

of Falkland Islands had not been fought. Nevertheless, a very few weeks afterwards the navy accomplished all that the Empire expected it to accomplish. We must bear in mind that everything in this war depends upon the British Navy. It does not matter how bravely our men may fight; it does not matter how much money the Minister of Finance may have; the fact remains that the products of the farm in this country would not be worth 15 cents on the dollar were it not for the British Navy. I think that the Navy should always be borne in mind, especially by those who farm the wheat fields in the West. We must bear in mind this: that if we want free wheat—and I confess I see no reason why we should not have free wheat, always bearing in mind that whilst this war is on we are all dependent upon the British Navy to market our crops. The British Navy has marketed the Canadian crops this year, and not only the crops of this country, but those of the other dominions and colonies, Australia included. Would it be well for us to endanger that support by allowing our products to be diluted with foreign grain? That is something we should consider when we are talking of the question of free wheat, and perhaps it would be well to leave the discussion of free wheat over until after the war.

Well, the British Navy saw us safely over to Great Britain. When we landed, we were immediately sent to the highest plateau in England, known as Salisbury Plain. Salisbury Plain is one of the most historic spots in England. There you will see the remains of Britons, Romans, and Normans. There were gathered at times the military people of England for three or four thousand years; mounds there mark the graves of forgotten kings and warriors. We were the latest warriors to reach Salisbury Plain, and we certainly had a time of it whilst we were there. When we reached that camp we imagined that we were going to be drilled by English officers, and that our work would be easy for us. At that time, however, Great Britain was in the throes of mobilizing Kitchener's army. Thousands of men were joining the colours, and the authorities could not get enough instructors to train the troops, with the result that pensioners of 70 and 80 years of age were called upon to help in the work of instruction. The Canadian force supplied some instructors to the British Army, my own battalion amongst the number, and I am very

[Mr. Currie.]

pleased to say that one of the lads from my battalion won the Military Cross at the Dardanelles the other day. He joined the British Army from the ranks of my regiment, and to-day he is a major in the British army. That speaks for Canadian merit. Some 18 or 20 others took commissions, and assisted in instructing that great army which was still in the process of organization. When I left England in midsummer last year, fully 50 per cent had not then received their uniforms, arms, or equipment, and yet we in Canada continually proclaim our helplessness, and rail because a man does not get his uniform and equipment the moment he enlists. Few of us have any idea of the enormous amount of work that Great Britain had to accomplish in order to arm herself for this momentous struggle.

To-day Canada has virtually twice as many regular troops as Great Britain had at the beginning of the war. One hundred and fifty thousand men—just imagine what a paltry army that British army was. Why, we would hardly go out to see it march past in Canada now, when we talk in hundreds of thousands. We had considerable difficulties there. The climate was very disagreeable, and we were kept under canvas which was not very good, canvas which looked rather like cheesecloth. We were kept under that canvas all through the fall of the year and during a very wet season. It rained continually; it was the wettest season they had ever had on Salisbury Plains. One author has written something about the rains on Salisbury Plains being very bad for the men, and he was perfectly right, so far as that goes. The weather was exceedingly bad, but the troops stood it well. They drilled regularly every day and at night, twice a week, under our own officers, and I may say that our own officers far exceeded expectations in that respect. Fuss and feathers were cut out almost entirely. Officers from the front came over to give us some idea of the conditions there, and our officers studied the methods and results, and organized the force until when it went to France it was one of the best divisions there. Ever since I joined the force, I have been "soldiering," and therefore my lips are closed with regard to a great many things that occurred at the front, because it does not do for a man who wears a military uniform to discuss questions that appertain to civil affairs or to military matters. Here I am free to speak, and there is one matter that I wish the Government would