

front. The tribute which they have so eloquently paid to the courage, sacrifices and achievements of the Canadian Expeditionary Force will be proudly and gladly responded to by the people of this country. From Ypres to Mons, an unbroken series of victories, often against the most desperate odds, attests the valour which has won the unstinted admiration of the world, and which will for all time be the most cherished tradition of the Canadian people.

Mr. Speaker, when this House prorogued in May last, it is not too much to say the destiny of Canada, of the Empire, of the world, and of civilization as we understand it, hung visibly in the balance. The enemy, after his successful attacks with massed and overwhelming forces in March and April, was pressing down the Somme towards the sea. It was clearly his intention to throw the British troops into the Channel,—to roll up the French line upon Paris and, as he thought, to bring the war to an end with one stroke. That was what the German Emperor had in mind when, a few months earlier, he predicted a victory for the German arms and, as he termed it, a good German peace. We all know what kind of peace that would have been. How serious the situation was, how nearly the plan came to realization, may be known to members of this House when I say that, at the time when the Prime Minister and some of his colleagues visited England in early June, Allied strategists were carefully studying the problem involved in a possible evacuation of the channel ports and even the withdrawal of the Allied line to the south of Paris. But in July, by one of the most sudden and extraordinary reversals of fortune in all military history, the change came, and at the second battle of the Marne; under the genius of Marshal Foch, there was established a new turning point in world history, and the Allies in all theatres of action were able to take the offensive.

Then followed in dramatic succession the unconditional surrender of Bulgaria, the collapse of Turkey, the capitulation of Austria-Hungary, and finally, after most desperate and sanguinary fighting, the surrender of Germany on November 11, 1918. Without any desire to boast, we must not fail to bear in mind the mighty part played by the British Empire in this great struggle. It is not too much to say, Mr. Speaker, making all allowance for the efforts of the other Allies, and particularly that of France, whose courage and heroism have been sublime, that the very shield and buckler of world defense against Prussian

[Sir Thomas White.]

tyranny and aggression have been the naval and military forces of Great Britain. The casualties, Mr. Speaker, show the degree of participation of the Allies in the closing battles of this war. It was, according to Marshal Foch, the illustrious and magnanimous generalissimo of the allied forces, the hammer strokes of the British army, including the Canadian divisions, which broke through the Hindenburg line and brought Germany to her knees, and it will be an eternal source of pride to the people of this country that the first troops to enter Cambrai, which was the great bastion of German defence on the west wore the uniform of Canada. It will also be a source of noble pride to the people of this country that on the last day of the war Canadian troops entered Mons from which the British forces at the beginning of the war had been driven by overwhelming enemy forces. The old saying holds true, that Great Britain always wins the last battle in any war in which she is engaged.

It is a great thing, Mr. Speaker, to be a citizen of the British Empire to-day, and it seems to me that in addition to the pride which this war must give us in our British citizenship there must also be a distinct gain in the sense of Canadian national unity by reason of our achievements in this war, and particularly those of our Canadian expeditionary forces overseas. The heroism, the sufferings, the sacrifices and common endeavours of Great Britain, of Canada, of Australia, of New Zealand, of South Africa, and of India, must also it seems to me bind together for all time, as with links of steel, those component parts of the Empire in loyal, loving, and indissoluble union.

Mr. Speaker, the war is over, and the Peace Conference is engaged in dealing with the most momentous questions which have ever come before a congress of world's statesmen. It would be premature to discuss the conclusions to which that conference should arrive. Suffice it to say that there are seated there the ablest statesmen in the world to-day. Canada is represented by the experience and wisdom of her Prime Minister, the Right Hon. Sir Robert Borden, and those of his colleagues who accompany him. The task is, indeed, a heavy one—the settling of the terms of peace, the recasting of the boundaries of European countries, the re-grouping of nationalities, and the establishment of guarantees and securities for that permanent peace of the world which is necessary if civilization is not to be wholly destroyed. There are, however, two observations which I desire to make.