

the same. There was no division of the taxes, and every person on the assessment roll paid a proportionate amount of the school expenses.

Mr. CROOKS said his desire was not in any way to interfere with those who had the right to vote. If the lists were made the same the effect would be to disfranchise the women who now had a vote in school elections. Women were perhaps more interested in the educational affairs of the country than men, and the women teachers were the most useful class of the school-teaching community. He was not prepared to take the responsibility of excluding from voting a class who had held the right for some time, and who were so deeply interested in matters affected by those votes. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. CREIGHTON was in accord with the Minister of Education as against the hon. member for Peterboro'. He had always favoured the right of women to vote at school elections. The education of children came nearer home to them than any other class of legislation, and women, particularly in rural districts, took much more interest than the men in such affairs. In Britain they were ahead of us in these matters, for the women not only voted at school elections, but also were elected themselves to the Boards directing the school affairs of the district. He did not see why, if it was desired to make the franchise the same in each case, it would not be well to extend to them the right to vote at municipal elections.

Mr. ROSS said the different voters' lists were a great difficulty, and a great source of expense to the country. The taking away the vote of the women would affect only four or five votes in each section. The school question was largely one of taxes, and complaints were being made of the heavy expense of our system. He was not in favour of the extension of the franchise. Those assessed for small amounts would get the full value of their taxes in the education of their children, without having a vote at school elections. He was to a certain extent a supporter of women's rights, but these rights when given were seldom exercised. He did not particularly oppose the extension to them of the right to vote upon municipal elections, but this should be taken up as a separate question. He favoured the exception of rural municipalities as indicated by the Minister of Education.

Mr. CODE said in his experience the ladies voted very largely at school elections. He knew one instance in which twenty-four of them turned out to vote. (Hear, hear.) He desired to call attention to some practical difficulties which School Boards in his vicinity had encountered. The School Act said that before putting up a school building it was not necessary to submit a by-law to the ratepayers; the High School Act was silent on the point, and the Municipal Act said the School Board could not incur a debt without submitting the question to the vote of the citizens. They had a case in Court upon this question now. They had sent to Toronto for the opinions of a number of eminent lawyers, for which they paid large sums of money, but no two of the opinions agreed. (Laughter.) He instanced a case of a Union Board in which organization had been prevented for about twelve months by the continued and persistent absence of half the members, thus preventing a quorum. In other cases they had had difficulties which necessitated appeals to different lawyers, but the only effect seemed to be the spending of a great deal of money, for the opinions never accorded with each other, and even if the questions were taken into court the judges would give different decisions. (Laughter.)

Mr. SCOTT claimed that there was no essential difference as a matter of fact between school and municipal affairs. He would, therefore, move that the franchise in both cases should be made the same.

Mr. CROOKS said it was for those favouring this motion to show good public cause why the women should be deprived of their franchise upon school matters. To his own mind, the line between municipal and school matters was sharply and distinctly drawn. Municipal government had to deal with the material interests of the people, while school government affected the intellectual and moral development, for under the Ontario system the moral aspect of the question was recognized, and the principles of Christianity regarded, as to their effect upon the schools. He thought it would be a retrograde step in the legislation of the country to put the two upon the same footing, and would sadly affect our system, which had been the growth of twenty years. The class of men who became candidates for the position of school trustees was altogether different from that of the aspirants to municipal honours, and the qualifications necessary to each were altogether different. With regard to having the elections upon the same day he saw the same difficulty. The tendency would be to have both contests characterized by the same party questions, and the same class of men would be likely to run for office in each. If the wish of the hon. member was to effect this end his motion was well calculated to meet his views, but otherwise he would be disappointed. The only argument to be used in its favour was that of convenience, and that in a case of so much moment was not a worthy one. He would endeavour to prevent the position indicated by the motion being recognized. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. BETHUNE apprehended that very few ladies entrusted with the franchise exercised it, and the question was whether they should for the sake of that small number incur a very large expenditure. All those who had the right of voting, with the exception of women, had their names entered upon the voters' list, and if the franchise for school elections was made the same as that for municipal elections the expense of making two lists would be done away with. It would be a difficult thing in cities to ascertain the names of those females who had the right to vote, while if the one list was made final for all purposes all that expense and trouble would be saved. Another difficulty would be that the power of making these lists would rest in the hands of the clerk, and the result might often be a contested election because of inaccuracies they contained.

Mr. MEREDITH did not think that the statement of the Hon. Minister of Education that trustees and aldermen were selected from different classes was founded upon fact. He also thought that there was not much in the objection that women would be disfranchised, as at present they very seldom exercised their right, and then only in cases where, from the circumstances attending a hotly contested election or otherwise, it was desirable that they should not do so. There was but one class that would be affected by the amendment as to which he had any doubt, and that was voters assessed in cities for \$400. It would be in the public interest,

and would have the effect of lessening the expense, if school elections were held on the same day and in the same manner as municipal elections.

Mr. BELL thought that a fuller vote would be got out for trustee elections if held on the same day as municipal elections than there was generally polled at present, and for that reason he would like to see the elections held coincidentally.

Mr. BARR was opposed to the disfranchisement of such a large number of voters as was proposed by the motion of his hon. friend from West Peterborough. It was well known that ladies took much more interest in school trustee elections than in municipal elections, and he did not think it advisable to deprive them of the right to exercise that power.

Mr. CALVIN pointed out the great reduction that would take place in the expense of holding the election for trustees if held at the same time as municipal elections. Such a course would also have the effect of bringing out a fuller expression of opinion.

Mr. DEACON ridiculed the sentimental objections that had been taken to the motion offered by his hon. friend from West Peterborough. He could see no reason why there should not be a uniform franchise for both classes of elections. He would not be in favour of placing the municipal elections on the basis of the school franchise, because he was not in favour of extending the franchise, but thought the case could be met by making the qualification for voters for trustees the same as that for councillors. The question of holding the elections on the same day was a distinct one, and he thought there were strong arguments in favour of holding them on different days. The objection that the motion would disfranchise ladies was a trifling one, and he did not think any lady in the land would blame them for depriving her of the school franchise, because it was rarely exercised, and when exercised it was generally under circumstances that rendered it undesirable to do so.

Mr. CREIGHTON pointed out the great difference that existed between the functions of Municipal Councillors and School Boards. He thought that they should be extremely careful in depriving any one of the rights now possessed in regard to school elections. The question was one between right and expediency, and where there was a question of that kind he was on the side of right. Those whom it was proposed to disfranchise were just as deeply interested in educational matters as those with whom it was proposed to leave the power of voting. Not only would ladies be disfranchised, but a number of ratepayers in towns and cities where the qualification for municipal franchise respectively was \$300 and \$400 would be also disfranchised. He thought the motion was in the direction of putting the country into the position of Turkey and the East—(laughter)—in the matter of depriving ladies of their rights. Trustee elections were generally conducted in a very peaceable manner, and there was nothing about them that would deter a lady from casting her vote.

The amendment was then put and lost on a vote of 25 to 25.

Mr. MEREDITH asked why the hon. Minister of Education did not propose to make the section apply to Separate Schools.

Mr. CROOKS said that the clause under consideration applied solely to Public Schools, and in another series of clauses he was proposing to legislate for Separate Schools. There might be considerations affecting Public Schools which could not be said to apply to Separate Schools, and it was desirable to defer the discussion of matters relating to the latter class of schools until that part of the Bill affecting them was under consideration.

Mr. MEREDITH said that the Bill did not extend the income franchise to trustee elections for Separate Schools.

Mr. CROOKS said his hon. friend would find that the Bill dealt with that question.

Mr. FRASER said there was no agitation amongst Separate School supporters to have the law changed with regard to income voters. They preferred the system they had now, which was one with which they were thoroughly acquainted.

The second section was then carried.

On section six,

Mr. BELL desired to move an amendment to the effect that the election of trustees for Public and Separate Schools should be held by ballot at the same time and place as municipal elections.

Mr. CROOKS pointed out that the mode of holding elections for Separate Schools was not proposed to be dealt with in the section under consideration, and thought it would be better for his hon. friend to leave that portion of his resolution over until the part of the Bill relating to Separate Schools was reached.

Mr. MEREDITH did not see by what authority the hon. Commissioner of Public Works could announce that the Separate School supporters of the Province did not desire the school franchise extended to income voters.

Mr. FRASER said there was no agitation amongst Roman Catholics for the change referred to. They were quite contented with the law as it stood. This Legislature had authority in certain matters over Separate Schools, and in certain matters they had none; and apart from the constitutional aspect of the question where or not they could interfere with the Separate School franchise, he could speak as a Separate School supporter and as a member of the House that a change in the direction proposed was not sought by those maintaining the Separate Schools.

Mr. SCOTT said there had been no agitation in regard to the income franchise for Public School elections.

Mr. FRASER said he spoke solely for Separate School voters.

Mr. MERRICK thought that the measure had been introduced by the hon. Minister of Education upon the view that it was for the benefit of the country, and considered that the hon. gentleman was justified in not waiting for public agitation.

Mr. BELL again wished to put his amendment.

Mr. CROOKS asked to have the motion changed as far as related to Separate Schools, so as to leave discussion on that point until a later portion of the Bill was arrived at.

Mr. MEREDITH saw no reason for postponing the discussion with regard to Separate Schools, and contended that the hon. member for West Toronto had a perfect right to put the amendment in the shape he had.