of the hon. gentleman's forces as a desperate resort in case of a desperate emergency. He has tried it once and again, and found that it was rather premature; that some of his friends did not like it, as they do not like it now. But now it appears that a desperate emergency has arisen, requiring a resort to this desperate remedy, and we have to guess again what that emergency may be. I do not think it is hard to guess. I think the right hon. gentleman's conduct during the whole of this Session, the conduct of his friends and supporters, and the tone of their press, have shown that a crisis has arrived in the history of that party. If anything were needed to precipitate that crisis, it has been the events of the past few weeks. I am not going to discuss those events now.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Go on; go on.

Mr. CASEY. We will discuss them enough by and by, perhaps. There are several stages in this Bill yet, and hon. gentlemen will have quite as much discussion as they can wish. I say that the events of the past few weeks undoubtedly added gravity to the crisis. The Government have been embarrassed for some time by the failure of their National Policy.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. CASEY. Yes; and voices from all parts of Canada would cry, "here, here," in answer to that statement. In every part of the country somebody can cry: Here is a man who has felt that policy to be a failure. Now we have the additional embarrassment caused by the disastrous, the sad and lamentable, failure of their policy in the North-West Territory, a failure which has brought about the events of the last few weeks. Under all these circumstances, it is perhaps not to be wondered at that the hon. gentleman should have resorted to that policy which he has kept in reserve for an occasion demanding its production. At the last elections it was found that something was needed to reinforce the Government—something in addition to the glories of the National Policy, which was then booming. At that time, in 1882, an attempt was made to strengthen the hands of the Government by an extraordinary measure. The Gerry-mander Bill was used on that occasion.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. CASEY. Hon. gentlemen may well cheer the name of that famous Bill, which was conceived in their interest, and, if it did not fulfil all the expectations of its authors, it was not their fault. It was not completely successful and was only partial in its operation, as it applied to only one Province in the Dominion. Those to whom the right hon. gentleman entrusted the task of advising him with respect to that Bill did not prove good advisers, as in some of the constituencies where it was expected to operate with certainty it absolutely failed. In Bothwell, West Middlesex, one of the Hurons, one of the Bruces, East Elgin, Brant, and in several other places where the hon. gentleman thought it would inevitably bring success, it failed. On this occasion, when the embarrassments are infinitely greater, and when the hon. gentleman knows that in two years, probably in a shorter time, he must go to the country, he feels he must adopt a wider policy than the Gerry-mander Bill. He cannot have the excuse of the census for