

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. They even manufactured ballot boxes.

Mr. BARKER. I am dealing with this fact that it has been found necessary even in the moral provinces of Quebec and Ontario—assuming they are more moral than the Northwest Territories, a point which I would not like to argue—it has been found necessary to curtail the authority of such officers so that they can give two certificates, whereas in the Territories there is no restriction whatever. It is especially important to have such restriction in a territory because in an old settled province men who act as agents for candidates are generally pretty well known, but in a territory in a sparsely settled country, an agent may go to a poll 100 miles from his home where nobody knows him; he may be enabled to vote although he may have no right to vote; his name is not on the list at the poll where he votes, he has simply the certificate of an enumerator. No one knows who he is and no precaution is of any effect, provided the accommodating agent is willing to take the oath. I protest, and I am sure the Minister of Justice will agree, that such a practise should not be continued for one hour, and that as we are dealing with this subject we should not allow it even until the provincial authorities choose to alter it. We should put a stop to it, and I ask the Minister of Justice to consider that question and make an alteration in the law.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Would my hon. friend suggest what change I should make?

Mr. BARKER. For one thing I should suggest the insertion of the limitation that exists in our own Dominion Election Acts, that there should be not more than two certificates at any one poll granted for each candidate. And why should we not go further and make provision so that a candidate wanting a certificate for his agents should know where to find the enumerator. It was proposed that the enumerator should post a notice stating where he could be found for a certain number of hours daily previous to the election so that candidates who want him for any purpose may know where he is to be found. As the law stands it is said a candidate friendly to the enumerator can get all the certificates he wants, wholesale, even signed in blank, while the candidate of the opposing party does not know where to find an enumerator and is not able to get any certificates.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. I understand the suggestion to allow clause 6 to remain as it is, but to amend the Northwest Representation Act on the line suggested by the hon. ex-member for Montmorency (Mr. Casgrain) last session.

Mr. BARKER. Practically.

Mr. BARKER.

Mr. TURRIFF. I think the information of the hon. member for Hamilton (Mr. Barker) is not exactly correct. In the first place the enumerator cannot give a certificate to any one who is not a properly qualified voter and his name is on the list of electors and he can only give the certificate for an agent and that man can only act as an agent at any other poll if he has also a certificate as agent from one or other of the candidates and he cannot vote even then if he is not entitled to vote because if they have any doubt of his being entitled to vote or if he is not known either one of the candidates, or his representative is certain to have him sworn.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. Does that count up there?

Mr. TURRIFF. So that he cannot vote unless he is entitled to do so. No doubt there are some objections to the Act, but there is also this to be said that no man who is entitled to vote can be prevented from voting because if his name is not on the list he can appear at the polling division on election day and by there making an affidavit that he is entitled to vote he can put his vote in. There was a serious objection to the Act some years ago because prior to 1896 if the enumerator failed to put a voter's name on the list he could not vote at all, but the Act was amended in 1896 or 1897, providing that if a voter's name is not on the list he could vote in the way I have mentioned. I quite agree with the suggestion that it would be much better, if it could be done, to provide that only two certificates should be given for each subdivision, but I want to say further that during the election last year, in my district at all events, I did not hear one complaint of any enumerator refusing to give certificates to the opposing candidate. I never heard a complaint from one end of the contest to the other in that respect.

Mr. LALOR. Perhaps it was the other fellow that heard these complaints.

Mr. TURRIFF. I think if there had been any complaints we would have heard them on the platform at some time during the contest.

Mr. LAKE. I am afraid that what the hon. member for East Assiniboia (Mr. Turriff) says does not cover the fact which I believe took place in the recent election that enumerators did issue certificates in blank, and a large number of certificates in blank, and they were placed in the hands of the friends of the party by whom the enumerator had been selected. But leaving that aside, his argument still does not cover the point raised by the hon. member for Calgary (Mr. M. S. McCarthy) who pointed out that the oath itself was of such a nature that a man could go into any district without any certificate whatever and swear himself on to the list in that particular polling division.