

deed that no man of full age who is not absolutely a pauper ought to be excluded from the lists. It is the duty of the revising officer to sort out the electors according to their qualifications. He places A upon the list because his property is worth \$300 and more; he places B there because he pays a rental of \$2 a month, either as a tenant or as a lodger; he places C there because he earns \$300 a year. The officer in determining the value of each man's possessions, rental or wages has judicial powers. C is an intelligent man, bearing his share of the public responsibilities, liable for military duty, and serving upon the jury when summoned. But the party to which he does not belong, challenges his right to vote, because it is believed that his income instead of being \$300 is only \$290. If it can be proved that the \$10 is actually wanting in the amount of wages earned, C loses his vote, although B, who earns possibly only \$200 a year remains on the list as a \$2 per month rent payer. The assorting of claimants to the franchise is full of anomalies: and what is worse, it is fruitful of irritation, of charges of unfairness, and as we have already seen, of expense. All this we tolerate, not because we are in search of difficulties, not because we have money that we can afford to throw away, but because we have inherited the old world theory—good enough in the days when ignorance prevailed, but not suited to this country or to this period of enlightenment,—that no man is fit to vote unless he is qualified not by intelligence or education, but by property and money.

However easily a property qualification may be defended in England it, cannot be so logically defended here, so far at least as relates to the Dominion House. The Imperial Parliament legislates on the subject of property: our Local Legislatures also exercise jurisdiction in respect of property: but property is specifically

excluded from the purview of the Parliament at Ottawa. In constituting the Dominion House, therefore, and having regard to the class of legislation with which that House deals, the question of property has not to be considered. The laws emanating from the assembly have reference to every citizen, whether he be a property holder or not; and, as they are so comprehensive, it follows, as a matter of common justice, that every intelligent citizen should have the right to express his opinion upon them through the medium of his vote. It should be declared, then, as the first principle of the franchise, that all men are entitled to the ballot, with qualifications, however, as to age, allegiance and mental condition. Having reached this basis, it is necessary to consider the nature of the machinery that shall enable the voter to assert himself. The present system, it has been said, is too expensive. But the cost has only been viewed, so far, in the light of a single revision of the lists. The last revision stood us in \$233,000. There ought to be a revision every year. In fact the law calls for such a revision and it is only by special legislation that the labor and expense can be avoided. If the law be complied with we shall perfect the lists annually, at a cost of \$200,000 to the state and of another \$200,000 to the political organizations. Yet, seeing that we have a general election only once in four or five years, we shall use only one out of every four or five sets of lists. Thus the outlay, public and private, incurred in preparing the three or four sets that are not used is good money wilfully wasted. If, however, we continue to omit revisions in order to save expense, we do a serious injustice to counties in which bye-elections are held, for it will happen that contests will take place on lists four or five years old. These are necessarily imperfect. They admit to the polling-booth persons