ment should have control of its own franchise. The design in this respect of the fathers of confederation in arranging the constitution of this Dominion was a most wise and beneficient one. I cannot help thinking that the right hon. gentleman who leads the House skipped lightly over that chapter of history to which he referred when he endeavoured to draw a comparison between the constitutions of Canada and the United States respectively. He said that the constitution under our system is analogous to that of the republic to the south of us. Nothing of the kind. The organizations are distinct and very dissimilar. As was abundantly shown by the hon. member for Brockville (Mr. Wood), the system which now obtains in the United States and has obtained since the constitutional convention of 1787 was a scheme of compromise that was evolved between the two conflicting parties in the union. If we look back at the history of the constitutional convention, which took place after the sitting of the so-called Continental Congress, and in which such men as Randolph, Read, Morris and Hamilton, and other great men took part, we shall see that the conclusion arrived at on this subject was a matter of compromise. It was held by several of these great men that the representation of the states in Congress should be regulated in the same manner as in the Senate, while others held that representatives of the different states should be elected on a franchise to be laid down by Congress itself. It was in order to reach an agreement that it was concluded then, and the system has obtained from that day, that all members from the House of Representatives should be elected upon a state franchise. But when our Act of confederation was drawn up, it was laid down that the franchise for the selection of members of this House should be controlled by the Federal Parliament itself. And this was for the purpose and with the design of strengthening the Federal authority. Now, it is tolerably clear that there is a very wide difference between the constitution of the United States in this regard and that of the Canadian confederation. The argument, therefore, made use of by the leader of the Government does not apply in the slightest degree, because the cases are not analogous but distinctly and emphatically dissimilar. The 41st section of the British North America Act reads as follows :—

Until the Parliament of Canada otherwise provides, all laws in force in the several provinces at the union relative to the following matters, or any of them, namely :—The qualifications and disqualifications of persons to be elected or to sit or vote as members of the House of Assembly or Legislative Assembly in the several provinces, the voters at elections of such members, the oaths to be taken by voters, the returning officers, their powers and duties, the proceedings at elections, the periods during which elections may be continued, the trial of controverted elections and proceedings incident thereto, the vacating of seats of members, and the execution of new writs, in case of seats vacated otherwise than by dissolution—shall respectfully apply to elections of members to serve in the House of Commons for the same several provinces.

The fathers of confederation could not do otherwise. They simply adopted the franchise of the several provinces as a basis for the election of the first House of Commons, and that was to apply to the election of all subsequent Houses until the House of Commons itself in its wisdom and by the exercise of its constitutional right, powers and functions, adopted another law under which its members should be elected. The explicit meaning of this Act is, that the House of Commons should regulate the franchise under which its members are elected. Acting upon that idea, the House of Commons did, in 1885, enact the law which it is now sought to repeal. That Act has some faults, no doubt ; it is cumbersome and expensive ; I readily admit these two defects. But, with these defects, it has merits, merits that should commend it to the members of this House. At all events, it has the merit of uniformity, and that should be fundamental in any law passed by this House regulating the franchise. It has also the merit of impartiality. Some hon. gentlemen may be inclined to smile at the statement that the law is impartial ; but I venture to assert that there is no hon. gentleman in this House who will rise in his place and state a single instance where partiality has been shown in any constituency in this Dominion from the time the first revision was made, in 1886, down to the present day. Hon. gentlemen say that they have heard of cases of partiality, but we never heard of any single case having been formulated, much less proved, where a revising officer in any part of the Dominion had acted with partiality. Why, these officers were impartial, good reasons may be assigned. They were judges of the land in one case, or they were revising barristers in the other, barristers of high standing in the community in which they were appointed to act. They were sworn into office ; they were not removable except by the House of Commons ; they were not officers of the Government but officers of the Parliament of Canada, and therefore were only removable by the House of Commons. They were incapable of being elected to the House of Commons of Canada for two years after they had resigned or vacated office. In that respect, the law was more stringent with respect to them than it is towards the judges themselves. A judge may leave the bench to-day and come into the House of Commons to-morrow, but a revising barrister cannot come into the House of Commons, or into any legislative assembly of a province, nor can he be a candidate for any Parliament for two years after he ceases to