

Q. Under our Act the registration official can put a man's name on the list even if he does not appear personally, and the voter may not even know he is on the list.—A. He is either on it or he is not. His business is to get on the list. If he is not, under the Ontario Election Act, he can come to the polls on election day, and if he takes an oath, he can vote anyway.

*By Mr. Boys:*

Q. So he does under the Dominion Act, in the rural communities.—A. Yes. All I have to say is that there are countries which have adopted this, and I have read a letter from the Premier of Australia saying that it is working out satisfactorily. I know of no greater humbug than that of endeavouring to run an election in a small municipality. It has staggered every man who has had anything to do with it. People who live within twenty rods of a polling place demand an automobile to take them to vote. I believe that the people of our country should concern themselves with the actual politics of our country, and we should be free to discuss the country's affairs and get the people interested in them. Why, I have known ten men take the trail of one voter in one day. Every automobile dealer in the country loads up your committee rooms with all the old automobiles he can find, puts all his old tires on them, and when the election is over it takes you six months to pay for the tires. And, oh, the string of fish you have to deal with. Not very long ago there was an election in Ontario where there were a number of coloured people—coons. Both parties were anxious to have them vote. The Liberals got in first and gave every nigger a dollar, and then the Tories went around and gave them two dollars, and the coons went out and voted, and they all voted Grit. They were asked afterwards why they had done that, and they said that the Liberals were the less corrupt of the two, and is why they voted for them. I believe that two-thirds of the humbug and the things which annoy us so much about an election would be overcome if we were to fix some kind of a penalty for the man who has a vote and refuses to poll it.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. In principle, I am inclined to agree with you. The practical application worries me a bit. Who would do the prosecuting?—A. Here (indicating) is the story of the way the others are doing it.

*By Hon. Mr. Ralston:*

Q. Do they disfranchise them, or drop them off the list for the next election?—A. I cannot read that, but I think they should make it optional; either pay the fine or drop them off for so many years from the list.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. Could that only not be done if you had a permanent list?—A. In Ontario we disfranchise a great number of people for all sorts of things, and if their names appear on the list, and they vote, they are penalized.

*By Mr. Kellner:*

Q. Does the Act give any definition of a "valid and sufficient reason for not voting"? I will read what it says:

(4) Within the prescribed period after the close of each election the Divisional Returning Officer shall send by post to each elector whose name appears on the list prepared in accordance with subsections (1) and (2) of this section, at the address mentioned in that list, a notice, in the prescribed form, notifying the elector that he appears to have failed to vote at the election, and calling upon him to give a valid truthful and sufficient reason why he failed so to vote.

[Mr. T. E. Kaiser, M.P.]