

ber for South Renfrew (Mr. Graham) say that an injustice is being done to these people who have been here for twenty or twenty-five years, they are saying something that is not in accordance with the facts, for these men will not be affected in the slightest degree by this Act. It is only those who have come here since 1902 who will be affected, and if these people who have been here twenty years are not naturalized now, it is their own fault.

Furthermore, when the hon. gentlemen opposite say we are doing an injustice to a large portion of the women of this country by depriving them of the franchise, they are making an equally erroneous statement, because the women of this country have never had the franchise, consequently, they cannot be deprived of it. No one in this country has protested more strongly against the granting of the franchise to the women of this country than the leader of the Opposition. In this House, not so very long ago, he protested against forcing the franchise upon the women of the province of Quebec, and he wanted a sort of patch-work affair conferring the franchise upon some women here and there. The Bill is granting the franchise to the wives, sisters and mothers of the soldiers who have gone overseas. It is a recognition of the services that have been rendered by these men. When you think of what these men have endured, and then think of the abuse hon. gentlemen opposite have heaped on some hon. gentlemen on this side of the House who have offered their services, fought in the trenches, and done everything possible to help win the war, I can come to no other conclusion but that it is a guilty conscience that made the hon. member for South Renfrew get up in this House and make the statements he did a few minutes ago, when he accused us of charging the Opposition in this House and the Liberal party with disloyalty. I have never said that they are disloyal. But I do say that the Liberal party in this country, and I know many of them, are ashamed of their leaders at the present time.

I want to say on behalf of the women of this country that they are not claiming that an injustice has been done to them in recognizing the wives and sisters and mothers and daughters of those who have gone to fight the battles of the Empire and of the 30,000 men who have already fallen in battle. On the contrary, many of them who were most active in urging that the franchise be granted to women have come forward and said that they are heartily in

accord with the measure that has been introduced, and are prepared to wait for an extension of the suffrage until the war is over. But they say it is a right and proper thing that the soldiers' women relatives should be given the franchise.

Other speakers have pointed out the influence that 300,000 soldiers could exert in an election if they were present in Canada. As they are absent, it is only right and proper that their representatives here should have some say in the election. This is going to be a war-time election, and it necessitates the passing of a War-Time Elections Act. If there was no war on, hon. gentlemen opposite might have some cause for complaint. The right hon. leader of the Opposition says that this measure involves a breach of faith with those who have come from enemy countries and settled in Canada. Do these people expect the franchise at this time? They are not called upon to serve this country as combatants.

Hon. gentlemen opposite are protesting against compulsory military service. I say that the state has demands on the citizen which the citizen cannot escape when the life of the nation is at stake. It is the duty of every citizen to render every possible service to the state. It is the duty of the Government to see that that service is rendered, but not by going to those who are opposed to military service and asking them whether they would approve of it or not. Compulsory military service has been on the statute books for fifty years, and hon. gentlemen opposite, notwithstanding the efforts which have been made by the right hon. leader of the Government ever since he came back from the Old Country to form a union government by which we could avoid an election, have persistently refused to co-operate. They insisted on an election. They hoped that by reason of the disloyal element—and there is a disloyal element in this country—they hoped by a union of that element with the slackers and the hide-bound partisans whom they expected to support them, that they would gain the ascendancy, and that the leader of the Opposition would be able to open the portals of office even with a "bloody key."

I can quite understand that they feel to-day it would be a tremendous disadvantage to them if the female relatives of the soldiers overseas were recognized and given a voice in this election. They realize that many of those who are in sympathy with them are not going to be permitted to poll their votes in this election,