

qualified to exercise the franchise, and if you leave it to the option of the Indian you may secure the most intelligent and advanced of them, and you would not have the evil in our midst that the ignorant, uneducated, semi-civilised Indian, who is possessed of \$150 worth of property, shall all at once be elevated to the right of exercising the franchise. Therefore, I think the process of selection should be in the hands of the Indians themselves. I do think it is a reasonable proposition, and one that ought to be accepted by the First Minister. He has given me no reason for refusing to accept it, except the one that it is drawing an invidious distinction; but he will remember that it is not my resolution but the Indian Act that makes the invidious distinction; and if he asks his supporters to vote my amendment down he should devise some plan to obviate the difficulty, else I shall not promise not to try to draft some other proposition to obviate it. But the question ought to be dealt with in some way, for it seems to me that it is not proper to leave with the Indian agent the power to have what Indians he likes put on the list of voters.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Under the Bill, as it now stands, the Indian and the wage-earner are exactly on the same footing. There is no clause in the Bill stating that the wage-earner must go personally to the revising officer and ask that his vote be put on.

Mr. PATERSON (Brant). He is not under control.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The hon. gentleman said they should be put on the same footing; I say they are on the same footing now, and in making a change they will be on a different footing. I take it that under the reading of the Bill the revising officer will put on all those he finds on the assessment roll as having a *prima facie* right to vote. Those who are not on the roll must come forward and have their names put on, whether they be wage-earners or Indians. That is not especially provided in the Act, but it is necessarily intended, and it would be drawing quite a distinction between the wage-earner who happened to be a white man and the wage-earner who happened to be an Indian to say that the latter must come forward personally, when we do not say that in respect to the former. Both stand on exactly the same footing; and as for the agent coming forward and putting on all the names, that is absurd; the agent will not do anything of the kind. And in case anything of that kind should be attempted, I have no objection to its being prevented. I have already said that on first impression I agreed to the motion in amendment, which was suggested by the hon. member for North York (Mr. Mulock), that the agent who, directly or indirectly, interfered with the Indian voters, would be committing a misdemeanor, punishable by loss of office and fine or imprisonment. I have no objections to preventing the agent, directly or indirectly, interfering with the request of an Indian to put his name on the voters' list, but what I object to is that the Indian must personally come forward and swear to his right to vote when the wage-earner is not put on the same footing.

Mr. MILLS. The hon. gentleman will see that there is a difference between the two.

Mr. PATERSON (Brant). You do not recognise the difference in position.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I do not think there is a substantial difference.

Mr. MILLS. The white man who owns property has to give a description of the property upon which he qualifies. There is the concession, the number of the lot, and other descriptions. What do you propose to do with the Indian property, in order to describe it with such exactness that it may be identified? You know his name, but the Indian name is unfamiliar; you cannot tell one from another by

Mr. PATERSON (Brant).

name, unless you know the Indian tongue. How will you know whether the Indian on the voters' list owns any property or not? The Indian, in that respect, does not stand in the same position as the Indian who is assessed on income. My impression is, that there will not be any such, perhaps not a dozen, in the entire Dominion. The Indian, the ward of the Government, dependent on it for a large portion of his means of subsistence, is not in the same position as the ordinary wage-earner. If the hon. gentleman will meet the case I have mentioned, and give such a description of the property as to enable us to identify it, he will do much more than he is doing now.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I am not going to enter into that discussion again; we have had it *ad nauseam*. With regard to the hon. gentleman's statement, which is erroneous, that the wage-earner is obliged to go and put in his vote, and that the Indian's name shall be put on the list, whether he likes it or not, there is no such proposition in the Act. They stand in the same position. As to the argument how the land is to be identified, the provision is that the Indian must be in possession and occupation of a separate and distinct tract of land. If the hon. gentleman will look at the original clause giving the franchise he will find that the property must be described in the voters' list by lot, concession, and so forth, or other available description. It must be so described that it can be identified. Those words were put in advisedly, because in large portions of the Dominion there are no lots and concessions, but an available description can always be got, and the revising officers will have to see that such description is given.

Amendment negatived. Yeas, 41; nays, 36.

On section 52,

Mr. LANGELEIR. I would suggest that in the Province of Quebec the bailiffs of the Superior Court should be entrusted with these duties.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I think the revising officer, who is responsible for all this work, should have the selection of his own officers, as returning officers have now.

Mr. LANGELEIR. Where will the list of the notices of objections be kept? The revising officer might come from a city 60 or 80 miles distant from his district, and it would be exceedingly inconvenient if those interested had to go to his place of residence to see the objections. The notices of objections, or a copy of them, might be kept in the same place in which the list is deposited.

Mr. MILLS. Is it intended that the revising officer shall, until the list is finally revised, have an office within the electoral district? If not, the list ought to be kept at the office of the county judge in the nearest county town.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I propose to go back to clause 51, and amend it in this way:

The revising officer shall appoint as his clerk a person residing in the electoral district.

Mr. SPROULE. How would it be if it was a judge, and he was attending to two or three electoral districts? In my county there are three electoral districts, and I have no doubt one judge will attend to the three.

Mr. MILLS. Then he would have three clerks.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I think he should have a clerk in each electoral district.

Amendment agreed to.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Now we can amend section 54. I move the following:—