

lieves that that particular feature of the Act was "infernal." He will not and dare not say it. Neither dare he open his mouth in regard to the matter for fear of offending some of those gentlemen who shouted "hear, hear" when he designated the Act in question as a piece of infernal legislation. Then the other feature of the Act was this,—it took the vote from certain people in this country. From whom? From certain aliens whose sons or relatives were in France and Flanders on the fighting line and killing our own Canadian boys. Is that why the War-time Elections Act is called an "infernal" piece of legislation? I know of no other reason.

Those are the two salient points of the Act. What has the hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition to say in regard to that? The issue, I say again, was clear and distinct. There is no doubt at all that the question put to the people at that election was: Shall we conscript our men and send them overseas to help in the fighting? Imagine putting that question to an alien in this country whose son or brother perhaps was in the fighting line of the enemy! Imagine that man going into the polling booth and saying anything but "No, of course I won't vote to send more men over there to fight against my own flesh and blood"! What else could you expect him to say?

The Act was manifestly fair, and to no people in the country was it fairer than to those aliens from whom it removed the franchise for the time being. We asked nothing of them in the way of equal responsibility as citizens in fighting for the life of this country. We merely asked them to step aside for the time being, so far as that election was concerned, and let the people whose sons and brothers were overseas risking their lives for Canada to say whether further help should or should not be sent. And yet this is what the leader of the Opposition terms "an infernal piece of legislation."

But, carried away by the force of his own eloquence the hon. gentleman also attacks the Military Voters' Act. I desire to pay some attention to that for a moment, for in referring to that Act he implied that it was even worse, if anything, than the War-time Elections Act. Let me quote his own words:

It has been openly stated in this House, and it will not be denied by hon. gentlemen opposite, that as a consequence of that legislation—that is, the Military Voters' Act—whole bundles of votes of soldiers overseas—votes by bundles—were taken and put into this riding, and into that riding, and into another riding, at the instance of some com-

[Mr. Edwards.]

mittee that was in the confidence of the Administration.

An hon. MEMBER: Hear.

Mr. EDWARDS: That is the statement of the hon. gentleman. I hear a little timid voice over there breathing out a faint "Hear"—not quite so certain now as he was a little while ago whether he will endorse his leader; the "hear, hears" were very vociferous at an earlier stage, but now he is not quite so certain. Well, I do not blame him for that. I presume that this gentleman with the timid voice was in the House when this matter came up last session when the then leader of the Opposition (Mr. McKenzie) was going to do great execution with a certain telegram, which he thought he had and professed to have, and which fizzled out very badly indeed so far as the hon. gentleman's argument was concerned. But, that aside, the statement is made by a man holding an important position in this country—it does not matter whether the man is very important or not, to hold the position of leader of the Opposition makes a man important—notwithstanding that the statement is made by the leader of a party (though that party is not so big or important as it used to be, and does not show any signs of getting stronger, but no matter, whether it is strong or weak, he is still leader of it as it is) that the soldiers' vote was manipulated in bundles for the benefit of this riding and the other riding. And the hon. gentleman to his right, who was at one time leader of the Opposition but now has to occupy a secondary place—and see the other fellow draw the salary—the hon. gentleman from Cape Breton North and Victoria (Mr. D. D. McKenzie), if I mistake not, in his remarks made a similar statement—that there were men in this House who owed their seats to the way in which the soldiers' votes were manipulated. I have already dealt a good many hard blows at this assertion, but I am going to ask the indulgence of the House while I give it another crack, in the hope that hon. gentlemen will be satisfied that there is absolutely nothing in the statement that the military votes were pooled for the benefit of members on this side of the House.

Let me call attention very briefly to one or two facts, Mr. Speaker, which I am taking from a summary of the general election returns of 1917. I will take first the province of Ontario with its eighty-two seats. How did the overseas voters affect the return of those members? All but four of the eighty-two were elected by the civil vote, to say nothing about the military