

A SILLY ARGUMENT.

When it comes to murdering logic and talking nonsense, a certain type of partisan is invincible. No better evidence of this can be found than in the contention, gravely advanced in Press and Parliament, that the withholding of the franchise from Germans and Austrians in the coming election is violation on Canada's part of a pledge comparable with Germany's infamous treatment of Belgian neutrality. Canada, at war with Germany, is holding a general election, the fundamental issue, of which is whether this country shall continue to fight Germany with all its strength, decides that Austrians and Germans within her shores (many of them reservists of the Teuton armies, and all of them exempted from service in the Canadian forces) shall have no voice in reaching such a decision. Germany, at peace with Belgium, suddenly violates her pledged word, treated her solemn treaty as a "scrap of paper," suddenly swoops down upon the Belgian people, destroyed their churches, desecrated their altars, outraged their women, murdered their children, and swept their country with a tide of blood. In the name of common sense and common decency, let's not make our politics preposterous by comparing these two conditions! What is the sense of all this foolish talk about breaking our pledge to immigrants? Does any sane person suppose that the Austrian and German in this country who wants to see Germany win the war (they would not be human if they wished otherwise) feels he is being badly treated because we do not permit him to have a say as to whether we shall fight the country of his birth all the harder?

This is not a question of violating pledges; it's a question of national security. The Germans in the United States whose newspapers are being suppressed, were guaranteed rights of citizenship by Uncle Sam. Prince Louis of Battenburg, who was removed from high position in the British Admiralty, was a German who had been guaranteed full rights of citizenship and heaped with honors by Britain. The action taken against them was simply in the interests of national security in time of war. And it is this same principle that has impelled Canada, just as it impelled Australia, to prevent former citizens of Germany and Austria from voting in this election. To argue that these men should be permitted to vote is to confess ignorance or indifference of the fact that we are at war with Germany and Austria.