

of the negotiations that had preceded the war, that the allies stood for justice, and that they were not the aggressors. We had, besides, the negotiations which we had followed from day to day, the opinion of a nation who should not have been biased in favour of the allies; in fact, from an ally of Germany and Austria, namely Italy, which declared that by the treaty that bound her to the Triple Alliance she was not called upon to enter a fight which was an aggressive one. This stamped the action of Germany and Austria as one of aggressiveness by its own ally and friend, Italy. Since we separated last August we have been able to look at the correspondence which was exchanged by all the principal powers of Europe during the crisis, and we have the satisfaction of knowing to-day that the universal conscience of the world approves the position taken by the allies. Through all the neutral countries the opinion is held that this war was engineered from Berlin, and from Berlin alone. The evidence is clear that Germany refused to abide by the offer of Sir Edward Grey of an arbitration, which should be offered by two friends of Austria in the difficulty between Austria and Servia, Germany and Italy on the one side, and by two friends of Servia, France and Great Britain on the other. The answer of Germany was 'I do not in principle refuse that suggestion, but I will not suggest it to Austria. Let us see if Austria and Russia cannot open negotiations between themselves, and try and settle this matter between them.' Austria at first seemed to be unwilling to approach Russia and accept the offer of Russia of a quiet discussion between the two, but when Austria realized that Russia was bound to stand by Servia, if there were not some kind of understanding, or agreement, at last yielded to Russia's offer to a conversation between the two powers. The very day this consent was given by Austria, Germany stepped in and declared war against Russia. The reading by any unbiased mind of the history of the negotiations which preceded the declaration of war has crystallized public opinion throughout the world in favour of the cause of the allies. But I want for a few moments to dilate upon one fact which was mentioned by my hon. friend the leader of the Government, that Germany was prepared completely and absolutely for this war, as she thought, while France and Great Britain were not prepared. Of course France was more prepared than Great Britain for a land campaign, but it was

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very evident that France had not within the preceding five years expended all the necessary money to prepare its material, to obtain for instance its heavy guns in order to be ready at a given date. France had reenacted the three years service just a year before, but was simply organizing its forces and preparing for a defence in case an assault should take place such as that which actually happened. It is evident to all military critics that on the first August, 1914, Germany felt that it could not be more prepared than it was, while France was in the same condition that it had been during the five or ten preceding years. Great Britain it is evident was prepared for a conflict at sea, but had not prepared itself for a campaign on land to be begun on the 1st August last. This is clear. And this unpreparedness of France and Great Britain is a complete vindication of the attitude of mind of the allies in this present struggle, of the fact that they had no corrupt intention, since they were going on in their ordinary way without any special preparation for a conflict. If France was half prepared, if Great Britain was not at all prepared for a land campaign, it seems to me that we, in Canada should not be reproached with accusations of unpreparedness or dilatoriness, and yet it is said that we have not done all that we should have done. I read the opinion of Colonel Wood, who is a most estimable gentleman from the city of Quebec, who made a speech before the Canadian Club in Montreal yesterday, and his theme was, 'Canada derelict in duty to Empire,' and Col. Wood proceeded to establish all that Great Britain had done towards Canada and for Canada, and the little we had been doing before and more especially since the first of August for the general cause of Great Britain and the allies. The point I want to make is that since we find the countries of Europe who had not in their minds an assault upon their neighbours, were not in a state of preparedness which we would have liked to find them in, how much more should we find an excuse for a country like Canada, which has never thought of entering world-wide wars, of waging war beyond its border, which has had for one hundred years absolute peace within its borders. How much more excusable are we in having found ourselves in that perfect state of bliss and peace up to the first August last. We must not forget that one hundred years will produce many generations, and in 1914 we were about to celebrate one hundred years of peace with