

see Belgium actually under the foot of the conqueror, of helping in the defence of France and of Belgium. It is not because they hate France, it is not because they hate Belgium, but because we cannot in this way help France or help Belgium without at the same time helping England. Sir, the case of France and the case of Belgium is the case of England. The case of England is the case of Belgium and of France. Away with such sophistry. It is nothing but an attempt to conceal the aridity of empty hearts. But, that is not all. These men also tell us that we may be fighting for an idea, as they say, and we may be fighting for the fate of the Empire, as they say, but that Canada has no direct or material interest in this war. And, every day we read in their press that if Germany were to triumph it would be of no material injury to Canada, that Canada would remain just in the position that Canada is in to-day. Canada, no interest in this war! Sir, I take a very different attitude; I take issue with that statement, and I not only assert that Canada has a direct interest in this war, but I go much further and I say that there is not to-day a civilized nation in the world which has not an interest in this war. Should Germany triumph there would be nations that would rue the day of their indifference and supineness. After all, what is Germany fighting for? For what has she deluged with blood the continent of Europe? Is it not, as has often been stated, for the purpose of world domination? The book published by the French Government on this point some months ago is most instructive. It contains a memorandum of the German staff of date March, 1913, in which it is avowed in so many words that the object of Germany is to dominate the whole civilized world. I may not quote at length, but let me quote just this one sentence which I translate from the French:

Neither the ridiculous howlings of the French Chauvinists for revenge nor the gnashing of teeth of the English nor the feverish antics of the Slavs shall deter us from our aim which is to fortify and extend *Deutschthum* (which means German domination) over the whole world.

And on top of that there is in the book another despatch from the French Ambassador at Berlin, M. Cambon, which further illustrates what I have just stated. M. Cambon, on November 13, writes to his Government in these words:

I have from an absolutely reliable source the tenor of a conversation which the Emperor had with the King of Belgium in presence of the

[Sir Wilfrid Laurier.]

chief of staff, General Molke, about two weeks ago, a conversation which as it would seem vividly struck King Albert.

Nor am I surprised at his impression for it corresponds to that which has been for some time forcing itself on me, *v.z.*, hostility against us is becoming more deeply accentuated and the Emperor has ceased to be favourable to peace.

The interlocutor of the Emperor of Germany, as everybody else, up to that time had believed that William II, whose personal influence had at several critical periods, been thrown on the side of peace was still of the same mind. This time he found him completely changed.

In the course of that conversation the Emperor seemed nervous and irritable.

The weight of advancing years is commencing to tell upon William II, and the traditions of his family, the retrograde sentiments of the Court, and above all the restlessness of the militarists, more deeply affect his mind.

Perhaps also he frets at the growing popularity of his son, who caters to the passions of the pan-Germanists, and does believe that the situation of the empire in the world is not equal to its power.

If I were to conclude I would say that we must be prepared for this new fact, that the Emperor is being reconciled to a conception of things which was previously repugnant to him.

There is the origin of the war. The military party at last prevailed upon the Emperor, and thus the world was plunged into that awful catastrophe. What would be the consequences of a German defeat? If the Germans are defeated the world may look for an era of peace, or disarmament, and of an approach to the ideal condition, the brotherhood of man. But what if Germany were to win? Germany cannot have a complete victory—as to that, it seems to me there cannot be a shadow of doubt. To triumph, Germany has to crush England, to crush France, to crush Russia and to crush Italy, and that is an impossible task. The only problem in my mind is as to the extent of our victory. If we had only half a victory, then Germany would be humiliated, but would still be defiant. She would continue her armaments, and then the other nations would have to follow suit. She would be preparing and arming, and even on this continent, Sir, we would not escape the vortex of European militarism. This, therefore, is our interest in the war; this is the justification of our course. Our action has not been based upon the sophistry which we have heard in the Nationalist press; our action has been based upon the primary condition that we must be free, or that we must lose our freedom. Upon that our choice has been made.

The speech from the Throne announces that we shall have measures to enable the Government to carry on the war. My right