

Mr. SCOTT said that it did not occur to him that any difficulty existed in having the elections for municipal councillors and school trustees held simultaneously. He did not apprehend any serious difficulty in the proposed change from open to secret voting, which elsewhere had been found a change for the better, and which would no doubt work as well for the election of a school trustee as for a municipal councillor. He thought a property qualification was as necessary in voting for a school trustee as for a municipal election. The list of voters would not thereby be reduced to any appreciable extent, and if it were that the voting list were reduced, was there any reason why the qualification for voting for a municipal councillor should be higher than for a school trustee? He hoped if the measure submitted by the hon. member did not meet the favour of the Government he would be able during recess to frame one more in accord with their views.

Mr. MASSIE thought by the change a greater interest would be excited in school matters, which was desirable. School trustees have a great deal of power in their hands, and it was desirable that the best possible men should be elected.

Mr. PAXTON, speaking from the experience of his county, thought no change desirable. No fault was found with the law and mode of electing trustees.

Mr. MILLER said it had been found in his district desirable to elect township school boards; and he trusted that the hon. the Minister of Education would take into consideration the propriety of having the township school election take place on the same day. It was not pleasant to be called out so often for elections.

Mr. LAUDER said that so far as he knew the township board did not meet with favour. In cities, towns, and villages some improvement was necessary in the elections for school trustees. In this city the election of school trustees has been productive of very little change in the *personnel* of the Board. The more interest that people took in school matters, the better. If the ballot were good for municipal elections it was good for school elections. He could see little harm from having the elections simultaneously and he thought that a better class of men would be elected and more interest shown in school matters by the people. He fancied there was a way of getting over the matter mentioned by the hon. the Minister of Public Works.

Mr. COLE said that in his section the men who took most interest in schools found seats as school trustees. Any change would make school matters a bone of contention, as were municipal matters.

Mr. BELL thought that there was no danger of politics being mixed up in school matters. He had been in the habit of nominating a strong political friend of hon. gentlemen opposite for years for the position of school trustee. The election for Water Commissioners in Toronto had been carried out on the same plan as that proposed by the Bill, and no difficulty had been found in its operation. He thought there would be a saving of money by the change. He was not in favour of disfranchising any voter, and he would not like to see the ladies deprived of a voice in the election, though he thought a booth at a hotly contested municipal election was hardly a desirable place for a lady to appear. He would like to see some provision made for school boards paying their proper proportion of the expenses, and also allowing municipalities power to lessen the number of polling places at municipal and school elections. About 250 votes were polled at municipal elections at each booth in the city of Toronto. At least one-half the expenses could be saved and the work be done quite satisfactorily.

Mr. MEREDITH was opposed to the Bill, believing that it would have the effect of introducing political feeling into educational matters, which all parties in the House agreed should be as far removed as possible from political considerations. School boards as at present elected were composed, as a rule, of men of a higher standard than members of councils. If people did not now feel sufficient interest in the school boards they themselves

suffered the consequences, and he thought that feeling ought to be left to be improved with the general education of the people in the use of the franchise.

Mr. BRODER thought there were no particular grievances connected with the school boards at present. If this Bill were passed it would have the effect of increasing the frequency of the changes of school trustees, which he thought was an evil to be guarded against.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that if this Bill lessened the expense of the election of Public School trustees, the supporters of Separate Schools would not be satisfied unless the same benefit were extended to them.

Mr. McMAHON thought this Bill was a step in the right direction, and that the hon. member for West Huron was deserving of the thanks of the public for introducing it. He should have preferred, however, to have seen it introduced by the Minister of Education.

Mr. BARR, while opposing the Bill in its general scope, believed the ballot should be extended to elections of school trustees.

Mr. FINLAYSON had no dread of politics interfering with the election of school trustees in the event of the change proposed. At present there was at times difficulty in getting a proposer and a seconder; since the introduction of the ballot an election day was like a Sunday.

Mr. BAXTER thought that by the change better men would be got and expense saved.

Mr. MOSTYN thought politics would be introduced, and that there was a possibility that, in the event of the elections being held simultaneously and one man being a candidate for both offices, the electors might split their votes, and though the candidate was a good one for both positions he might get neither.

Mr. MACDOUGALL (Simcoe) did not apprehend any introduction of politics and thought that the change would have the effect of making men think more of the issues before them. Every effort should be made to simplify the machinery of the country. After making some remarks upon the machinery of counties and townships, he went on to say that he saw no need of the separate election and the large expenses, which had much better be expended in education proper. The Bill was a move in the direction of true reform.

Mr. GIBSON said that the greater proportion of school electors are men who have to work, and can spare the time to vote on the first Monday of the year, generally a holiday, while they could not at any other time. He was in favour of the change.

Mr. CODE said that, as a rule, school trustees were superior to municipal councillors. He would be sorry to see school matters mixed up with municipal matters. He had not heard of anyone complaining of the mode of election of trustees, though he thought they had too much power in their hands. He hoped the Government would not allow the Bill to pass.

Mr. LYON thought that by the present system they got the best men. It was his experience that great interest was taken in the elections for school trustees, than which he had seen none more interesting. He believed it was wrong to disfranchise any one who paid the school tax.

Mr. ROSS said that the qualification clause was inserted for convenience, but the number of votes that would be excluded was hardly worthy of consideration. The amount of money controlled by the school board was almost as large as that by the Municipal Act, and so he thought the qualification as desirable in the one case as the other. There was little or no interest taken in school elections by ladies in his section. He continued by replying to objections raised by hon. members, and concluded by hoping that the vote would be taken upon the question irrespective of politics, merely to affirm whether or not this were a move in the right direction.

The Bill was declared lost without a division.