

son. We take a broader view than did Sir John Thompson. The view we take on this question, as on many others, is that a settlement is to be made not on the floor of this House but in every province where, according to the education of the Indians, the legislature thinks the Indians should or should not be entitled to the franchise. There are certain provinces where that may be; there are other provinces clearly where it could not be. Still the hon. gentleman wants us to have a uniform system on that subject. The arrangement proposed shows the position we have taken, that the question is to be considered by the provincial legislatures. I do not want to go out of the records and I have only one remark to make to the hon. gentleman on this point. Should this duty devolve on the provincial legislature or on the Dominion Parliament? Let me recall to the hon. gentleman's mind, because he seems to forget these matters very readily, that for the first nineteen years of confederation, this Parliament was elected on lists prepared by the local legislatures. Let me recall further that there were no complaints made at that time against that system. Let me recall again that under the system of the Dominion Franchise Act passed in 1885, there was not a year but there were complaints and grievous complaints in regard to that matter. I ask my hon. friend this question: Is it not the fact that if this Franchise Act is not passed during this session we shall be obliged to have a revision of the Dominion lists. There is not an hon. member who would not look with absolute terror on the prospect that in July he would have to meet the worry and expense of a revision of the lists. If hon. gentlemen opposite have a better system to propose, let them offer it; but as between a Dominion and provincial franchise, as between a Dominion list and provincial lists, there can be no hesitation, because we have had for nineteen years a provincial list and provincial franchise.

Mr. MILLS. The right hon. First Minister has told the House that we had, previous to 1885 a law giving the control of the franchise to the different provinces, and that there was no complaint and no cause for complaint. On that ground I differ entirely from the leader of the House. There was a great cause of complaint, and it existed in the province of Nova Scotia, where men were disfranchised from voting at the local elections. Their names were struck from the local lists and being so disfranchised they could not vote at elections for members of this Parliament. That matter was before this House in 1882. It was a cause of complaint then, and that was before the Franchise Act of 1885. It was such a serious cause of complaint at that time that this Parliament passed an Act providing that the electors who were struck off the lists in Nova Scotia by the iniquitous Act of 1871

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should be restored to the voting power, and they were restored by a special Act, incorporated in a measure that was being passed through the House in 1882.

The Act of 1882 was introduced by the Right Hon. Sir John Macdonald, and after passing through this House it went to the Senate. It was amended by the Senate because it was brought to the ear of the Senate that some of the people of Nova Scotia who were disfranchised were—to use the words of the right hon. leader of this House—educated enough to vote intelligently for a member of this Parliament. The Senate amended the Act passed through this House in such a manner as to enable those who were disfranchised in Nova Scotia to vote at the federal elections that were about to take place. The right hon. the Premier is therefore incorrect in saying that previous to 1885 there was no complaint of the manner in which the provincial franchises were regulated. I have heard that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) was proud of the work done in Nova Scotia disqualifying these men. He is now, however, endeavouring to shuffle the responsibility for these disqualifications on to the shoulders of other parties, but I tell the House that he cannot by any means get rid of the responsibility for that most infamous and most iniquitous Act.

An hon. MEMBER. Hear, hear.

Mr. MILLS. I am glad that what I say is meeting with the approbation of the hon. member for Inverness (Mr. McLennan). I know it would have had his approbation at one time in his political existence, and though he may have turned his coat in the meantime, yet he may have some solid and substantial reasons for so doing. If the responsibility for maintaining this Franchise Act on the statutes of Nova Scotia rests upon any person in this House, it rests upon the Minister of Finance. He was not a legislator in 1871, to be sure, but he was in a hot-bed of secession, and in a hot-bed of repeal at that time, and it was the hot-bed of secession and the hot-bed of repeal that gave vitality to that Act disfranchising a section of the community in Nova Scotia. It was the hot-bed of secession, it was the hot-bed of repeal, it was the hot-bed of anti-federalism, that caused that Act to be retained, as it is retained to-day in that province. The question was asked in this House, whether the fourth section of the Act of 1871 is still in force in Nova Scotia? I say that it is in force, and that it prohibits those voters not only from voting at an election, but it prohibits their names from being placed upon the list. The occurrences in this House this afternoon are a strong argument in favour of having a man of a trained legal mind to act as reviser, for even the lawyers in this House are at variance as to the correct interpretation of the Nova Scotia franchise law. We