

## NATIONAL LANGUAGE NECESSARY TO CITIZENSHIP.

There are certain provisions in the amendments to the existing election law proposed by Major John Currie, M.P., that are well worthy of the attention of both political parties. His proposals relate to naturalized voters. One of them which aims to prevent naturalized citizens from resuming the rights of citizenship in the countries from which they came does not mean very much because it is a question for other nations to deal with. If they desire to restore a returned native to citizenship, Canada could not prevent them from doing so. What is really important in Major Currie's bill is the provision that a man cannot become a naturalized citizen—and by inference a voter—until he becomes acquainted with either French or English. It would, indeed, be well if the bill went a little farther and would deny the franchise to a man who could not read or write either French or English. It cannot be argued that a man who cannot read the newspaper and familiarize himself in some degree with political issues is entitled to vote. In the great centres of Canada, like Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver, there are hordes of electors who are herded into the polling booth by party workers, that not only cannot read or write English; but who cannot read or write the language of the various countries from which they came. These men are absolutely ignorant of the demerits of the candidates or issues and are naturally sold to the highest bidder. The party that is best organized and the best "healed" naturally gets them; and under our system of manhood suffrage their votes kill those of honest and intelligent men. The writer knows that it is a question that has seriously worried many of the ablest Jewish rabbis of the country, who have had a very heavy problem imposed on them by the immigration of large numbers of Hebrews from Russia. These immigrants, owing to the state of oppression in which they have lived, are ignorant of Canadian conditions, and it is repugnant to educated Hebrews to see their own people handled like sheep at election time. The same applies to the Galicians, Doukhobors and myriads of men of other races who during the past ten years have peopled sections of the West, and until these persons learn English they are a menace to clean elections in that section of Canada.