

hand statements of hon. gentlemen opposite on that subject.

Mr. PUGSLEY: He knows about the horses, too.

Mr. DAVIDSON: He knows all about the horses; he has seen them. He does not have to read the public accounts to find out the twisted stories of perjured witnesses; he gets the information first-hand. I can readily understand why my hon. friend is not content that a man like that should pronounce on the record of his party.

Hon. gentlemen opposite object to a Britisher who has joined a Canadian regiment voting because he is not acquainted with the history of Canada. He, perhaps, has never sat at the feet of the Gamaliel whom I see opposite. He, perhaps, has never read the speeches delivered in this Parliament. He, perhaps, has never attached himself in election time either to the Grit or to the Tory camp. But I do not think that disqualifies him from voting; he has been taught in a better school. The men who have gone from the country that I have the honour to represent to join the Canadian army are the pick of the manhood; they are the men with the keenest sense of public duty. They are familiar with the affairs of this country; they know Canada's needs. These comrades in arms will constitute the school that will teach the British recruit Canadian history. It will not be upon the instruction of hon. gentlemen opposite that the British recruit in the Canadian regiment will form his views; it will be through association with the comrades who have been there and who have been true enough, loyal enough, and intelligent enough to see Canada's needs and to join the colours in order to defend the country they love.

When hon. gentlemen opposite say that a soldier of that kind is not sufficiently acquainted with the affairs of this country to vote intelligently, I wonder if they forget that there are a great many people in Canada who are not thoroughly posted in public affairs, but who nevertheless enjoy, without challenge, the right of the franchise.

Only last Saturday, if Mr. Chairman you will excuse a personal reference, I was in the province of Quebec and I happened to meet a citizen of that province. In the course of conversation, I asked him what he thought of the Military Service Bill, or of conscription. "Oh," he said, "it is a very bad measure. We were all Conservatives in this country a little while ago, but Borden has ruined this country and we

[Mr. Davidson.]

are all for Laurier now." I said: "Are you quite sure you are right?"

Mr. PUGSLEY: Did he say that Borden had ruined this country?

Mr. DAVIDSON: Ruined the party—that was the cry.

Mr. MEDERIC MARTIN: Did he say that he was responsible for what would happen after the Bill had been signed?

Mr. DAVIDSON: He did not say that but I think he could have said that the man who was responsible for this troubled condition of affairs is the professional politician, the agitator, who makes fire-brand speeches. But, to finish my narrative; I said: "Are you sure that you are quite right about this matter? I do not think it is going to be so serious as you think." He said: "It means taking us all away from our children and sending us into a strange land to be shot down." I told him that that was not the case, that probably not very many men would be required and that probably men who were farmers and the heads of families would not be called upon. But this is what especially impressed me. He said: "That is not the worst part of it. If I have a pig that weighs 100 pounds it is all right, but if my pig weighs more than 100 pounds I have to send all that weighs more than 100 pounds over to feed the soldiers; if I keep twelve hens it is all right, but if I keep more than twelve I have to send all over twelve to the soldiers." That was a man living right near the capital and almost in the shadow of this building. My hon. friends opposite would give the vote gladly to men of that kind but they would deny the right to vote to a man who is fighting and dying for this country in the theatre of war? To me that seems absurd. Men over there who know all about the situation, who know all about our military needs who know why we fail and why we succeed, who go to sleep to the music of the artillery and are wakened by the crash of shells, these men who bivouac day after day with death, are to be told that they cannot be entrusted with the sacred task of deciding what the policy of this country should be. Some hon. gentlemen opposite contend that it is almost a crime to allow these men to vote.

One hon. gentleman this afternoon—I think the hon. member for North Oxford (Mr. Nesbitt)—claimed that it was going to lead to a great deal of corruption which would mean a dishonest and corrupt elec-