

chise Act. The Minister of the Interior would be able to explain just what the character of the preparation was. I can assure the minister that to have an amending Bill placed in the hands of members in the form in which the amendments to the Dominion Land Act were prepared would save an enormous amount of time and discussion, and give the members full information in regard to the changes that are being made.

Mr. MICHAUD: In the province of New Brunswick the local custodian of the lists is the secretary-treasurer of the county, and at every provincial election he is called upon to deliver the voters' lists to the returning officer, and on declaration day the returning officer makes a parcel of all these lists and sends them to the Provincial Secretary. We had a provincial election in New Brunswick in the month of February last, and the lists of 1917, which were prepared in 1916, are no longer in the hands of the Provincial Secretary. All that he could give to the enumerator under this Bill would be a copy of those lists. But if that would be satisfactory to the enumerator, well and good.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The lists are now filed with the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery, and have become the official lists.

Mr. MICHAUD: And the enumerator could get them from the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Oh, yes. Answering the hon. member for Haldimand, if his suggestion were carried out and the provisions of the western provinces were applied to the province of Ontario, and that would mean making a new list from the ground up, using the old list as a basis only. I fear there would be no justification for that in the province of Ontario. Even if the present law were applied without any new Act at all, it would mean the adoption of the very same lists and the consequences of that adoption. As to the printing of this Bill it seems to me it would not be impossible to have the amendments in italics, and I will endeavour to have that done.

Mr. McCRANEY: Is my understanding of the matter correct, that the principle of the tied ballot has been taken from the present law of Alberta, or has it been repealed?

Mr. MEIGHEN: My understanding is not the same as that of the hon. member for Edmonton. I have not looked at the statute, but my information—and it comes from one

who certainly ought to know—is that the tied ballot exists in provincial elections in Alberta to-day. We have the same principle here, although much enlarged and improved. In Alberta all they can do is to vote on oath, and if they vote on oath that ballot is tied. They cannot challenge a vote, tie the ballot and have it submitted to a judge. We allow that here. In Alberta all that is done with a tied ballot is that some Justice of the Peace tries the case the next day, or within a few days. We subject it to a judge.

Mr. McCRANEY: I have not had any experience of the tied ballot since the provincial election of 1905, and my recollections of it may be somewhat at fault, but in Saskatchewan we had the same provision at that time, I suppose, as they had in Alberta, because both elections were being run under the same law. My recollection of it is that any person challenged would have his ballot put in an envelope and it would be laid on one side as a tied ballot. Before the voter left the polling booth he would be handed an appointment by the deputy returning officer naming an hour within a couple of days when he was to appear before one of two Justices of the peace, near the place of polling, and the right of the voter would then be tried out. I understand from what the Secretary of State says that while this law introduces the tied ballot there is no local tribunal and everything is held up pending a recount. I attended some local tribunals in connection with the elections of 1905. There are always a number of votes tied up, but these cases are very often quickly settled to the satisfaction of all parties before a Justice of the Peace, without any need for referring them to a judge. That is to say, the fact that there is the right of examination and of investigation will obviate the necessity of taking an appeal from the local tribunals to the judge. At the last election I had a county 130 miles long and 60 miles wide, with 147 polling places, and nearly 10,000 votes were cast. Under such a system as this Bill provides it would surprise me very much if there were not at least ten per cent of the ballots tied up. The very cumbrous machinery which makes it so difficult for a person whose ballot is tied, and who lives sixty or seventy miles away from a judicial centre, is a great inducement to an opponent to tie up a vote. If there was a local tribunal where both sides could get information, it would settle a great deal of that. I do not like these tied ballots at all, and