

--and so on. Now it seems to me that would not confer on the woman who had been an alien and had become a British subject by marriage the right of voting if her husband were not living, because she is no longer a married woman.

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: I see my hon. friend's point and I will make a note of it. We shall be very glad if any other hon. gentleman has any observations to make upon this Bill so that we may get the benefit of the wisdom of the Committee.

Mr. NICKLE: While upon this subject, take the last part of the section dealing with minors. As I understand it a minor becomes a British subject if, during the period of being a minor, the father being an alien becomes naturalized, and on attaining majority the minor does nothing to deprive himself or herself of the citizenship attained. The last part of paragraph (c) says that a woman can vote and can attain British citizenship by virtue of the naturalization of her father, but she must produce a certificate from the Court that she has lived sufficiently long in the country to entitle her, in her own right, to become a British subject. The child might have lived outside the country and have attained British citizenship by virtue of the naturalization of the father but she would not have the qualification required by the Naturalization Act entitling her to be naturalized if the father had never been naturalized. What is the object sought in this? Is the object of the Bill to confer on a minor the right to vote by virtue of the father's naturalization, or must the naturalization of the minor be under such circumstances that she could have attained it if she applied on her own initiative?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: Of course no woman can obtain the right to vote unless she is already a British subject. When she comes with her application to put her name on the electoral list she must show that she has the qualifications which would at that time have entitled her to become a British subject if she had not become technically such by the naturalization of her father.

Sir SAM HUGHES: Take the case of daughters of aliens over twenty-one years of age, though the father becomes naturalized, yet the daughter, being over twenty-one, must also become naturalized.

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: They can become naturalized and make the necessary application.

Mr. CURRIE: Is this Act intended to amend the War-times Elections Act?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: The Bill provides that it shall be construed as one with the Dominions Election Act and with the War-times Elections Act. According to the tenor of its provisions it is therefore in amendment of both.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: The War-times Elections Act is to be repealed.

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: This legislation will operate until it is repealed.

Mr. ERNEST LAPOINTE: Against such legislation as this I would certainly have entered objection at a previous session, because I have some difficulty in making up my mind as to the desirability of granting the franchise to women in Canada. I am bound to admit there is a very strong public sentiment in favour of this legislation in various parts of the country, but no such demand exists in the province from which I come. The women of my province do not want to vote and are not asking for the right. I respect very much those women who believe they are entitled to have a voice in the settlement of great national questions in which they are vitally interested, and I understand such a claim when coming from women who are earning a living for themselves and families. They are a great deal more entitled to the franchise than the society women who are so insistent in their demands for it. Then there is the sentiment of those other women—I believe they constitute the majority of the women of Canada—who feel that their exalted position as queens of their homes cannot but suffer if they meddle in our political battles, who feel that the duties of motherhood require all their devotion and all their energies, and who are quite willing to leave to the men the troubles and responsibilities of political administration. But, by all means, if women are to vote in some parts of the country they should vote in all other parts of the country as well. It is true that the fact that the women of some provinces would vote, while the women of other provinces would not, would materially affect the representation in this House, but the total number of women's votes in any province on any big question, when numbers are computed, might have such an influence as to militate against any discrimination in the electoral law of the country.

The second reason I have for supporting the Bill is that it may prevent the recurrence of what took place at the last election,