

exonerated the French residents of the place where the stoning of the train was said to have occurred. It did more; it placed the blame on some of the soldiers themselves. Incidentally it revealed that if the disturbers had had a knowledge of the French language, in all probability there would have been no trouble at all.

Let me refer to another incident in another part of the country. At a conscription meeting held in Queen's Park, Toronto, a returned soldier, who is not, I am convinced, a fair representative of his comrades, is reported to have evoked the loudest cheers of the afternoon by saying that the Government should conscript the foreigners, and that the returned soldiers would fight the French. I am within the judgment of every fair-minded man in Canada when I say that such language as that is deplorable, deplorable in the highest degree. And yet, Sir, in the newspapers of the city where Lount and Matthews gave up their lives that the principles of liberty and justice might survive; in the newspapers of the city where George Brown and Edward Blake lived and preached the gospel of democracy and freedom, I have failed to notice one word of regret or reproof for the language that was used at that meeting. Worse, than that, Sir, we have heard an echo of that very language in this very Chamber. In moving the introduction of this Bill, the Prime Minister, speaking of the Canadians who had enlisted, said:

If what are left of 400,000 such men come back to Canada with fierce resentment, and even rage in their hearts, conscious that they have been deserted and betrayed, how shall we meet them when they ask the reason? I am not so much concerned for the day when this Bill becomes law, as for the day when these men return if it is rejected.

Mr. Speaker, I ask if it would be possible to use language more unfair to the soldiers who have fought for the principle that public opinion must be respected; that there must not be government without the consent of the governed; the soldiers who have fought for the very principle embodied in the amendment of the right hon. leader of the Opposition (sir Wilfrid Laurier)? I ask, would it be possible to use language more unjust to those who oppose this Bill on principle, but who are ready and willing to obey its provisions when approved by a majority of the people? I ask, Sir, would it be possible to use language more provocative, more destructive of that very spirit of fairness and moderation for which the Prime Minister himself appealed in the dis-

[Mr. Murphy.]

cussion of this Bill? The words of a mob orator, unskilled in public speaking, without responsibility and carried away by the excitement of the moment, may at times and on public grounds be excused; but no such excuse can be advanced for the words of a Prime Minister, speaking in a deliberative assembly such as this. Much as I regret the Prime Minister's words, it is not my intention to retort in kind. Rather, Sir, would I appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober; rather would I ask the Prime Minister to bear in mind his own dictum that it is easy to sow the wind of clamour, and to apply, in quarters where it is most needed—and they are not far distant from his own political household—his own conclusion that those who make that sowing may reap such a whirlwind as they do not dream of to-day. If my right hon. friend will do that, I am confident he will decide that the first application of the lesson should be made elsewhere than in the province of Quebec.

But, Sir, it is not merely to such attacks as those I have alluded that we are to attribute the lack of that united effort which it is pretended this Bill will supply. These attacks are bad enough, but there is a more deep-rooted cause of discontent, which this Bill will undoubtedly not remove, but which I am profoundly convinced this Bill will make much worse. It is evident to every Canadian who is concerned about his country's welfare and the unity of its people, that neither can be secured while our French fellow-citizens are disturbed by the belief that there is a disposition on the part of the English majority to deprive them of the use of their language. At such a critical time as this, it is useless to argue whether that belief is well or ill founded. Argument of that kind will accomplish nothing. The sensible, the courageous, and the patriotic thing to do is to frankly recognize that the belief exists, and to seek to dispel it at the earliest possible moment. The statesman or the Government that will adopt that course will do more to stimulate recruiting, will do more for the boys in the trenches, and will render better and more effective service to Canada and the Empire than all the Bills this Parliament can pass.

In this same connection, I would offer a friendly suggestion to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Doherty). He is designated in the Bill as the minister by whom its provisions are to be carried out. For reasons that will readily occur to my hon.