

## Graver Issue than Confederation.

**I**N 1917 the people of Canada faced a much graver issue than Confederation. It involved not only the future of Confederation, but Canada's part in the struggle for human liberty throughout the world. Without compulsory military service our troops could not be reinforced adequately, and without a union of political forces compulsory military service could not be carried into effect. As I have already stated, the great majority of the English-speaking Liberal members of the House of Commons, and the Liberal leaders from every Province of Canada, save Quebec, approved compulsory military service and Union Government. Sir Wilfrid and the leaders from Quebec opposed. The Liberal leaders from the other Provinces, had to face the issue of whether party unity and personal considerations or the national interests should be paramount. They chose as Brown did to place national interests first. History has already justified and more than justified Brown and Mowat's stand in 1864. It will equally justify the stand of the English-speaking Liberals of 1917.

Surely it should be possible, in the face of the grave problems which we are now facing, for men to subordinate their party prejudices to the national interests, forget their differences for the time being, and move forward as a united people. During this past year Canada has made a great contribution to the overthrow of Prussian military autocracy and the re-establishment of human Liberty in the world. We have also laid anew the foundations of Canadian national unity on the solid basis of the common obligation of every citizen to serve the state in the hour of his country's need. These are great achievements, but we must now address ourselves to even more difficult tasks, that of bringing back our soldiers from overseas and restoring them to civil life, and of applying the principles of Democracy and Justice for which our men have sacrificed so much, to the solution of our own domestic problems.