

Winning the War the Supreme Issue Confronting the Nation.

OTTAWA, November 10, 1917.

TO THE PEOPLE OF CANADA:

The twelfth Parliament has been dissolved, and it becomes the duty of the people to choose a new House of Commons. Under the constitution the mandate of those whom the constituency returned in 1911 expired a year ago. But by agreement between the two parties in both the Commons and the Senate, and with the clear sanction of public opinion, the duration of Parliament was, for causes strange and momentous in our history, extended for one year. A further extension was proposed, but owing to the attitude of the Opposition it could not be pressed, and a general election thus became inevitable.

The circumstances and conditions under which and upon which the people must pronounce judgment are without precedent or parallel. Nearly three and a half years ago, in obedience to honourable alliances and out of regard for her very existence and the security of her Dominions, Great Britain engaged in war with Germany. Canada, as became a partner nation in the British Commonwealth, entered the struggle by the decree of her Parliament. That decree was enacted without a single dissenting voice; and it gave true expression to the sentiment and determination of the people of this country. No Government could have lived, and no Government would have deserved to live, that did not give such instant effect to the popular will. Hesitation would have savoured of cowardice. Delay would have humbled and defamed the nation. Failure to mobilize the manhood and resources of the Dominion for Freedom and Civilization would have exposed us to the scorn of our own time and the contempt of posterity. But neither the Government nor the people hesitated. The resolution and patriotism of the Canadian people found prompt and adequate expression. By voluntary enlistment, an army of over four hundred thousand has been enrolled. Three hundred and fifty thousand Canadian soldiers have gone overseas to service and sacrifice on the scarred fields of France and Flanders. Many thousands of them lie in graves hallowed by their blood