

through the naturalization of the father need not secure the voting certificate; finally, women who were born on the continent of North America are not put to the same necessity.

Now you have the peculiar condition, in connection with the last proviso, that the woman who is born, we will say, in the West Indies—and she may be an uneducated negress—or a person who comes from Mexico or any other part of North America, is given the franchise without restriction if she is married to a British subject; whereas if a woman comes from France, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Italy, Germany, Austria, Belgium or any other country than North America, she is obliged to go to a judge to obtain this voting certificate. I say that is an unfair distinction, and I have never to this day heard any justification whatever from members of the former government as to why that provision was drafted.

It has been said in previous debates that these women who are naturalized should not complain of the necessity for appearing before a judge and showing that they are proper persons for naturalization. Well, it means that they are at once placed in a separate and distinct class, and there at once attaches to them at least some doubt as to whether they are as worthy to vote as are their husbands, who also were born in a foreign country and who are not in any way any more Canadian citizens than are their wives. It obliges them to take three distinct steps before they can cast their ballots. In the first place, they must go to the judge, and that may necessitate, as it often does in Western Canada, a journey of perhaps one hundred miles or more, and the judge may after all refuse them a voting certificate; then it necessitates their seeing to it that their names are placed on the voters' list; and, finally, they must go to the poll to deposit their ballots, as of course everyone else must also.

Then there is the natural feeling of pride which rebels at the unnecessary restriction. I know in my own riding women who have lived in this country for thirty, forty and even fifty years, women who are good Canadian citizens, and they resent the necessity of appearing before a judge and showing cause why he should issue to them voting certificates. As a matter of fact they do not go before him, and I am of the opinion—and probably other members can speak with just as full know-

ledge—that of the women affected by this clause perhaps 75 to 80 per cent are thus virtually disfranchised.

We have both Dominion and provincial laws which do not perhaps in all cases meet with the approval of our citizens, but I do not think we have on our statute book any laws which conflict so directly one with the other as does this particular clause with the Naturalization Act. Our Naturalization Act provides distinctly that the wife of a British subject is herself a British subject; but this clause in the Election Act states that the wife of a British subject is not a British subject when it comes to voting.

Those two laws are absolutely irreconcilable, and if they are irreconcilable, the illogical one ought to give way. If my resolution is accepted that is what will happen, and the franchise will be universal to all Canadian women without restriction, the same as it is to men. We are now in the position of the Indian giver; he gives only in the expectation that it shall be returned to him again. The Naturalization Act gives to these women citizenship and the Dominion Elections Act takes it away. I leave it to the sense of justice of hon. members whether the franchise itself is not the first privilege or right that ought to flow out of citizenship. It is upon that ground that I base my claim that there should be no restrictions whatever placed in the way of a British subject, other than the ordinary restrictions that apply to male citizens, and that they should be given the franchise as a natural result flowing out of the fact of their citizenship. I say, Sir, there is only one proper remedy for that: let us adopt the principle that citizenship in itself confers the franchise. It is the only solution. Why should not a foreign-born woman, legally a Canadian citizen, as unrestrictedly have the right to vote as the foreign-born man, her husband, who is also a Canadian citizen? I have never heard any satisfactory reply to that question. Let us accept finally and frankly the logical consequences of our action in conferring upon women the privileges of naturalization. Now that women have the franchise, there should be no discrimination between foreign-born citizens of this country and the wives of those citizens, who are just as fairly and just as legally Canadian citizens as are their husbands. Let us bestow the franchise as freely as