

ples to-day. This war will go down in history as one in which the overseas dominions recognized without discussion or hesitation that when Great Britain was at war those dominions likewise were at war; that Great Britain's obligations were their obligations whether offensive or defensive; and that the duty was theirs to march in step with the armies of the empire whithersoever that march might lead.

The present situation is unique not only in our actual relations to the empire but even more so in thus settling for some time at least the future relations of Canada to the empire. For some years past the future of Canada proved a prolific theme for discussion and thought. Constitutional students have worked out time and again the national destiny that would be most advantageous for the future of Canada. Much has been said and written upon the inexpediency of Canada in any way being involved in the complexities and conflicts of European diplomacy. Publicists have discussed this subject as if it were purely one of cold reason, one in which Canada could at will detach itself from the sentiments and traditions of the empire and map out for itself a constitution and a national career entirely apart and distinct from the ties that up to the present time have bound it to the empire. We have discussed at length, and very properly in all seriousness, whether Canada should involve itself in the conflicts and wars of another continent, but suddenly as a bolt from the blue England's declaration of war has aroused the whole of Canada to action and fired its patriotism as if we were part and parcel of the United Kingdom. The response which has been made from the Atlantic to the Pacific is not the response of the Government of Canada nor of any political party, but the irresistible sentiment and will and voice of a united people. It is in answer to this sentiment that this special meeting of Parliament has been called; it is in response to this spontaneous outburst of loyalty and patriotism to the empire that we are about to proceed to consider the measures to be submitted to Parliament.

When war's alarms resound throughout the nation it is surprising how seemingly petty become many subjects and concerns of party warfare. It is gratifying to note how trivial and superficial are the differences that have divided great parties and how easily united are all

sections and parties in the face of a common danger. Few things have been more gratifying than the common front presented by political parties in Great Britain, who a few days ago seemed to be on the borders of civil war, but who within twenty-four hours forgot all their differences and stood shoulder to shoulder ready both to attack and repel the common enemy. It is likewise gratifying that within our own boundaries political divisions have been forgotten, party strife has been silenced and a united people seek to outrival each other in responding to the calls of empire. In view of what has happened the paramount duty of the Government upon the declaration of war was to respond to the sentiment and will of the people so irresistibly expressed throughout the whole of Canada. This we have done.

While the situation which faces the empire has been brought about without Canada having had a constitutional voice therein, yet we accept the situation as freely and as loyally as if the responsibility had been entirely our own. We, therefore, approach the duty cast upon the Government in meeting this national crisis, this state of war in which the empire is placed, as a duty pointed out not by the Government itself nor by any political party, but by the people themselves. Canada finds itself as a part of the empire in a state of war with Germany and Austria-Hungary. We accept the situation with equanimity. While we make no comment that we had not a voice in bringing it about yet we view the situation with precisely the same satisfaction as do the people of Great Britain. This is another manifestation of the same national sentiment that is found in the very heart of the empire.

Probably no good purpose is to be served by attempting to discuss the causes which have led to the present war, owing to the complexities of the European situation which for some years past have placed the most extraordinary strain upon the great powers in building up those titanic armaments which daily threatened to convert Europe into a shambles. It has been apparent for some time that the strain had about reached its limit. The absolute refusal of Germany to call a halt in its armaments, notwithstanding the pacific approaches made from time to time by the other powers to secure its consent to disarmament, constituted such a menace as