

aments depend upon policy." Now, what is the policy of the British Government at the present moment? Their first item of policy which has any bearing on the question of armaments, from my point of view, is that the Old Country has entered heartily into the support of the League of Nations. If that be our policy, if that be the policy which we believe to be the one that should guide the most advanced nations of the world then surely it has a most important bearing on our attitude to armaments. Because if you are going to make the League of Nations a success, if you are going to have combination of the strongest peoples of the world to prevent war, then I submit to this committee that you are not going to do that by following the old path of believing that war is eternal, and that therefore the competition in armaments must recommence, with the horrible experiences the world has gone through in the last six years. I have heard opinions of the lightest character expressed about the League of Nations and its chances of success in this world. Mr. Chairman, I have no sympathy with those expressions; and at this point I want to pay a compliment to my hon. friend the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Rowell) who seems to be the one member of the Government, the one public man of Cabinet standing, who in this country has devoted himself with wholeheartedness, so far as his leisure would permit him, to making Canada's contribution to the League of Nations a real success.

I pass from that consideration in regard to my hon. friend to a consideration of the men who are behind the League of Nations in Great Britain. Unfortunately, on this continent, President Wilson, who did splendid service in this connection has been put out of commission—he has had an unfortunate illness. But in Great Britain the world is distinguished in having A. J. Balfour, of almost unparalleled experience and ability in politics; Lord Grey, whose knowledge of foreign policy is not exceeded by any one; Lord Robert Cecil, Lord Bryce, and numbers of others of little less calibre that we could mention, who not only believe that the League of Nations will be a success but are working might and main to make it a success. Now if that is the policy of Canadian statesmen—and here I speak to both sides of the House—I confess that I think we should have spent our time better if we had voted a sum of money to bringing our own people up to the high mark of civilized thought upon this question instead

[Mr. M. Clark.]

of voting two and a half millions at almost the first session of Parliament after the war is over, for the buying, or upkeep, of vessels of warfare. I cannot disguise from myself in this connection that we have had an expression of an opinion from one of the calmest minds in the Empire or the world, Viscount Grey; that another war would mean the ruin of civilization. That is a very weighty opinion coming from such a source, and if we subscribe to it, we will be careful ere we embark upon this war of armaments, because the one war leads inevitably to the other one. And that leads me logically to this consideration that if the war did anything it demonstrated the absolute fallacy of the old pagan doctrine which has come down to us from thousands of years and has been preached up to the very commencement of the last war—the fallacy that to prepare for war is the best way to maintain peace. Mr. Chairman, I submit that no man with ordinary intelligence who looks at the history of this war and the events that preceded it, will ever maintain that old fallacy again. Why, what did we have? If ever a war would have been prevented by preparation for war then the last war surely never would have occurred. We had the nations of Europe arming and arming by sea and land, until they were staked against one another and held back like dogs in the leash, until the leash broke, and the most civilized peoples of mankind poured themselves out in slaughter upon one another, with the result that civilization was shaken to its very foundations, and it is hardly yet at the point at which it has recovered. Now there is this further consideration in this connection—it is a supplementary thought to that which I have just tried to impress upon the committee: that we cannot any longer logically hold that to prepare for war is the best way to keep the peace. Sir, the very opposite is the truth. As sure as the nations embark in a competition of armaments, so surely, sooner or later, will they land themselves in war again. That is one of the lessons of the late war that we cannot hide from ourselves. But the war has demonstrated this further supplemental fact, as I mentioned in a word or two uttered upon the military estimates—that a nation not warlike at the beginning of a war can be one of the most potent factors in the final and concluding stages of that war. For proof of that I only ask Canadians to reflect, as they may do with pride, upon what happened by the