
13 June, 1911.]

NATURALISATION.

[8th Day.

Sir JOHN SIMON—*cont.*

be put in a better position than an exactly similar man who was born within the British Empire. The real safeguard which I suggest that the Dominions have is the power which they, of course, exercise freely as they think right, of imposing conditions which apply not only to aliens, but apply to British subjects, which must be satisfied before those persons in their own area exercise political or other rights. That seems to me really to show that the danger is exaggerated when the danger is referred to of the grant of naturalisation in some other part of the Empire.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I think the Conference are perhaps ready to come to the conclusion on these points. I do not know, Sir Wilfrid, how far we meet your view?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: They do go very far, but not quite as far as I would like. What I have in my mind is this—of course, every one speaks for the country he represents here—the case which I put forward some time ago of the American citizen who has been three years in Canada and becomes a British subject in Canada, but is not a British subject in Great Britain. You would meet partially my views if you were to go further. I had hoped that the man who was a British subject in Canada would be a British subject in Great Britain. I had hoped you would go further than you are going, but if you are going to say that with two further years in Canada he would be a British subject.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Yes.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: I would accept that.

Sir JOHN SIMON: And granted by the Canadian Government.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: Yes, that would carry the full British citizenship.

General BOTHA: I think we should accept Mr. Churchill's suggestion.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: I agree.

Mr. CHURCHILL: May I ask the Conference, then, if they will allow me to have the Bill redrafted at once on the lines of the principles which have been elucidated in the discussion, so that the Bill, or, at any rate, the heads of the Bill* could be submitted to the representatives of the Dominions before they leave this country. I am not quite familiar with the actual procedure of the Conference, but I imagine that we could have a sitting in a fortnight or three weeks of one day when I could submit the draft Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid that will not be possible.

Mr. FISHER: I should like to say, Mr. Harcourt, that I should hesitate to assent to a proposition of that kind—the examination of a Bill to be gone through. We shall do well if we confine ourselves to affirming propositions in well-defined language expressing our views here.

The CHAIRMAN: They must ultimately take the form of a Bill.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: If you ask me, I say we are prepared to accept the proposal as far as Canada is concerned of adding another two years to the period of probation. If you could make it general and say that after continuous residence in any of the Dominions for five years—

* See draft Bill in Volume of papers [Cd. 5746—1].