

Government were taking action with the view to having the mines opened. We expect this will be done in a day or two.

Mr. W. A. BUCHANAN (Medicine Hat): I have a couple of telegrams to-day from the unions in Alberta stating that the men had agreed to return to work on the terms agreed to by the Policy Committee and Mr. R. F. Green, M.P., and that their only objection was to the penalty clause, which the operators insisted upon. Is that the case or not?

Mr. CROTHERS: I think the information that my hon. friend has received is correct. The representatives of the miners and operators agreed on everything except the penalty clause.

Mr. OLIVER: Might I further suggest to the Minister of Labour that he take the earliest possible opportunity of placing before the House and the country the conclusions of the Government in regard to the production of coal in the West. The importance of this matter cannot be exaggerated, and I think it would be very much in order if the minister would inform the House and the country as to the situation at the earliest possible moment.

Mr. KNOWLES: Did the minister state that the Government would be operating the mines in a day or two, or simply that they would have an announcement to make then?

Mr. CROTHERS: We expect the mines to be in operation within the next two or three days.

MILITARY SERVICE ACT, 1917.

DEBATE CONTINUED ON MOTION FOR SECOND READING.

Consideration of the motion of the Right Hon. Sir Robert Borden (Prime Minister) for the second reading of Bill No. 75, Military Service Act, 1917, and the amendment of Sir Wilfrid Laurier thereto, and on the amendment to the amendment by Mr. Barrette, resumed from Wednesday, June 20.

Mr. F. F. PARDEE (West Lambton): Mr. Speaker, to my mind there is one thought, and one thought only, in the minds of the people of the Dominion of Canada to-day. That one thought possesses our people in their waking, and I had almost said in their sleeping hours; that thought is of the crisis the Empire is struggling through, and of the means by which we may use all our resources to bring the war to a successful conclusion for

[Mr. Crothers.]

the Allied powers. I am speaking here to-day, Sir, as a Canadian to Canadians and not as party man to party man, for this is not an hour for partisan speeches.

Democracy has made great strides. Prior to August, 1914, I take it, there was not a man in this House—there was scarcely a man in this Dominion—who would have believed, that in this twentieth century, any nation or any people would attempt to strike a blow at the very foundation of democracy, with all the ambitions it inspires in the human heart and with all the benefits it has conferred on the world—and to substitute for it an autocracy, which through the ages has crushed the human race. Such was the wanton design of Germany. Tyrannical to the last degree, cursed with militarism in all its phases, the right of free speech denied, and the people's own parliament practically elected for them, Germany stands opposed to democracy, and for the maintenance of a nation of men in bondage instead of a free people. It is of Germany that Mr. Balfour has said there could be no greater danger to the world than the menace of a nation which believed itself to be superior to all law, human and divine. By the power of might over right Germany seeks to compel other nations to act according to her tenets. Does Canada want that? If that be a true picture of Germany, and I do not think I have overstated the case, is Canada not prepared to say that with all her resources in men and money and in the pride of her young democratic nationhood she shall stand to protect her free institutions against this Prussian slavery, and to help her sister enlightened nations to repel the onslaughts of Prussian barbarism on civilization? These are the thoughts that appeal to me; these are the thoughts that must come home to every one who ponders on the present day situation in world affairs. I say, Sir, that Canada cannot afford to allow the tenets of Germany to prevail through our lack of effort.

Do the people of Canada realize that to-day they are enjoying the greatest freedom to be found amongst nations? Do they realize that, if Germany conquers, they will become bondsmen instead of freemen? That they do realize it to the full, I have reason to doubt, judging by what has taken place during the last year or year and a half. We entered the war with the greatest enthusiasm; we cheered our men off to the front; we threw our hats in the air; we pledged ourselves that we would stand for what we thought was right. The war has gone on. The war has lasted longer than most Canadians ever thought it would.