

benefits Canada. Every effort has been put forth, with enthusiasm and with zeal, to encourage our young men to serve in the army; but no similar effort has been made to encourage them to serve in the navy, and that is a branch of the service in which, as I have said, many thousands of our young men would feel it an honour to serve.

I am glad that hon. gentlemen opposite are coming to reason. Perhaps the minister will allow me to say, without offence, that I trust they will wake up to the necessities of the situation. We know how hampered this Government has been. I know what has hampered it, and every member of this House, and the people of this country, know what has hampered it in regard to doing anything to assist in the naval service of the Empire. They know that this Government pledged itself before the elections of 1911 to abstain, as far as possible, from having anything to do with the naval service of the Empire. I trust that the gentlemen who are coming from England will be able to do something to wake the Government from its lethargy, so far as this important branch of the service is concerned, and that something really beneficial will result from the efforts of the committee who are proposing to visit Canada.

#### CANADA'S TRADE AND COMMERCE.

On the motion for Committee of Supply:

Sir GEORGE FOSTER (Minister of Trade and Commerce): I am going to ask the House this afternoon, before taking up my Estimates, to listen to a short statement which I think may be of some interest in connection with the trade and commerce of the country. I am not making any apology for asking the House to listen to me for a few moments on this matter, as I think it is one of very great importance, and one to which, probably, neither side of the House has devoted that amount of time, energy, and attention which 224 representatives of Canada, comprising business men, men of capacity, men of influence, men of ripe and extended views, men of great experience in commercial and business matters, might have found it profitable to devote.

I do not believe that any of us in this House, or that any one in the country quite appreciates the tremendous transition which is to take place in this country some time soon when war ceases and peace commences, a transition rendered necessary because

of the diversion that has taken place along certain lines since the war began. At the risk of repeating something of the sentiments, if not the words which I have already expressed in this House, I am going to call the attention of the House to a few prominent features of the situation.

What has happened in this country since August, 1914? The happenings have been gradual and, therefore, they have not impressed themselves upon our minds with the same force as if, instead of being gradual, they had come suddenly. But they are none the less important and none the less grave because they have been gradual.

Up to the present time, 300,000 5 p.m. adults have been drawn from the fields of industry, from the factory, the business house, the farm, the mine, and the fisheries. These have been abstracted from productive work in these lines, and if this war continues for a year, or a year and a half more, 500,000 adults will have been abstracted from productive work in this country. Now, if the Minister of the Interior had come to this House two years ago and stated that he could promise that within a year there would be an immigration into this country of men like ourselves, representing an addition of 250,000 adults to the working forces of Canada, he would have made a statement such as had never been made in Canada, or in any other country in the world. And if he had followed that up with the statement that in the succeeding year there would be an immigration of men like ourselves, knowing our institutions, understanding our laws, familiar with our social, intellectual, and moral habits, adding in the course of two years 500,000 working adults to the productive power of this country, that would have been a statement surpassing in interest and gravity the one to which I have just alluded. But does it make any difference whether the statement shall be made in that form or shall be in the inverse form, that in two years during which this war shall have been carried on 500,000 adults shall have been abstracted from the productive forces of this country? That is the first point to consider and it is one which I would like the country to consider very carefully.

More than that, during those same two years something else has been taking place. There has been a diversion from productive, beneficent labour into lines of labour and work which are not beneficent and productive, but which are maleficent and hurtful. Tens upon tens of thousands of