

titled to be placed thereon, nor have I, in order to deprive any person of a right of voting, omitted from column 4 opposite the name of such person, any letter or letters which I ought to have placed there.

The assessor signs the affidavit that he has done what the law required of him, and he has to take the oath of office. I have been astonished to hear the charges made in this debate. No less than four hon. gentlemen have declared that the assessment rolls were stuffed in the province of Ontario. The hon. member for Halton said that the only qualification for an assessor was that he should be a man who would stuff the assessment with names that ought not to be there and keep out names that ought to be there.

Mr. HENDERSON. I beg the hon. gentleman's pardon. I never used those words.

Mr. McMILLAN. I have been in municipal life in Ontario for over thirty years and have never yet known an assessor who wilfully stuffed the assessment rolls. But I have no doubt that those hon. gentlemen who make these charges would, if they had the appointment of the assessors, only name those who would stuff the lists. I have never known an assessor to do anything of the kind. I have always found them intelligent men, sometimes with not as much experience as they ought to have, but always willing and anxious to make as correct a roll as the circumstances and their experience would allow. I have known assessors who have held the office for fifteen or twenty years, during which time the political complexion of the councils have frequently changed from the Reform to Conservative, and vice versa; and when the court of revision sits, every elector has a right to appeal against the amount of his assessment. Names must necessarily be omitted, in the cases of young men who have not yet completed their twenty-first year. The assessor begins on the 15th of February to make his roll, and must finish before the 1st of May. Many young men who are not placed on the roll by the assessor because they had not reached their majority, are put on the roll by the judge revising the list, because at the time of revision they were within sixty days of their majority.

Mr. CLANCY. Does that class of voters, those within sixty days of their coming of age, apply to the Ontario elections?

Mr. McMILLAN. Yes, if they are within sixty days of the time of their majority when the judge is revising the list, it is his duty to place them upon the list.

Mr. CLANCY. The hon. gentleman had better read the Act before he makes a statement of the kind.

Mr. McMILLAN. I have read the Act to-day carefully and have read it before to-day. Hon. gentlemen opposite have de-

cried the assessment rolls and municipal councils, but I would ask them what they would take as the foundation of the voters' lists, even under a Dominion Franchise Act, if they were to throw aside the assessment roll. Is there any class of men in Ontario, or in any other province, so capable of making correct lists as the assessors and the township clerks. As regards the extra expense for payment of the township clerk, there is no extra expense in the municipalities, whose councils understand their business, because a municipal council has a perfect right to make a by-law, when appointing a clerk, that he shall receive no extra remuneration for revising the lists or serving the notices. This will not only keep down the expense, but make the clerk very careful, because if any extra labour is involved, through his making incorrect lists, the expense falls upon himself. There is no body of men who can make more correct voters' lists, and they are independent of the local legislature. The township council is perfectly independent of the local legislature, and so is the assessor appointed by it, and so is the township clerk. In the revision of the lists, under the present law, the judge, in most cases, employs the township clerk as revising officer for the time being, so that in reality the very same individual who revises the provincial lists also revises the Dominion lists. The people of every township municipality have it in their own hands to see that the assessors do their duty. I was twelve years at the head of one municipality, the lists were carefully revised every year, and we never had the judge in the township but once.

As regards the statement that it cost \$200 to pay the judge to revise the lists in the county of Huron, there are fifteen rural and ten urban municipalities in that county, or twenty-five altogether, which makes only a little over \$8 each municipality had to pay the judge and the constable and the other expenses of revising these lists. That is a long way short of what it cost to revise the list under the Dominion Elections Act. Under that Act, it never cost a riding less than \$700 for the expenses of the judge and the other expenses in the revising of the lists.

Mr. BENNETT. I always like to hear the fervid indignation of the hon. member for Huron (Mr. McMillan). He is always indignant at any imputation on the good faith of his own party, and yet the hon. gentleman comes from a riding which—be it stated to its discredit—is the only county in Ontario where they have absolutely gone to work and cut up the townships in order to gerrymander their political opponents. Why, the hon. gentleman of all men in this House, should never assume an air of virtuous indignation.

Mr. MACDONALD (Huron). How many townships were cut up?