

Lest some may think I am too strong in my contention that there was no fair play for the Opposition, let me give a few instances to the House. There is a constituency called Edmonton West, which was represented in the last Parliament by as brave a man as ever stood on the floor of this House, a man of intense courage and of absolutely independent mind, who would not bow the knee to anybody or vary his opinions for any man living. I say there was nothing short of a conspiracy to defeat Mr. Oliver. Am I too strong in that statement? This is what took place in the constituency of West Edmonton: In no less than seven polls there were not enough ballots for the electors who came to register their votes. If that had taken place in only one poll, I would not have very much to say, but when it is a fact that the same thing occurred at seven different polls, I say that it was a conspiracy. In three of these polls the electors were so insistent on their right to have their votes recorded that ballots were substituted. At the fourth poll also, eighty-two ballots were substituted, but the returning officer refused to count them at any of the polls. Was that all? No, there is something more. In three sub-divisions the polls which the returning officer had proclaimed would be opened, were never opened at all on election day, and men who had travelled hundreds of miles and more to the poll found it locked on their arrival, and they were unable to record their votes. Is not that something to confirm the words I used a moment ago, that there was no fair play for the Opposition?

But there is something more. In the riding of Bow River the returning officer issued over his signature the following notice to the deputy returning officer:

By order from the General Returning Officer I am to advise you that naturalization can only be proved by production of naturalization certificates in the manner before advised, and that neither oath of person affected, nor presence of his name or any voters' list will be proof of his right or his naturalization for purposes of section sixty-two or otherwise.

Arthur G. Bond,

Returning Officer for Bow River Electoral District.

That is the statement made by the returning officer of Bow River, who shields himself behind the General Returning Officer, Mr. O'Connor. I believe, for my part, that Mr. O'Connor never gave such an order, but we shall know by-and-by. But whether the authority, so called, was, from headquarters at Ottawa or from the returning officer himself, the fact remains

that no naturalized British subject whose name was already on the list would be admitted to vote unless he had his naturalization certificate in his pocket. Could anything be more arbitrary or more tyrannical even in Germany itself or in Russia? A man who has been living the life of a peaceful citizen, who has been acknowledged and recognized by his neighbours as a British subject, and whose name is on the voters' list—this man has to bring his naturalization certificate in his pocket before he can be permitted to vote. I am sure that such a thing shocks the sense of justice and fair play of every man in this House. I am told, Sir, that in the constituency of Bow River, Belgians who had come from heroic Belgium, Frenchmen who had come from glorious France, and Americans who had come from the land of freedom, and who had all been naturalized, were not allowed to vote because they had not their naturalization certificates in their pockets. I am told more, and I believe it is true, that the same principle, the same doctrine, the same order, was followed in constituencies other than those of the four provinces west of Lake Superior. That is the situation.

Here are two constituencies in which the most sacred laws of British freedom were violated. I will be told perhaps: "But what of the soldier's vote? Was it not overwhelmingly on the side of the Government?" I admit it was, but what of it? I will not be prepared to-day to give all the evidence which I shall have to submit, but I can call attention to some facts. The Minister of Militia, in the early part of November, addressed a meeting in the Russell Theatre, Ottawa, which it was my pleasure to attend, in connection with the Victory Loan, and he made the statement that the number of enlisted soldiers at that time was 35,000. It turned out that the number of soldiers who voted in Canada was not 35,000, but 54,200. In less than one month, or thereabouts, the number of enlisted soldiers in Canada had increased from 35,000 to 54,000 odd. We have no explanation of this fact yet, and we might ask, whence came these additional 20,000 soldiers who voted on the 17th December? They could not have been conscripted under the Act. The Act had just been put in force, and nobody had been conscripted at that time. Was the explanation that they had enlisted voluntarily? We had been told by the Prime Minister again and again that voluntary enlistment had completely broken down in Canada. Or was the explanation that a certain number of men were put in khaki, not to win the war, but