

There have been revisions or rather amendments to it since then but it is the same in that regard. However, it goes a little farther than that; that declaration may be taken before a deputy returning officer at the poll, but in this (indicating) there is a registrar appointed. We have had a lot of difficulty over the registrar business. Proclamations are frequently put up giving the hours at which the registrar can be found before whom to make this declaration. There has been the question of difficulty in locating the registrar; frequently he has not been where he was supposed to be. I can give you proof of that. At Ottawa at the last election, we were pestered by a number who had to leave without voting because they could not find the registrar to take their declaration. This would do away with that difficulty. We are simply adopting the Ontario Election Act, which is working out all right. I am quite willing to admit, for instance, that the Ontario Election Act provides that any officer of the poll can exact an oath. We have no objection to that, but may I suggest that there is no law that is proof against fools and rogues, if they want to take advantage of it. I think perhaps Mr. Anderson, of Toronto, is familiar with that Act.

Mr. KENNEDY: Is that due to the preparation of the law?

The WITNESS: No. Before a railroad man or a commercial traveller or a sailor can vote, the law provides for a registrar before whom he has to make this declaration. If you have not made the declaration you are not permitted to vote, and if you cannot get it, you cannot vote. We have tried to simplify the procedure by adopting the provision of the Ontario Act. There are difficulties enough amongst our men to get their votes in, and we thought we would endeavour to simplify it as much as we could without interfering with the sacredness of the ballot at elections. That is about all of our amendments.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. The registrar of any rural community or the revising officer for any urban polling division is the man who gives you the certificate?—A. Yes.

Q. Are there many rural divisions in which there are advanced polls?—A. Several. Suposing you are a railroad man at Chapleau; the registrar may be three or four hundred miles away.

Q. There are a few advanced polls in the rural communities to-day?—A. Yes.

Q. It would not suit your purpose any better if the man who was to issue these certificates was the returning officer for the division? You would be up against the same difficulty?—A. The same thing. That is why the Ontario Election Act works so well. We have about 40 different divisional points of importance, and the same difficulties would have arisen under that Act if the same provisions were made as are made in this Act. My purpose is not to take up unnecessary time, but to explain why we want these things and I would be glad to meet with your sub-committee and get into an argument with them.

*By Mr. Anderson (Toronto-High Park):*

Q. Section 102, subsection 15, reads:

15. Revising officers and registrars authorized to issue certificates to vote at advance polls shall attend for that purpose at such times and places as may be directed by the Chief Electoral Officer, who may specify what public notice, if any, is to be given by such registrar or revising officer that he will so attend.

—A. Yes.