

Province; but here I propose to take issue with them. It is quite true that even in so far as regards the real estate qualification it will have the effect of disfranchising a large number of persons in the Province of New Brunswick, who are considered farmers, but this is not the ground on which it is likely to do the greatest injury. There are in that Province a large number of persons who are engaged in the business of lumbering; many of these people have no real estate; some of them have homes, it is true, lots of land, which are of not very much value, yet they are possessed in most cases of a considerable amount of personal property, and many of them have their names on the revised lists in their Province, on account of the personal property qualification which obtains in the law existing in that Province. Every one of these, and they are not a few in my county, and in some other counties in New Brunswick, will be disfranchised under the operation of this Act. In a number of cases this class is confined to young men who reside during the summer with their parents on the farm. They spend the winter and a large portion of the spring in the business of lumbering. It might be said that they could avail themselves of the farmers' son clause. But I wish to point out to the right hon. the leader of the Government that this cannot be so, as they require to be absent from their homes more than the time allowed in the Bill, which is four months in the year, and in most cases they are absent for six or seven months. Therefore, a class of young men—and they are numerous all over the Province where lumbering is carried on—cannot avail themselves of the provisions of the Bill which gives the franchise to farmers' sons. Lumbering, next to farming, is the principal industry of the Province from which I come. It furnishes, as most gentlemen in this House are aware, four-fifths of the exports of that Province, and I think a Bill like this before the House, which, if it becomes law, must have the effect of disfranchising a large number of people who are engaged in the lumber business, is one that ought not to receive the assent of this House. It is true that numbers of persons who are put down as farmers in New Brunswick are living on farms which are not valued at more than \$100. I do not pretend to say that any farmer in New Brunswick can subsist and make a living for himself and his family on a farm which is valued at no more than \$100, but for a great portion of the year these people turn their attention to the business of lumbering, or some other occupation, and under this Bill they, too, will be deprived of the franchise. It is well known also to hon. gentlemen in this House that the shipping interest of the Maritime Provinces is a large and important interest. If you will turn to the report of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, you will find, I think, that in the Dominion of Canada about thirty-seven millions and a-half are invested in shipping. In New Brunswick alone, something like ten millions of dollars in round numbers is invested in shipping, and yet in this Bill I fail to find any provision by which the owner of vessel property in the Maritime Provinces or elsewhere has a right to vote or could be represented in this House. That is not so under the local laws which prevail in the Maritime Provinces, as the personal property provision gives to every vessel owner to the extent of \$400 the right to vote. By this Bill he is deprived of that right. Some gentlemen have said that the income derived from that property would entitle the vessel owner to a vote. I am not a lawyer, but, as I understand the law, such would not be the case. I will read the section which applies to the income franchise, sub-section 6 of section 4:

"Is a resident within such electoral district, and derives an income from some trade, office, calling or profession, or from some investment or charge on real property in Canada, of not less than four hundred dollars annually."

Mr. KING.

Now, I do not think, in that section which I have just read, any hon. gentleman on the other side of the House will be able to point out to me that the owner of vessel property anywhere in New Brunswick or Nova Scotia would be entitled to the franchise. What I am more particularly interested in, however, is not the large ship-owners, but a class of men who are owners or part owners of a smaller class of vessels, ranging from 100 tons downwards. Every year, on the lakes in my county, large numbers of that class of vessels are built by the farmers. In most cases they are owned and manned by the young men belonging to that section of country. They are employed during the season of navigation in carrying on the inland waters, on the lakes and rivers of the Province, and also in the coasting trade. Under our law, as it exists to day, in New Brunswick, every one of these young men, owning \$400 in a wood boat, schooner or coaster, would have the right to be placed on our revised list, and in many cases they do vote on that kind of property. Under the provisions of this Bill everyone of those men must be struck off this list. I ask why this discrimination? I ask why provision should be made to enfranchise the fishermen with a boat worth \$150, and to disfranchise the owner of a ship, the man who works in the lumber woods, or I might say the mechanic or the miner? Then again, in this case, it might be said that these young men who follow the business of coasting, as they reside for a portion of the year at their homes with their parents, could avail themselves of the provision for the farmer's son, but here again a difficulty arises, as they require to be absent for at least seven or eight months in the year. Therefore, unless that is changed, they cannot avail themselves of that provision of the Act. I think it is very unfair to that class of men. I do not complain of the advantages which are likely to be afforded under this Bill to the fishermen. I think, perhaps, it is a step in the right direction. At all events, I have no disposition to find fault with it, but I would like to call the attention of hon. gentlemen to it. I will read the section:

"Is a fisherman, and is the owner of real property, and boats and tackle within any such electoral district, which together are of the actual value of \$150."

Now, it does appear to me that, so far as the real property is concerned, it is a mere myth. I have no doubt that I could go to the county of Charlotte and buy 100 acres of rocks for \$100, and lay that off in lots of a quarter of an acre each, deed it to 400 fishermen, and qualify them, as far as the real property was concerned, for 25 cents each. Then, if each of them owned boats and tackle of the value of \$149.75, they could be placed on the revised list. I think I can claim, notwithstanding the words "real property" are in that section, it is practically retaining in the interest of the fishermen, and of the fishermen alone, the personal property qualification which, under the present law, applies to others in the Province of New Brunswick. I think that is unfair. I am quite sure that the lumbermen and the vessel owners of New Brunswick, so far as they are affected by this Bill, will readily come to the conclusion—unless some change is made, that it is an attempt to stifle the expression of the opinion of these people at the polls. It is a well known fact that the policy of hon. gentlemen opposite bears more heavily on these people in the Maritime Provinces than on any other class of people there. I do not understand why they should be singled out to be disfranchised. They are not dependent upon this Government for bounties, and I cannot see, for the life of me, why a Micmac Indian in the Maritime Provinces, with his scoop net, his spear, and his dugout, is to count for more than a vessel-owner or lumberman. I have shown to the House that in the words of the First Minister this Franchise Bill is no increase, only a readjustment at the best. With regard to the appointment of revising barristers, I would like to make a suggestion that would