

all through my career as an officer I constantly had in view the fact also that I was one of the members of this House and that I should comport myself in accordance with its dignity and honour. Far greater responsibilities rested upon me than upon anybody else there, but I never found the fact that I was a member of Parliament had anything at all to do with assisting me in any possible way, because I did not presume upon that; I took very great care that I never presumed or asked anything for myself from any person; neither political favour nor military favour of any kind have I asked for myself. There has, as I have said, been a little gossip. The men in my regiment and my officers know that when a battle takes place and I am there with them it is my duty to be there to lead them, rifle in hand; and after the battle is over I am the man who knows whether they comported themselves with bravery and dignity or not. The man who knows whether I did my duty there is Brigadier General Turner, V.C., who was with me all through the fight, and who shared the same dig-in with me during part of the remaining twelve days of the battle when we were in the thick of it night and day. When I was invalided to England he was good enough to ask for four days more leave for me. I got six days to start with and he was pleased to give me four days more, and he wrote me a letter which I think it is only right, in justice to myself, I should put on record here as it will show that the words I have spoken to you are true. This letter was written on the 10th of May, virtually on the battlefield. The general was in the thick of the fight at Festubert a few days later. General Turner does not hesitate to go in with his men. He does not ask any officer or man in his brigade to do anything that he was not willing to do himself. That is the kind of man he is. He is an opponent of mine politically, so you will understand that there is no scratching of one another's backs, and no politics in this. He wrote to me:

Dear Colonel:

Leave has been extended for four days as requested.

The process of reorganizing is a heavy one.

Your battalion will have lost its identity as the 48th Highlanders.

In forwarding recommendation for "Mention in Despatches" it has given me great pleasure including your name for the valuable services rendered at St. Julien.

According to medical officers and my own opinion you are entitled to a good rest or suitable staff employment.

[Mr. Currie.]

You have done more than called for as a regimental officer.

With best wishes, believe me,

Yours sincerely,

R. E. W. Turner.

General Turner, in his modesty, has not added the words letters "V.C." after his name, as he was entitled to do. That letter speaks for itself. So far as my conduct is concerned, there is nothing to be ashamed of there. So far as the conduct of any Canadian soldier in the Canadian army that took part in that battle is concerned there is nothing to be ashamed of as far as I know. I am speaking for them all. If anything has been said or done since to my injury there are only two men who stood between me and any decorations that might have come to me, or any "mention in despatches," and these were General Alderson and the Minister of Militia here. One was six miles back of the line all through the fight, and the other was attending to his duty in Canada, several thousand miles away. I choose to take the verdict of the man who stood over me in the trenches and the men that fought alongside of me.

We will now pass from what is a very disagreeable thing for me to speak of a personal matter, because a soldier has only his honour; you get nothing but hard knocks out of war and a little honour; so let us turn to the question of the war itself. We have now some 250,000 men ready for the field, and we are asked to get more men and yet more men. There are three things we will need: men, money, and munitions, and then more money and munitions. Of men we have now 250,000, and I often wish that this country had been blessed with national service before this war broke out. Then there would have been no heart burnings. The French people have national service, and you have no idea of their attachment to their country, and the excellent way in which that service works out. In France, when war broke out, every man, woman and child in the state was mobilized for war. The man whose place was behind the desk at the bank was left there, that was his place. The man who was to till the ground was left there. The only son of the widow, the only hope and support of a widow, or the bread winner of a small family, he was not taken off to the war. Places were adjusted for everybody, and there were no qualms of conscience in anybody whether he should don khaki or