

they have been in this House for the last two hours. I do not know whether it is a realization of the position they occupy in the minds of the people of this country, or the forlorn hope they will lead in the next election that has struck them dumb or not, but they must be a very disappointed party, because it is not so very long ago that they wanted an election at once, because they thought they were almost sure to win. Now things have taken on a different aspect.

Mr. McKENZIE: The sooner the better. Bring it on to-morrow.

Mr. LALOR: We are going to bring it on before very long, and we hope we shall have our friend from North Cape Breton back with us, because we want some one opposite to keep the leader of the Opposition from getting lonesome.

The hon. member for South Renfrew has made some remarks about the German voters in this country, in a speech that was designed to influence, if possible, the German electors of Ontario and other provinces of the Dominion. The fact is that the measure now before the House does not change the position of the old German settlers in Canada one iota; they are in exactly the same position they always have been in, and no one knows that better than the hon. member for South Renfrew. Every one knows that no man in this country could vote unless he had taken the oath of allegiance and was enfranchised, and that is the position to-day. I represent a constituency where there are a great many Germans, and I resent any suggestion that this class of honest and respectable settlers and citizens should be disfranchised by this or any other Act of this Parliament. There is no better class of settlers in the county I represent than these fine old German settlers; there is no better class of settler in all Canada than these men who came here forty or fifty years ago. There is no part of my county I enjoy visiting more, or where I have more enthusiastic and loyal supporters than in these communities of German settlers in the county of Haldimand, and I would go down to defeat in my county rather than have these men disfranchised. I am sure it is not the intention of the Government, or the intent of this Bill, that these men should be disfranchised. I am making this statement so that the German people in my county may know that the Government have no such intention, and that any insinuations to that effect are untrue, because these settlers are in exactly the same position they have al-

ways been in as regards the franchise in this country. They are honest and law-abiding citizens, and among the best farmers in the county of Haldimand. I am on record as having made speeches in this House in defence of the German people of my county, even before the war broke out, and there is nothing that I ever said on their behalf that I propose to retract or change in the slightest degree.

Hon. gentlemen opposite are not very much in favour of extending the franchise to the female relatives of the soldiers overseas. True, they have not come out very strongly in opposition to it, but they try to becloud the issue by agitating that the franchise be extended to the women of Canada generally. I am very proud indeed to know from statements that have been made here this afternoon and from press reports that the women's organizations throughout Canada, through their presidents and vice-presidents, have told the Prime Minister of this country that they do not want the franchise at the present time, and would prefer that the female relatives of the soldiers overseas should be given that honour. It is estimated that at the next election 500,000 women will be enfranchised and vote at a federal election for the first time in the history of Canada. I am in favour of a general enfranchisement of women when the proper time comes, but this is not the time. It is a war-time election that is coming on. It was stated this afternoon, or at all events during this debate by an hon. gentleman opposite from the province of Quebec, that the women who will vote at the next election do nothing but draw pay from the Government. I do not know whether he was alluding to the wives of soldiers or not, but if there is any class of people in this country who are entitled to the franchise and will do honour to it, it is the female relatives of the soldiers who have gone overseas.

As members of Parliament instances come before us almost every day. When I heard the gentleman make that statement, I thought of one of the women in my town whose husband is unfortunately in the asylum. She depended upon a young man for her only source of livelihood—a splendid well-educated boy. He went to the front and unfortunately made the supreme sacrifice. Is that woman entitled to a vote? Would any man on this other side of the House insinuate that that woman does not do anything but stay at home and draw pay from the Government? I say it is a shame