

principles that lead to hypocrisy, chicanery and fraud. In these days of long distances it is often difficult to get voters to the poll, especially over roads that are bad; and it is often hard to get them over long distances on boats. Now what is the practice? A man will say to his friend, Tom, Jack, or Bill: "I can't promise to pay you anything for your conveyance to bring six or seven voters from one place to another." But the other fellow winks and there is a definite understanding between the two that while Tom, Jack or Bill, as the case may be, declares that he will volunteer his services he does not in reality give them gratis. That is the common practice, and what is the good of getting around it and saying it is not so? I think that nearly every hon. gentleman knows that this is the common understanding in the country, so that this clause is really a vehicle for the introduction of hypocritical practice in the conduct of elections, and it has a tendency to lower the moral standards of the electorate and those who seek election. To my mind, if this clause were eliminated altogether it would have a tendency to elevate rather than lower the standard of election practices. I think the clause is obsolete. It does not cover practices of extreme corruption, if there is such corruption. The offences in connection with this clause are trivial, but the clause involves a principle which has the effect of weakening the moral tone of the electorate, and I do not think it is worth while retaining. It would be better out of the Act.

Mr. PETER MCGIBBON: It was my privilege the other night to oppose the adoption of this clause, and I would ask the minister to cut it out. In the interests of the electors, the candidates and the Government, the minister would be well advised to leave it out of the Bill.

Mr. J. R. WILSON: While this clause may not have been altogether lived up to in past elections, still if we were to eliminate it we would, I think, make it possible for the man with the longest pocketbook to be elected. I think we should construct our election law in such a way as to enable the poor man to have an equal opportunity with the wealthy man of being elected to Parliament.

Mr. JACOBS: Hear, hear.

Mr. J. R. WILSON: Moreover, if you did leave this clause out there would be greater possibility of bribery or the buying of votes

[Mr. Morphy.]

than if it were retained. I therefore think it would be better not to eliminate this clause

Mr. JACOBS: I think I misunderstood the remarks of the hon. member for Saskatoon when I said "Hear, hear" to what he said. I take the exactly opposite view, and contend that if this clause were allowed to remain in it would work against the poor man and in favour of his more wealthy opponent. Let us take the case of a wealthy candidate who, we will suppose, has not been in politics before and who consequently has some means. He has at his disposal some half a dozen automobiles in his private garage—limousines, runabouts, touring cars, etc.—and he has a number of friends in the same position, because wealth usually likes to associate with wealth. In that way, the wealthier candidate, the automobile millionaire, would have any number of vehicles at his disposal, while neither the poor man nor his friends could boast such conveyances. Probably all they would have would be wheel-barrows, and it would hardly be possible to bring voters to the poll in such vehicles. This section of the Act is therefore going to operate against the candidate of more modest means while it will favour the wealthier man who seeks election. For that reason I ask that it be eliminated.

Mr. McMASTER: Before the clause carries I would like to ask whether an amendment of the Franchise law by which a man who did not exercise his franchise or present himself at the polls would be penalized either by disfranchisement at a subsequent election, or even by a fine. In Belgium, they have compulsory voting. Has the minister considered that matter,—because it is well worth considering whether the enactment of compulsory voting might not eliminate a large number of the ways in which money is, or has been, illegally spent at elections.

Mr. GUTHRIE: I do not know that the question arises in regard to this clause, but I say that the subject has received consideration by the Government. While there is a great deal to be said in favour of the proposal of my hon. friend, the Government has not seen fit, up to the present moment at all events, to introduce so radical a change in our election law. It may be that, as the Bill progresses and as discussion takes place upon that phase of the matter, the Government may receive new light on the subject. The time has not