

learned the language and met the statutory requirements, and, if his record had proved good and there was no cause to believe him at heart an enemy, would seem reasonably to have earned the privilege of casting in his lot with Canadians. In cases of aliens other than those from an enemy country eight years was much more than sufficient to secure citizenship, because, until 1919, three years' residence—and this without the knowledge of English or French now required—was the necessary qualification.

By the Act of 1919 the probationary period of residence within the Empire for naturalization of the alien was raised to five years, but it was provided that no person of **alien enemy** birth—whether he had resided in Canada before the war or not—was to be permitted to become a British subject for ten years after the conclusion of peace, the only exceptions being those who had served with the Canadian or British armies or races within the enemy countries who during the war had been hostile to Germany, Austria or Bulgaria.

The result is that a bona fide immigrant from Lower Austria who came to Canada to procure citizenship in 1911 and has proved a peaceful and worthy resident is not permitted to become a British subject or cast a vote in Canada until 1929. It is doubtful whether the Canadian Parliament, when it adopted the uniform British naturalization law last year, ever intended to penalize such a settler for eighteen years. Something might very well be done to relax the stringent operation of this law.

In dealing with citizenship and the franchise it ought to be the earnest aim of Parliament to avoid anything that savors of injustice or unfairness. This country needs worthy settlers, and should make it clear that she is prepared to deal generously, as well as justly, with all those who prove their worth.

#### GRANTING THE FRANCHISE.

First consideration in the framing of Canada's new franchise law ought to be given to the fundamental of first importance. The measure must be just and fair. Prejudice and partisanship have no proper place in its preparation.

It is essential to this young country, emerging from a cruel war and reaching out for the larger population needed to cooperate in resuming the peace projects of national development, that care should be exercised in bestowing the great gifts of British citizenship and Canadian voting power. But it is equally essential that, in so doing, no cause be given worthy settlers from any foreign country to realize that they are victims of unwarranted hardship or discrimination. There should be no unnecessary prolongation of the probationary period of paying taxes without enjoying the privileges eventually associated with that duty in all British democracies. If the Parliamentary protests of Mr. Fred F. Pardee, Dr. Michael Clark, and Mr. W. D. Euler serve to arouse a more serious sense of responsibility on the part of the Government and the House of Commons in dealing with the all-important question of franchise, they will not have been made in vain.

Some days ago The Globe directed attention to the case of the immigrant from Austria, Bulgaria or Germany who came to Canada with peaceful intent in 1911, planning, after the three years' residence required by law, to become a permanent British subject and Canadian citizen. He found himself in the summer of 1914, when his probationary period was about finished barred from all possibility of citizenship during the period of the war. He was an enemy alien, required to report regularly and care was taken to see that he was not merged among the general mass of the citizenship of Canada. This was a proper war-time precaution. In 1919, after eight years in this country, he had probabl