

In the notable victories leading to the glorious issue accomplished by the arms of the Allies, none of the forces engaged bore a more valorous or heroic part than those of Canada, whose achievements throughout the entire war have won imperishable renown for their country. It is most gratifying to be able to state that, in the final and decisive stages of the mighty struggle, our divisions in the field were maintained at over-strength, and equipped in the highest degree with all the requirements of modern warfare. The appreciation and gratitude of the nation cannot be too earnestly and sincerely expressed to the gallant members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, whose sacrifices, sufferings and heroism have played so effectual a part in vindicating the cause of world-liberty and civilization.

Prior to the armistice, plans and preparations had been made for the return, demobilization and re-establishment in civil life, after the close of the war, of our soldiers with their dependents overseas. These are now in operation, and while this great undertaking presents, owing to after-war conditions, many difficulties and complications, it is confidently expected that it will be accomplished speedily and satisfactorily.

Immediately upon the conclusion of the armistice, which necessarily involved the cessation of operations in the manufacture of munitions and in other essential war industries, steps were taken by my advisers to facilitate the readjustment of business, and to provide employment. Orders in Council embodying the measures adopted will be laid before you without delay.

A Bill relating to the franchise, with such provisions as are necessary having regard to existing conditions, and providing among other things for effectually enabling women to vote, and conferring upon them the privilege of sitting in Parliament, will be submitted for your consideration.

Your attention will also be invited to Bills providing for aid in the construction of highways; for assisting returned soldiers in establishing themselves upon the land, and for promoting desirable immigration and farm settlement.

Bills will also be submitted for the promotion of vocational education; for the creation of a Department of Public Health; for promoting better housing conditions throughout the Dominion by loans made for the purpose to the several Provincial Governments, and for the validation by Parliament of Orders in Council prohibiting the importation and manufacture of intoxicating beverages, and the transportation thereof into any community where their sale is contrary to law. Other necessary legislation dealing with matters, including pensions to soldiers and their dependents, now regulated by Orders in Council, will be laid before you. Further important measures, designed to promote the welfare and prosperity of the people in the new era of reconstruction, social as well as material, upon which the world has entered, will be recommended to your consideration.

After more than four years of war, and notwithstanding the sudden dislocation brought about by the armistice, Canada's industrial, commercial and financial stability has been well maintained. It is the expectation that in addition to business arising from the resumption of public and private undertakings in Canada which were suspended by the war, and needed improvements and betterments throughout the Dominion, Canada will obtain substantial participation in the expansion of export trade following the conclusion of the war, and the liberation of commerce from the restraints which have existed during its continuance. Steps have been taken by my advisers to promote and facilitate such participation.

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons:*

The accounts of the last and the estimates for the next fiscal year will be submitted to you without delay, and you will be asked to make the necessary financial provision for meeting the remaining expenditures arising out of the war and connected with demobilization; also for the establishment of credits for the financing of purchases of our agricultural, industrial and other products.