

the most unfair character, and most obstructive in regard to the good regulation of an election, simply on account of one word. I agree with the honourable senator from Hamilton that everybody in Canada is not a scoundrel or a felon; but the law can make him one officially. This law says that the enumerator or reviser, whoever he may be, will only have the voters' list completed fifteen days before polling day, and that it cannot be interfered with—cannot be changed, added to or subtracted from—until six o'clock on the morning of the polling day.

Now, members of this House who have gone through elections know that in the days of Sir John Macdonald or Alexander Mackenzie the first thing we used to do when an election was announced was to run to the returning officer and get all the copies of the voters' list we could, and that would be forty or sixty days before the polling day. The Government at that time was good enough to give us those copies at ten cents each. But in the elections under this Bill the list will not be ready till fifteen days before polling day. Have you stopped to think what is going to happen? Remember, it is not everybody who can get a copy of the list. According to this Bill a copy will be sent to the candidate, and another is to be posted up. But does the Government think there are many small pocket boroughs about a mile and a half or three-quarters of a mile square? Is the Government not aware that out of the 235 or 240 constituencies in the next election there will be at least a hundred covering from fifty to one hundred miles in length and the same in depth, while there are some counties over 500 miles long and 300 deep? How is a candidate or a revising officer to get around there in the fifteen days before polling? And the candidate is not sure that at six o'clock on election morning the entire list is not changed; he has no guarantee. The enumerator can change the list up to six o'clock that morning. Go over to Germany and ask the Kaiser if he has anything to do like that. He would be glad to see you on a mission of that kind; he would be getting lessons from you. I do not ask the leader of the Government to go, for he would be too honest; but let some of his colleagues go—the Secretary of State, for instance, who concocted this scheme; let him go over and ask the Kaiser if that is good legislation for a free and independent people—to have candidates travel 300 or 400 miles, and some of them in boats.

Hon. Mr. CLORAN.

The more you look at this Bill the more disgusting it is to a man who loves his country and wants to see it free and well governed. It breaks my heart; that is what it does. I have no interest in this election; but I love my country, and when I use such words, people like those on the other side of this House, who have no heart, sneer at the remark; all they care for is the petty little triumph at an election. I am looking to guard the honour of my country, and I am contrasting the action of the Government with that of the Kaiser in Germany, and I find the action of the Kaiser more acceptable than that of this present Government.

Now, I ask the honourable leader of the Government to suggest to the Secretary of State to strike out the word "fifteen" in two or three clauses and put in "forty" at least. If I had my way and were Secretary of State, I would give the people and the candidates a chance by providing that the list should be revised and completed sixty days before the polling day. I would also strike out the words stating that the lists can be changed and added to and taken from up to six o'clock on the morning of the polling day. Just imagine a candidate at an election who has fifty, sixty or seventy polling subdivisions; how can he be in the whole seventy at one time to see that the list is not interfered with before the polling is opened? Can you not see that that is unfair? It is unfair not only to the candidate on the Liberal side, but more especially to the Laborites and to your dear friends, the Bourassa outfit, the Nationalists. I am considering the independent candidates as well as the Liberal candidates. Do you not think that this legislation is unfair, unrighteous and unjust? On its face it is. I therefore suggest to the Secretary of State that he strike out that word "fifteen," and I will split the difference and make it forty days before the polling that the list is to be closed, and not open to every Tom, Dick and Harry to interfere with it before polling day. What is the use of a candidate running an election if he is not sure of the names of the men on the list? I put that to any honourable gentleman on the other side who has been a candidate in elections. How can a candidate leave his home and drive ten, fifteen or twenty miles when he is not sure that the men to whom he is to speak on that night will be on the voters' list? That is not fair to the people or to the candidate, who may have to cover thirty or forty parishes.