

as this were, according to Parliamentary practice, dealt with by the Government alone and never introduced in such an under-hand way.

Hon. Mr. McKELLAR said that as the hon. gentleman had referred to him (Mr. McKellar), and more especially as the person who had circulated those pamphlets, he was free to acknowledge that he had been instrumental in their circulation.

Mr. RYKERT—Were they prepared in your office?

Hon. Mr. McKELLAR—No, in England.

Mr. RYKERT—Was the Bill prepared in your office?

Hon. Mr. McKELLAR replied that it was not. He had not even read the Bill, and he did not see it until it was printed. Nor did he know at the time the papers, to which reference had been made, were being prepared and printed, that his hon. friend from Wellington intended to introduce a Bill upon the subject. The observations he intended to make would be made entirely upon his own responsibility. The question was one of vast importance. It was one which had not been considered by the Government, and he did not know what were the views of his colleagues upon it, and whatever views he expressed would be entirely his own. He was free to confess that he was wedded to the system of the ballot. (Hear, hear.) With the view of obtaining information as to its working in other parts of the world, he sent to Ottawa during the summer and got copies of the correspondence that had taken place between the Home Government and the Australian Colonies. He was so much pleased with the correspondence that he thought it would be proper to have it printed and placed in the hands of the members and the press of the country. He had not the slightest doubt that they had been instrumental in deciding gentlemen, in the House and out of it, upon the question and in its favour. The hon. gentleman for North York had stated that there was no feeling in the country in

favour of such a measure. He (Mr. McKellar) dissented from that view. During the last summer he did a good deal of canvassing upon the question. He believed he was in eight or nine of the largest counties of the Province, and in alluding to the corruptions practised at elections, he referred to the ballot as one of the remedies, and he never alluded to the ballot without receiving a hearty response from the large meetings. He was quite prepared to say that the people were quite ready to receive the Bill. He agreed with the remark that they should devise every possible means for the securing of a proper exercise of the franchise and of placing voters in such a position as would enable them to vote without fear or favour. It was well known that intimidation was used, and that the Bill had become a greater necessity in consequence of the establishment of manufactories in the country where large numbers of men are employed by one or two men who could coerce them. There were Railway Companies who employed large numbers of men, and they know as a positive fact that an undue influence was used to control their votes. It had been found that the working of the machinery in other countries where it had been in operation, and in our own colonies, had been satisfactory. He, however, thought a measure of that kind should be introduced by the Government, and he hoped that after the sense of the House had been taken upon the question, his hon. friend would leave it for the consideration of the Government, who would entertain the subject, and, he hoped, at no very distant period introduce a bill perhaps not the same in detail but involving the same principle. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. CAMERON said he was not in favour of the principle of the ballot. He did not think it was needed here, and he did not think it would do away with corruption. The reason there were fewer elections upset under the ballot was because it was more difficult to detect bribery and corruption under the ballot system than under the open voting system. He read an extract from the report of the Governor of New South Wales, in which he stated that he did not believe the ballot would diminish bribery. Also from the report of the Governor of South Australia, favourable to the ballot. The Governor of Queensland wrote that the system had the effect of preserving order, nothing more. In this country, however, it was very rarely that there was any disturbance at the polls and therefore the ballot was not necessary on that account. He thought the most manly course was for an elector to record his vote publicly. The plan of secret voting under our system would be extremely dangerous. Men who were not entitled to vote were put on the assessment roll, and this was done

much more extensively by Reformers than by Conservatives, though he admitted it had been done by Conservatives. He referred to a township in Peel where that was done.

Hon. Mr. PARDEE—How many voted in Renfrew who had no right to?

Mr. CAMERON said he knew nothing about it. Whether any persons voted who were not entitled to vote remained to be proved. He went on to argue that under the ballot the returning-officers who were partizans might change the votes of illiterate people. The ballot, he believed, would never prevent corruption. Corruption would never cease until every elector should be compelled to vote and to take the oath, and until every candidate be compelled to take an oath that he will not bribe, until he is prevented from having organized committees, and from holding any communication with the electors except by speaking or writing, until secret canvassing was prohibited—until then they could not prevent corruption. If a man took a sum of money from another man to vote for a certain candidate and then went and voted for the other candidate, the man who paid the money could not say anything. He saw no reason why the members of the House should not take oath to do their duty without fear or favour the same as members of the Executive Council. It was too much the custom to deride a man who would not spend money in his election; he was called mean, instead of being encouraged in the course he had adopted. He had made it a strict rule never to allow any money to be spent in securing his election other than for legitimate expenses, and he had been condemned for his action by papers and by friends of the hon. gentlemen opposite. The speaker made reference to the so-called Proton outrage, and said that hon. gentlemen who had seen no harm in the proceedings in South Grey now claimed to have a great desire to have purity of elections. He held that it was an unmanly thing for a person to go to the poll and give in his vote secretly. There was a great deal of bribery in vogue at elections, but the Bill before the House would not remedy the existing state of things.

Mr. CALVIN said that having had personal experience on both sides of the line, he could say that there was very little money spent on elections in New York State, where he had been an elector for 30 years. He could not say the same thing of this country. He advocated the abolition of nominations, which merely gave candidates eight days' time in which to corrupt the constituencies. If men in high standing were very often afraid to let people know how they were going to vote, what objection could there be to let poor men have some safeguard? If the nominations were abolished the elections would be more honestly carried on.

Mr. MACDONALD was opposed in principle to the Bill, and it was evident from the remarks made by the Premier that the members of the Government as a whole had no fixed policy upon it. He, however, thought that the introducer of the Bill was entitled to much credit for the great pains he had taken in framing the measure. The system of election, he held, should be as at present; the way proposed by the Bill was un-British, and he thought there was less undue influence exercised at elections than was sometimes alleged. He moved, seconded by Dr. Boulter, that the Bill be read this day six months.

Mr. BETHUNE said that in many sections of the country this measure was desired and needed. The worst form of corruption was intimidation, which the ballot would do away with. This was an age of great corporations, and a very large number of electors, perhaps one-tenth of the entire electoral vote, was subject to the undue influence of these corporations. He instanced the case of undue influence at the Brockville election on the part of railway corporations, and it was because they could not connect the respondent with this intimidation that the election was not affected. In his own county employees of the Grand Trunk told him they were compelled to vote against him. In every city a few men with a large number of employees could control the election. It was natural for all large corporations and employers of labour in the heat of the contest to bring pressure to bear upon these under them to induce them to vote as they desired. He believed a perfectly secret system of voting would not only prevent intimidation but bribery as well. With reference to the reforms suggested by the member for East Toronto, he regretted that when that gentleman was in the Government he had voted down the proposal of Mr. Blake to establish a system of auditing election expenses. He agreed with the hon. member for East Toronto that canvassing from house to house should be prohibited, and he would gladly