

subdivisions as deputy returning officers, which is also clothing him with great power. It is one of the difficulties of the Act, I admit, it is one of the difficulties of applying a federal law to a local Franchise Act, it is one of the difficulties that must stare hon. gentlemen opposite in the face. This is a tremendous power to put into the hands of a political nominee. Then, again, I do not think it would meet the case entirely. I will again appeal for corroboration to the Minister of Railways and Canals. He knows the constituency I represent almost as well as I do myself. Take, for instance, the parishes of Dundas and Wellington, large French parishes in the county of Kent. In those parishes a large number of the electors are of one name. Take, for instance, the Leblancs in the parish of Wellington. I do not say that half the electorate of that large parish are of that name, but a very large proportion of them are of that name. And so it is with a number of other family names in those parishes. I, therefore, think that this plan, even of subdividing the names alphabetically from A to E, from E to K, and so on, would not meet the case in such circumstances. I admit the difficulty in a case of this kind, but I must protest putting in the hands of the returning officer, nominated in the heat of an election strife from the ranks of the ruling political party, such tremendous powers as are here given him, and opening up the door to fraud on his part, as such machinery as this would necessarily do. It would be an extremely dangerous thing.

Mr. ELLIS. In the city of St. John we vote precisely in that way under the present law.

Mr. McINERNEY. Does the returning officer on the day of election appoint the deputy returning officers?

Mr. ELLIS. Take, for instance, Prince or Queen's Ward in the city of St. John, in which there are a large number of electors. The returning officer, not on the day of election but some days before, selects his deputies for all the various divisions of that ward. Then he provides them with all the necessary paraphernalia for carrying on the elections on the different lists. I vote in one particular place in my ward on the list of which I find my name. Another elector whose name appears alphabetically below mine, goes to another poll.

Mr. McINERNEY. The hon. gentleman does not see the difficulty we are now dealing with. That is all right, because a ward is divided into subdivisions, but it is not divided into subdivisions alphabetically, the alphabet is not divided up among wards.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. Yes, it is.

Mr. McINERNEY. I cannot agree with the hon. gentleman, that the whole list for each

subdivision is not an alphabetical list beginning with A and ending with Z. The hon. gentleman will not tell me that the alphabet from A to Z is divided into different parts or subdivisions. Take King's Ward, for instance. The elector whose name might begin with A would go to one poll, and in the same ward an elector whose name would begin with B, would necessarily have to go to another poll.

Mr. ELLIS. That is just what I told my hon. friend.

Mr. McINERNEY. I do not think that is the law.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. The mode of overcoming the difficulty which would necessarily arise where there is a larger number of names on the list than could possibly vote within the hours of polling at one poll, is a matter with which we in New Brunswick are very familiar. We have made provision for it exactly in the way in which this proposed amendment will make such provision. We are familiar with it, not only in our municipal and provincial elections, but also in our Dominion elections. I remember that in the city of St. John I voted at one polling booth because the initial letter of my name was such as it is; and another gentleman who lived alongside of me, whose name comes a little lower down in the alphabet, has a vote at another polling booth within the same polling division. I am speaking at this moment of Dominion elections.

With respect to local elections I do not recollect the particular circumstances. It is a very common practice in the county the hon. gentleman represents. We have found it necessary in one or two of the parishes, probably in two or three parishes more populous than others, to divide up the list exactly in the same way as is proposed in this Bill. I am quite at a loss to understand why the hon. gentleman thinks an opportunity will be afforded for fraud or wrong-doing. No one has suggested fraud or wrong-doing under the operation of our provincial Act. When this plan was devised in connection with the provincial election law, as it was under the provincial Act of 1891, no one suggested any possibility of wrong-doing occurring, and from that year down to the present day I have never heard of any returning officer of any of the districts doing wrong, either in omitting names or placing names on the lists that should not appear there. I think there is no foundation for the fears the hon. gentleman entertains. The amendment which he has prepared, but which he has not moved, would be found very faulty when it came to be worked out. He has not gone far enough to provide for conditions which will certainly arise and which are fundamental, which would, however, be fully dealt with in the clause submitted by the Solicitor General. This matter has not been entirely