

would have given it to him years ago. We purpose, under this measure, giving the franchise to the female nurses who go to the front and take care of our wounded soldiers, not because they are 21 years of age, not because they are entitled to the franchise under any other statute in existence in Canada, but because they are risking their lives to assist our fighting men at the front. It is a recognition of their services that they should have something to say as to how this country shall be governed, especially during the balance of this war. We purpose under this measure giving the franchise to a young man who may be only eighteen years of age. Our general election law provides that a man must be 21 years of age before he is entitled to vote. We are giving this young man a vote because he has shown sufficient patriotism and courage to go to the front and risk his life for his country.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: No one is objecting to that.

Mr. CROTHERS: There are many extraordinary provisions in this measure because the whole thing is founded upon extraordinary circumstances. Even if a man has lived in the United States for years, whether he was born in Canada or not, if he feels sufficient interest to join the forces of Canada—and, to risk his life for Canada, he should have something to say as to how this country shall be governed while this war is on.

Mr. COPP: No one controverts the general argument made by the Minister of Labour in so far as giving a minor, even as young as eighteen years of age, the right to vote. They may be even younger than that, because there are young lads of sixteen in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, and they will be included in this measure. I cannot, however, agree with the Minister of Labour or the hon. member for North Perth (Mr. Morphy) as to giving the vote to a man who knows nothing about the Parliament of Canada.

Mr. CROTHERS: He knows enough to fight.

Mr. COPP: Yes. I agree that the franchise should be given to such as have an intelligent idea as to what the duty of a Canadian member of Parliament is, and what the Parliament of Canada is for, but if you grant the franchise to a British subject who happens to have been a resident of the United States, who may never have been a resident of Canada, who knows nothing about Canadian affairs—

Mr. BURNHAM: Would the hon. gentleman object to bestowing the freedom of Canada upon men who are fighting for this country, even although they were born and lived in foreign lands just as the freedom of a city is given to a distinguished foreigner? That gift carries with it the privilege of that city, just as the freedom of Canada would carry with it privileges for distinguished services.

Mr. COPP: I would give every British subject the freedom that any citizen of this country is entitled to.

Mr. MORPHY: Except the right to vote.

Mr. COPP: My hon. friend is wrong there. Take the case suggested by the hon. member for St. John, of a British subject who has enlisted in our forces after residing in the United States for a number of years. Now, although that man knows nothing about Canadian politics, he is to be given the right to vote. Then subsection 3 of section 3 says:

If he cannot, because of non-residence or otherwise, so state or specify, he shall be deemed an elector of, and his vote shall be applied to, such electoral district as he may indicate.

He may not know a single candidate or a single electoral district in all Canada; so how can he intelligently indicate what district his vote shall be applied to?

Mr. MORPHY: It will be done for him.

Mr. COPP: By whom?

Mr. MORPHY: Don't ask me.

Mr. COPP: I repeat that it is absurd to expect a man to vote intelligently who knows nothing about Canadian politics, and who knows nothing about the candidates and the electoral districts.

Mr. TAYLOR: There is a very simple answer to the argument of hon. gentlemen who would disfranchise a British subject simply because he had entered the military service of Canada. If any of these Britishers from abroad to whom reference has been made came to Canada for the purpose, let us say, of avoiding military service in the United States, and remained in this country a few months, they would be entitled to vote in Canada. Why then, should we, as advocated by the hon. member for St. John, the hon. member for Halifax, and the hon. member for Westmorland decline to give the franchise to them because when they come to Canada they propose to do their duty and join our military forces and fight for us? If you exclude these