

for civil liberty in Quebec, and for unity and harmony in this great country, I have yet to read it.

Mr. Speaker, this is no time for politics and personalities. I might say, as the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Clark) said of my leader, that the leader of the Government intended to use this Bill to win an election. There are clauses in this Bill which I regard as absolutely unnecessary and redundant, and which might lead one to that conclusion. I have heard that suggested, but I do not think it will assist in the discussion of the Bill to make such suggestions. I might find fault with the Prime Minister of this country because he promised in January, 1916, 500,000 Canadian boys to fight the battles of Britain, I may say, Mr. Speaker, that that rather flavoured of Czarism, that it might be all right in Russia, but in a free country, when Parliament was about to be assembled, it was not the proper thing to do, but that would not assist in the solution of the situation. I might go further along that line and say that the mal-administration of this Government has led to this situation, but I do not intend to do so.

Mr. PUGSLEY: The hon. gentleman came mighty close to saying it.

Mr. ROSS: I might say many other things. Members on the other side of the Chamber have said many bitter things, which I think were entirely uncalled for and unnecessary, and will not help the situation in the least degree. All the wrong in this matter does not come from the province of Quebec. Ontario is somewhat at fault also, but I do not know that it assists in any way to stir up these old bitter-nesses. For my part, I am quite ready to let the dead past bury its dead. This is no time for personalities or for politics. The nations are having the greatest struggle for liberty which has ever occurred in the world. In the past there have been struggles which inspired the poet, the bards, and the historians of almost every nation. They inspire us to-day. No man can read of the immortal heroism of the Greek people, when they were fighting against the domination and cruelty of Turkey, without having their heart's chords touched. No man can read of the heroic struggle of Poland against her inhuman adversary, or of the downfall of Warsaw and the death of Kosciusko, and the death of Polish freedom, without having his blood run more quickly through his veins. No Scotchman in Canada can read of

Wallace or Bruce of Bannockburn, and the struggle of the Scotchmen for their liberties, without being proud of his country and countrymen. But the Canadian people are engaged in a much greater struggle. The struggle of the small countries for their liberties might be said to be the mere glimmer of a firefly as compared with the dazzling light of the noon day sun, in comparison with the great struggle the Canadian people are engaged in to-day. Scotland was a poor country. Her soil was poor. It was not timber nor agricultural land, but the people were fighting for what was dearer to them than their country or their lives. They were fighting for their liberty, and I say that their descendants in this country, and the descendants of all the British races, are not, at this stage of the war, going back on the heroic inclinations and the heroic traditions of their ancestors, and are not going to refuse to assist the Canadian boys who are at the front to-day, fighting the battles of civilization.

When I say I am in favour of the principles of this Bill, I mean it, but I do not think at this time it would be wise for this Government, nor would it be wise for any other Government, to immediately put this measure in force. I do not know what the Government is going to do. It will not tell us. I do not know why we have not been informed of their intention. The Parliamentary Secretary of the Militia Department told us the other night he thought it should be put in force immediately. I do not think the Prime Minister intended to put it in force immediately, because he made an offer of coalition to my honoured leader, and an election was to be held in regard to this measure, so that he could not have intended to put it into force immediately. I do not think the Government really know what they intend to do. The reading of the Bill would lead one to think they did not know themselves, because, if they intended to put it in force immediately, they would not provide that it should only go into effect by Order in Council. However, my opinion is that voluntary recruiting in this country has done wonderful things. I do not think it has fallen down. I do not think any country in the world, situated as we are, could have done better than the Canadian people have done. I think more good can be done yet under the voluntary system, and the men we require to reinforce our boys can yet be procured by that system.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Hear, hear.

Mr. ROSS: I agree with the member for West Lambton (Mr. Pardee) in that re-