

We do not know where they may be. We do not know who the officers may be; we do not know the operations they are conducting. But at Bermuda there is a regiment which was stationed in Halifax. To assist the views of the Conservative party largely, votes are to be given to the sergeants and other officers of that regiment. The effect of this Bill would be to enfranchise the whole of that regiment, and as their domicile was last in Halifax, the whole of that vote would be cast in a constituency in which elections are decided by a very small majority. Incidental to that is the fact that the Prime Minister is expected to be a candidate in that very constituency; therefore this Bill bears directly upon that constituency, with which I am very familiar. Those sergeants, non-commissioned officers and others qualified have been canvassed on a previous occasion. Amongst them were emissaries attached to the Conservative party and working in their interest. Very many of those who were called old soldiers had the idea, which was extensively propagated, that the Conservative party stood for British connection, that the Conservative party were to the last man loyal and identified with the interest of the Empire, but that the Liberal party were identified with the French, or the rebellious party, or the non-contents in Canada who are always in insurrection, always in rebellion, and always inimical to the British Crown. It was put thus to one of them, and he gave his answer very distinctly: "In this ballot paper I find the names of one Englishman and three Irishmen, and I am going to vote for the Englishman." That vote did not extend to the politics which existed in that division of the Canadian forces which is now in Bermuda and whom we are supposed to enfranchise by this Act. What are the facts? The ballot papers are to be issued to the commanding officer, they are to be given to the paymaster; the paymaster will give them to the captain over the company; the captain will give them to a sergeant over a unit; the sergeant will hand them over to a corporal, unless he has been induced to act as an active partisan in the matter; and we may take every precaution that the ballot is to be handed in formally and precisely to the commanding officer and an affidavit made before him that he is the man that has his ballot, and so on, and that it is to be duly conveyed out to Canada. All that is provided for, but the influence that w

be brought to bear upon this man by the regiment, and upon those associated with them, and by partisans, either paid or otherwise, imbued with those sentiments, is a very dangerous phase. All these formalities that we have introduced into these clauses will be nugatory unless that sentiment is eliminated altogether. What has that sentiment done already? What damage has it wrought in Canada and the Empire? I believe that that was one of the main reasons for the war; the Conservative party, the British press and all those interested in jingoism, conveyed the idea that there was seething revolution in Canada, that the people were not loyal to the Empire, that if war should break out they would not go forward to defend the Empire, that they were disloyal to the core. I believe that that was one of the inducing causes which led the military party in Germany to precipitate this war. It was brought about by the jingo press in England and by the re-echo of that press in Canada producing the conviction that the whole Liberal party, one half of the electorate in Canada, was inimical to Great Britain and was only rejoicing in the opportunity of severing the connection and of coming out for independence or joining the United States. Now, I say that those influences will be brought to bear upon the individual soldier. No individual soldier will want to vote against the Government; for the vicious part of this Bill is the insidious clause, insinuates "Vote for the Government or for the Opposition which is against the Government," and how will that be construed? The man who votes against the Government will be told "you are against the British Empire, you are against the troops in the field, you are against British institutions, you are against the King." The man who votes for the Opposition will meet the obloquy of all that, the ridicule and the threats; that man knows there is no preference for him if he votes in that way. The man who would vote for the Liberal party, or for the Opposition, would know he was a doomed man. We are sending those men to vote with a halter around their necks. My hon. friend talks about entanglement and barbed wire; this is nothing else but asking a man to commit suicide in the present state of the British Army in the field confronting the enemy. He is not a free man. He has not the benefit of our institutions. In civil elections men can be seen and canvassed, their sentiments are known, their faces are known, and they know the

Hon. Mr. ROCHE.