

view which is occasionally put forward that it is a great hardship for a man to have to travel twenty or thirty miles to appear before some naturalization tribunal. For the consideration of members I would point out that it is far better to have a judicial tribunal passing upon a man's qualifications to become a citizen of this country than to have a political tribunal, even this parliament, passing upon those qualifications. Also, that the man who complains of having to travel a score of miles or to spend a few days to obtain a privilege so important as this, would have to travel just as many miles and spend just as much time to get before the same tribunal if he were involved in litigation with some of his neighbours. Why should we take away from a man all the obstacles which intervene between him and his accomplishment of British nationality, and yet leave him to travel perhaps a long distance and spend a good deal of his time in order to defend his civil rights? It is suggested that county court judges sometimes make mistakes. I presume they are still human, and will continue to be to the end of the chapter, and therefore they will continue to make mistakes. But those mistakes may just as well occur in private litigation, and a man may be deprived of a great many other things that are valuable to him because of the mistakes of some officials. Therefore I do not see why we should put what, after all, ought to be the highest thing in the land, a man's participation in British nationality, upon a lower plane than an ordinary lawsuit, and ask to have all formalities disregarded and make naturalization a mere perfunctory ceremony. I repeat, it is far better, even with some hindrances, to have the determination of nationality a matter for a judicial tribunal, even though it may err, than to have it in the hands of any political tribunal whatsoever.

Mr. BROWN: Mr. Chairman, I wish to refer to the point raised by the hon. member for North Waterloo (Mr. Euler). Perhaps he will recall that on two occasions I put a question to the Prime Minister in regard to this matter and with reference to the discussion that took place in the Imperial house. It appears that the press reports of that discussion were not strictly accurate. The matter was introduced into the Imperial house by Major Harvey, by way of resolution to the effect that British women should retain their nationality on marriage to foreigners unless they definitely requested otherwise. An amendment was introduced to this resolution, that they should lose their nationality unless they made a definite request otherwise. Mr. Locker-

[Mr. Baxter.]

Lampson promised that if the amendment was adopted he would take the matter up with the dominion governments, but when Lady Astor questioned him as to whether he would do so in case the original resolution was carried he did not make any reply. If I remember rightly, the amendment was withdrawn, and the original resolution carried. But evidently Mr. Locker-Lampson did not assume any responsibility for communicating with the dominion governments. I have had the matter urged upon me by some of our women's organizations, and when I stated to them the situation as I find it to be now, they further urged that the Canadian parliament should not wait until the Imperial parliament acted, but that we should give to our Canadian women who might marry foreigners the right to retain their nationality unless they themselves definitely decided otherwise. For my part I should like to support that position.

Mr. POWER: Mr. Chairman, within the past few months two or three cases similar to those given have come to my personal knowledge. I may be mistaken in this, but I understand that this is a consequence of the United States quota law, the effect of which is that alien women marrying American citizens do not become citizens of the United States unless they comply with certain requirements in respect to residence. I do not know whether it is three years or five.

Mr. EULER: One year only, I believe.

Mr. POWER: Perhaps so, but there are certain residential qualifications. The hardship which results is that this class of women lose their nationality. They are no longer Canadian citizens under our law because they become citizens of the country of their husband, and they do not acquire any new nationality. It seems only fair, in view of these facts, that some such legislation as has been proposed in the British House of Commons should be introduced here. I commend to the Secretary of State the remarks made by the member for North Waterloo (Mr. Euler) and the member for Lisgar (Mr. Brown) in this regard.

Mr. COPP: I assure my hon. friends that if the legislation that is proposed in the Imperial parliament in regard to this question is placed on the statute book, we will do the same thing here. We shall be very glad to communicate with them and see if we cannot impress upon them the necessity of having this uniform legislation passed. Until that is done, under our agreement with the