

country. It is most unfortunate that we should urge old country emigrants who look forward to coming under the old age pension schemes in the old country to come to Canada where they would possibly be disqualified until after twenty years' residence. There should be some arrangement made by which an emigrant from Great Britain should receive credit, as it were, for a certain number of years which he was under the scheme in England, provided of course that the British government made certain financial arrangements.

Mr. STEVENS: I would like to ask the Minister another question. As he has just explained clause (a) I quite understand it. That is, provision shall be made for the payment of a pension to a person who is a British subject, or, being a widow, was such before her marriage. Take the case of a woman, alien by birth, say an Italian or German or any other national, who marries a British subject and lives in this country for fifty years as a British subject. Her husband dies. Is she still a British subject, because it says, "or being a widow, was such before her marriage." Before her marriage she was not a British subject. She becomes a widow, and under this clause she loses the right to a pension. It may be that is just a slip in the wording, but there is no doubt about the effect. When she becomes a widow, she comes under this clause. That widow before her marriage was not a British subject. You qualify the payment of a pension to a widow, the qualification being that she was a British subject before she was married. That may not have been intended, but there it is, and I think we ought to correct the wording of this clause to make the intention abundantly clear—and the minister will please take this suggestion in the spirit in which it is offered, and not as a captious criticism at all.

Mr. ELLIOTT: Might I just answer my hon. friend, and if there is still doubt about it perhaps it can be remedied. Clause 8 says:

Provision shall be made for the payment of a pension to every person who, at the date of the proposed commencement of the pension:—

(a) is a British subject—

That is disposed of. It goes on:

—or, being a widow, was such before her marriage.

Now if she were a British subject before her marriage, no matter what she became afterwards, she is a British subject and she comes under this act.

[Mr. Woodsworth.]

Mr. STEVENS: That is perfectly clear, but what about the other case? My hon. friend has not caught my point. It says:

(a) is a British subject—

That disposes of that. Then you go on to put the widow in a separate category:

—or, being a widow, was such before her marriage.

So the widow must have been a British subject before her marriage, according to that clause. There is no question that it can be read that way. If you will make this clause to read—I have not the exact words in my mind—that it applies to the widow who had married an alien, that covers all that is necessary.

Mr. CANNON: If I understand my hon. friend aright, this is the case of the woman who acquires British citizenship by reason of her marriage. When the marriage ceases, what becomes of her citizenship? Is she an alien or is she a British subject? If she is a British subject, the clause as it reads now covers her case. If she becomes an alien, she is not covered by that clause.

Mr. STEVENS: Perhaps my method as a layman does not make my point quite clear. If she was not a British subject before her marriage, she obtains British citizenship by marriage. Her husband dies and she becomes a widow. Then this clause says, "being a widow, was such before her marriage." But in the case I mentioned she was not a British subject before her marriage, and therefore I reason that she would not be entitled to the pension. I admit that in the application that might be ignored, but it is desirable to make the language clear.

Mr. CLARK: The alien woman who marries a British subject is still a British subject after his death. But the widow is specially provided for here. If she happens to be a widow, she must have been a British subject before her marriage. The words are:

(a) is a British subject, or, being a widow—

The widow is dealt with in a different manner altogether from other people. That is the interpretation that could be given that sub-section.

Mr. CANNON: My hon. friend says that if an alien marries a British subject she continues to be a British subject even after her husband's death.

Mr. CLARK: Yes.