

*By Mr. Heaps:*

Q. I should like to ask a question based on those cards. Is a person living outside the constituency entitled to obtain one of those cards and send it to the electoral district in which he is entitled to vote?—A. Yes; the card is only for registration; but wherever he is in the state he may vote. I shall refer to that when we are speaking of compulsory voting. The particular section of the act relating to compulsory voting is section 128 (a):—

It shall be the duty of every elector to record his vote at each election.

Subsection 12 of the same section says:—

Every elector who—

(a) fails to vote at an election without a valid and sufficient reason for such failure;

or

(b) on receipt of a notice in accordance with subsection (4) of this section, fails to fill up, sign, and post within the time allowed under subsection (5) of this section the form (duly witnessed) which is attached to the notice.

“shall be guilty of an offence” and liable to a penalty of not less than ten shillings and not more than two pounds.

I may say here the notice referred to is the notice sent by the returning officer to the elector who has failed to record his vote calling upon him within 21 days to give an explanation. I shall quote the words of the chief electoral officer:—

The divisional returning officer, after the election, must prepare a list of non-voters. Having prepared this list, he sends a notice calling on defaulting electors to give a “valid and truthful and sufficient reason why he failed to vote.” The defaulting elector must reply within twenty-one days. If he should be absent from home or physically incapable of replying, any other elector with personal knowledge of the facts may answer for him. The divisional returning officer decides if the reason given is sufficient and later the divisional returning officer sends a list of defaulting electors to the Commonwealth electoral officer, who alone, by himself or by an authorized representative, can commence proceedings against the defaulter.

The penalty for failure to vote is not less than ten shillings nor more than two pounds. It should be pointed out that great facilities are afforded all voters who may be absent from home. In the first place there is the absentee vote. Any elector who happens to be within the state but not within his own electoral district may vote wherever he is under certain conditions. More than that an elector under certain conditions may even mail his vote; he may obtain a postal ballot and complete it under the conditions prescribed, have it witnessed and forwarded through the post office to the returning officer for his district.

*By Mr. Cameron:*

Q. Within the time limit?—A. He must give the reason for not having voted—

Q. I am speaking of the privilege of voting through the post office.—A. He must vote or arrange that his vote reaches the electoral officer on the balloting day.

*By Mr. Turgeon:*

Q. Can he do that if he is outside the country?—A. No, not outside the state; only within the state.