

the renewal of the lease forever. Yet, they have not a title in free and common socage. No matter what might be the value of the property, the sons of the lessees would not, under the definition given, be entitled to vote. How does the hon. gentleman intend to exclude them; is that his deliberate intention, or is it from the fact that he has overlooked the peculiar tenure by which they hold.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. No; my intention is to make it as wide as it now is in Ontario, and no wider.

Mr. WELDON. I would call the hon. gentleman's attention to what the result will be in the city of St. John. A large portion of that city is held under perpetual leases. When the Loyalists came there, in 1784, a town plot was laid out in lots, and an apportionment was granted to them. When the city was incorporated the ungranted lots were given to the city, or almost all of them, and the corporation has never parted with them. Some have perpetual leases, some have ninety-nine years leases, and some twenty-one years. I should say that one-third of the real estate of St. John is held under those leases. Take the wharves of the city, the most valuable property there. The property of the late Senator Robertson, worth \$100,000, would be entirely excluded, because it is held by lease and not by freehold.

Mr. HESSON. The hon. member for South Perth (Mr. Trow) is quite correct, and I think there will be many farmers' sons who will be left out, if the Bill were left as it is, because many of the farmers in my county, who bought their lands from the Canada Company, and who have farms worth \$3,000 or \$4,000, have balances still due to the company, and their sons would not have a vote, which, I think, would be unfair. In some cases the sons of these men work together on farms of 250 or 300 acres, though they have not their title from the Canada Company. The Bill, in that respect, would not be as liberal as the Ontario Act is to-day, which permits farmers' sons, in those cases, to vote.

Mr. WELDON. I might also mention that the city of Portland is largely held by leases, from two or three estates, and I should judge that in St. John and Portland together 50 per cent. of the real estate is held by tenants. Practically, these parties consider them as valuable as freehold, but still they are not freehold.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. And therefore their sons should not have votes.

Mr. WELDON. It may happen that the sons of a man who has one of these properties, worth \$10,000 or \$20,000, held by these perpetual leases, would not have a vote, while the sons of a man alongside, with a property of \$1,000, would have votes.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. It is only a twenty-one year lease after all, so they are not owners' sons.

Mr. WELDON. It may be 999 years.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. You would enfranchise those in New Brunswick, who never had a land owners' property at all.

Mr. MILLS. The hon. gentleman laid down the rule this evening that a man's having property was no evidence of his fitness to vote.

Mr. TROW. I am quite sure that the hon. member for North Perth (Mr. Hesson) will, if this clause passes in its present shape, be deprived of scores of votes which were recorded for him last election. Many of these men have large and valuable farms from the Canada Company, or from the Crown, though many of them are indebted for balances on these lands.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I take it that those who voted for my hon. friend behind me (Mr. Hesson) last election will vote upon the same property next election. They voted last election under the Ontario Act, and these words are exactly as in the Ontario Act.

Some hon. MEMBERS. No, no.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Yes; exactly.

Mr. CHARLTON. I would point out to my hon. friend from South Perth (Mr. Trow) that he need not be alarmed for my hon. friend from North Perth (Mr. Hesson), as no doubt the revising barrister will make it all right.

On paragraph 13, "electoral district,"

Mr. WELDON. I would suggest that the word "parish" be inserted after the word "township."

Amendment agreed to.

On paragraph 17, "actual value," or "value,"

Mr. FISHER. I have put in your hands an amendment which I wish to lay before the committee. The actual value is here defined to be the present market value of any real property, if sold upon the ordinary terms of sale, and it is something which is to be determined by the revising officer. I wish to make an amendment, that the actual value means the value as shown by the assessment roll of the municipality in which the property lies. I think there is a very important difference between my amendment and the provision of the Bill as it stands, and I think it is a difference which is essentially in favor of the amendment I propose. The Bill, as it stands now, practically leaves in the hands of the revising officer the assessment of property upon which the various classes of voters will qualify as voters. It leaves practically in the complete control of the revising barrister the power to put anybody on the list or not. The amendment proposed does not affect in any way the business of the revising barrister, with regard to the various franchises which are not based upon property; but those franchises which are based upon property, I contend, should be based on the proper valuation of that property, as ascertained for purposes not connected with the electoral lists. The assessment roll, which I wish to take as the basis of the value of the property, upon which various classes of voters shall qualify, is made out for the purposes of municipal taxation, which affords a guarantee that the value fixed is the real and correct value of that property. The taxation of every owner in a municipality is based upon it, and he himself is interested in having the property correctly assessed; whereas, by this Bill, the assessment is left in the hands of an officer appointed by the Government, who has no direct interest in the correctness of the assessment, and whose hands are in no sense tied by the counterbalancing interest on the part of the elector. Under the municipal system, if an elector desires to be put on the voters' list, he asks the assessor, as I believe is sometimes the case, to assess his property sufficiently highly to qualify him to vote, and he has to pay a corresponding increase in his taxation; whereas, under this Bill, the elector may try to show to the revising barrister that his property ought to be assessed more highly than it is in the municipal assessment, and if he does so, he is not required on that account to pay any increased taxation to the municipality in which he lives. Under the municipal system, not only is the person interested in keeping his assessment at the correct value of the property, but every person in the municipality who elects the councillors who revise the assessment rolls is also interested; so that the assessment roll is pretty sure to indicate the correct value of the property in the municipality. I think, therefore, that if the revising barristers are obliged to base the voter's lists, over which they have so much power, on a valuation roll,