

fact ; that instead of this being an anomalous state of things, if the amendment of the hon. gentleman were adopted it would introduce an anomaly. The franchise throughout the Dominion was regulated by the Local Legislatures, and every one who had a right to vote for members of the legislature in the several Provinces, had the right to vote for members of the House of Commons. In the Province of Nova Scotia it happened that the employees on the Government railway had not a right to vote since 1871. They had not the right when the seats were redistributed in 1872, and it was most extraordinary that the Minister of Justice should single out these few scores of men to make them an exception to the rule which prevails all over the Dominion ; it was highly improper and objectionable. The hon. gentleman had stated that the tendency in England was to take off restrictions and allow Government employees to vote, but the position of public servants there was very different from that of Government officials here. The Customs officials of England get their positions by competitive examinations, and politics have nothing to do with their appointments. But on the Intercolonial Railway every employee, however humble his position might be, was appointed because of his politics, and if this amendment were adopted we would see in the coming elections what was witnessed years ago—numbers of employees being brought up in a solid body to vote for the ministerial candidate.

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL said things had been altered under the present regime. No doubt as matters stood during the time of the late Government appointments were made for political purposes solely.

HON. MR. POWER said that he spoke of the condition of affairs before 1871.

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL said as matters stood now, these persons were appointed on their merits. The anomaly was very striking, that on one side of the provincial boundary railway employees could vote, while on the other side they could not, and he was sure the hon. gentleman would not press his objection.

HON. MR. POWER—I shall certainly.

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL—Suppose it was a case of a post office, and on one side of the line a postmaster could vote and on the other side he could not.

HON. MR. POWER—That is a reason for enacting a uniform election law for the whole Dominion.

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL—I dare say that would be a good plan.

HON. MR. MCKAY was a little astonished at the objection raised by the hon. member for Halifax. In 1871 these employees on the railway were disqualified by a local act, but there was open voting then. Not long ago they unanimously petitioned the Local Legislature to repeal that Act. The Legislative Assembly passed a repealing Bill, but when it went to the Legislative Council it was defeated by a majority of only two votes. This showed that public opinion was in favor of putting these men on an equal footing with other people. At present they were no better than Indians. A Government official might own any amount of property in Nova Scotia, and yet he would not have the right to vote for a candidate for Parliament. He failed to see why this clause should not be adopted, and he hoped the Government would not withdraw it.

The amendment was declared lost on a division.

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL moved an amendment to place Muskoka in the same position as other counties of Ontario. He explained that railways recently constructed remove Muskoka from its former exceptional position, and it is as accessible now as other parts of the country. There was no reason, therefore, to leave it in its present exceptional state, and the amendment was to provide that elections should take place there at the same time as in other parts of the Province.

The amendment was adopted.

HON. MR. RYAN, from the committee, reported the Bill with the amendments, which were concurred in.