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# THE BUSINESS OF WAR

## AND

### THE MAN CANADA CHOSE TO BE OVERSEAS GENERAL MANAGER.

One of the outstanding characteristics of the Canadian temperament is common sense. It is not that imagination is lacking, but everything that really represents Canadianism has the quality of common sense somewhere about it.

It was patriotism that made her throw in her lot with the Empire in this war—it was also good common sense.

It was superb determination that made her enforce the Military Service Act when the striking power of her Army Corps was at stake—it was common sense as well.

With Lt.-General Sir Richard Turner, V.C., in command of her troops in England, and Lt.-General Sir Arthur Currie leading the Corps in France, Canada had placed the military end of the war in the hands of her two foremost soldiers. It was a natural deduction of her logical mind that a business man should be placed in charge of the Overseas business in connection with the war—also, since it was too vital to permit of experiment, he would have to be a *successful* business man.

The Canadian Government took into cognizance Sir Edward Kemp's record as Chairman of the War Purchasing Committee, his level-headed handling of the Militia Department since he took over from Sir Sam Hughes in November, 1916; and they noted the fact that by legitimate business enterprise he had become a very wealthy manufacturer—whereupon they decided to do the sensible thing.

They offered Sir Edward Kemp the position of Minister of Overseas Military Forces of Canada.

Most laymen's brains gave up trying to comprehend war finance about four years ago. A few men like Sir Edward Kemp brought their shrewdness and financial experience to bear upon the subject. They were impressed but not awed by the colossal figures. They determined that the soldiers should want for nothing—and also that there should be the minimum of waste.

Sir Edward Kemp applied certain rules that he knew would be effective.

One was—if there are sixteen holes in a pipe and you want the water to emerge from only one, stop up the other fifteen. I doubt if Sir Edward would admit that that is one of his maxims, but to us who watched him that seemed to be his idea. He didn't try to save so many million dollars a month in a heap—he just began to plug up the holes where the wastages were occurring. And much of our sound position to-day is due to this common sense policy adopted by Sir Edward Kemp and the group of men at the head of affairs.

As a matter of fact the Overseas Minister is not a man whose business maxims are starched and obtrusive. He keeps an open mind and brings imaginativeness to bear on everything—but any proposition that doesn't endure the acid test of common sense has a poor chance with him.

When the Hun cried "Hold! enough!" on November 11th, Sir Edward's task, which had been tremendous, became Herculean. Turning civilians into soldiers is fairly simple with a well running military machine, but transforming soldiers into civilians requires

genius. The Overseas Minister is keeping certain factors before him—that every recognition deserved by Canada's fighters must be shown to them; that, if possible the fighting units in the field shall return intact so that the spirit of Canada in France may be transported to the Dominion; that no soldier shall be the object of charity nor pauperised by sloppy sentimentality. The debt that the Dominion owes to her men as soldiers will be paid to the limit: the obligation that she owes to them as men about to become civilians again is only second in importance.

Sir Edward Kemp looks farther ahead than demobilization; he is taking the deepest personal interest in the re-settlement of soldiers on the land and their re-establishment in civil life. He is lending his valuable assistance to all the various bodies, including the Khaki University, the Canadian Y.M.C.A., and the Chaplain Services, which are all co-operating to do the best for the men on their return.

I have a feeling that, though he is essentially a civilian, Sir Edward is not entirely indifferent to the joys of a fight. No constituency has more hecklers and instinctive orators than East Toronto. It is a constituency where the voice of Labour is heard—and it is anything but dumb. At the last election his majority was 8000.

There's something in a man when Labour elects Capital to represent it.

Once, the opposition in the House at Ottawa, girded its loins and decided to challenge the War Expenditures. Sir Edward marched into the House and with a crispness and a clarity that was most effective, proceeded to annihilate his critics.

It takes a man of considerable courage to venture into the lists of War Finance as a critic. When his opponent is Sir Edward Kemp it amounts to heroism. Since that time there has hardly been a question asked.

He has always insisted that there must be no secret expenditure: the books of Canada must be open for audit at any time.

Although he is a wealthy man to-day, I imagine Sir Edward looks back with grim pleasure to those three years when ruin stared him in the face, and because he believed in the country, in his business and in himself he hung on. It was a scrap with adversity that would bring joy to any fighter's heart—and finally the long lane turned. To-day, the firm that consisted once of Albert Edward Kemp with assets consisting principally of bull-dog grit, is a gigantic metal manufacturing concern with branches in various parts of Canada, and employing thousands of hands.

It left him alert, shrewd and determined, but it did not harden him. He is deeply patriotic but does not believe in hysteria.

He has unbounded faith in Canada, but realizes that the Mother Country has certain things which we must learn. Sir Edward is just as proud of the Corps as anyone, but he is punctilious in his observance of the fact that the Canadians are part of the glorious British Army.

Sir Edward Kemp has made a real success of his overwhelming task. He is too busy to be spectacular—and besides he dislikes brass band effects.

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