

we should have been compelled to have our voters' lists different from the Provincial voters' lists; and yet they tell us that they desire to have provincial franchises adopted by this Legislature. But, says the hon. member for North Wellington (Mr. McMullen), we are prepared to accept the franchise as it now exists in Ontario, no matter how it may be changed in the future. Is that a correct principle? If you once adopt the provincial franchises, and recognize the principle that the Local Legislatures have the right to fix the franchises, then we must accept, from time to time, whatever franchises they choose to adopt. But these hon. gentlemen say, we will meet you half way; adopt the franchise that now exists, no matter what it will be in the future. Well, Sir, we have the past record of these hon. gentlemen. We can see exactly what course they pursued in 1874. While they were strong advocates of provincial rights, they were willing then to interfere with the franchise of Prince Edward Island. I recollect well what a cry there was in this Legislature at that time, and how the Hon. Mr. Laird was abused for introducing a clause in the Bill then, before the House, by which a number of people in Prince Edward Island should be disfranchised. They were willing then to accept the franchise which was the basis of the election of members for the Upper House in Prince Edward Island, and at the same time to force on the other Provinces their provincial franchises. Another very important feature of this debate, which shows the inconsistency of hon. gentlemen opposite, is the manner in which they advocated manhood suffrage. There is hardly a gentleman from Ontario, who has spoken in this debate, who has not spoken in favor of manhood suffrage. If they are sincere in that, knowing that their own party in the Provincial Legislature refused manhood suffrage, how is it possible to adopt the provincial franchise, and to have manhood suffrage for this Parliament? That shows exactly how consistent these hon. gentlemen are, and how desirous they are to protect provincial interests. But we know that these hon. gentlemen have a record so far as the provincial franchise is concerned. I recollect that the leader of the Opposition, when making his famous Aurora speech, declared in favor of compulsory voting. He has never relinquished that view; and this shows distinctly, if we place ourselves at the mercy of Ontario, what we shall be brought to. Within the last few days, we find the *Globe*, the organ of the party of hon. gentlemen opposite, advocating the same thing. We find in the paper of the 10th this statement:

"The names of the voters who had failed to vote should be struck off as a stigma for neglect of duty unless one of several recognised pleas of justification is at the proper time entered. This should be done for the purpose of emphasising the idea that in a self governing country it is a duty to vote."

That is one of those other views of the organ and of the party, and those views are in accord with the views of the leader of the Opposition which were dealt with so unmercifully by the same organ in 1874; but, as I say, if we adopt the provincial franchises, we must subject ourselves to those periodical changes which will be made according to the whims and impulses of gentlemen on the other side. We have had on this occasion as on former ones, hon. gentlemen of the Opposition prophecy what will be the result if this measure be passed. The hon. member for Queen's P.E.I. (Mr. Davies), who usually is good tempered and shows a considerable amount of good feeling towards members of this side, waxed wroth and warned us, if we passed this Bill, what the consequences would be. I wondered whether it was the warning that he received a short time ago from his own county that made him so angry; I wondered whether the recent return of my hon. friend (Mr. Jenkins) from Queen's County, P.E.I., by a large majority, was the reason why he treated us to so much abuse, and prophesied we were going to be defeated. No doubt the hon.

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gentleman feels somewhat chagrined at the position he occupies, and some excuse may be made for his uttering these prophesies. But he is not the only prophet; the poet of that party, the hon. gentleman who lately received his seat by the grace of Mr. Mowat, I mean the member for West Ontario (Mr. Edgar), although on the female franchise question he did not know where he stood, although after speaking two hours on this question, he could not make up his mind what position he would take, but said he wanted first to see how the feeling was on this side,—he also indulged in prophecy couched in the following language:

"I do not believe any hon. gentlemen can go back and face their constituents successfully after doing that. I believe that the indignation of the constituents who will be left out, will be so great that the member will suffer the consequence of the Act."

If that be so, what is the use of all this debate? Why not allow the verdict to go by default? Why not allow the Bill to pass, if we are to be condemned by the electors at the polls? But hon. gentlemen opposite know better. They know right well that we are acting in the interests of the people, that we are not betraying their trust; and that, as in 1879 and in 1882, the verdict will again be granted in our favour should we go to the polls. The hon. member for Queen's, P.E.I. (Mr. Davies) said:

"I warn them they will be brought face to face with the people whose rights they are surrendering and violating."

We have also prophetic utterances from the organ of the party on the 6th of May, when it said:

"Let the Franchise Bill pass, with its Indian voters' clause and its lawyer-made voters' clause, and the Tory conspirators will soon learn that Canada is too hot a place for them."

Why not let the Bill pass if we are going to be condemned at the polls? Why not let the condemnation come? Let the Bill pass with all its iniquitous revising barristers and Indian clauses. But, no; they know better. Hon. gentlemen opposite have repeatedly declared in their speeches, that we are invading provincial rights by passing this Act. Three or four of the gentlemen who have last spoken have declared that we have the power to pass this Act, while the hon. member for St. John (Mr. Weldon) still protests that we have not the power. It is just as well to place upon record what is the law on that subject, as determined by the founders of our constitution, to show how inconsistent these gentlemen are in their speeches, to show how various are the views they have expressed in Parliament upon that question, in order that the electors may see exactly the position we occupy in this country. The hon. member for North Wellington (Mr. McMullen) who no doubt is a high constitutional authority, and who can talk as much and say as little as any person in or out of Parliament, declared boldly that we have not the power to pass this Bill. The hon. member for Brome (Mr. Fisher) says he thinks we have a technical right to pass the Bill, but he believes we have no right to infringe on the rights of the Provinces. In his speech he made this observation:—

"Hon. gentlemen opposite say that it is the right of this Parliament to pass this measure. No one on this side of the House has denied that Parliament possesses the legal and technical right."

And yet the hon. gentleman goes on to say we are infringing upon provincial rights. The hon. member for Quebec East (Mr. Laurier) says:

"No one has contended that it is not within the power of this Government to enact such a law. No, no one has disputed it. It must be admitted by everyone that it is within the power of every Parliament to regulate the franchise to elect members to that Parliament."

Then he goes on to say:

"We contend that it is not within the spirit of the constitution to have two separate bodies of electors, one for the Provinces and one for the Dominion."

He admits in one breath that we have the right, while in another he says we have not. Another high constitu-