

keep on giving of their best under the voluntary system without quarrelling with their neighbours whether they have done their best or not. When we are being put under a conscriptive system; when the glory, if you like, of voluntarism is to be taken from us, then we demand a square deal; that is all we ask. Everything my hon. friend has said has pointed to the fact that there is an object in this Bill which is not the filling of the line in France and Flanders. It is a Bill with a double purpose; one to find the men for the fighting line, and the other to protect certain home industries. Let the Government bring forward such a Bill as was introduced in New Zealand, for the sole purpose of filling the fighting line, and we can forego details that we demand in regard to this measure. But when a Bill is brought before us which is intended for a double purpose, then those who have done as we have done and who will be called as we shall be called upon under the terms of this Bill, certainly have a right to know how much of this Bill is to be for France and how much of it is to be for Hamilton. The idea that we have gained from the explanation of this Bill is that the man who is necessary in Canada should stay in Canada. Is that right? Am I misinterpreting the expressions of the Solicitor General?

Mr. MEIGHEN: That is fairly correct.

Mr. OLIVER: My hon. friend says that is fairly correct. Do I interpret correctly the sentiments of the member for Kingston (Mr. Nickle) when I say that the principle of the Bill is that the man who is necessary in Canada should stay in Canada?

Mr. NICKLE: Where it is in the greater national interest that the man should stay in Canada rather than go to the front, then he should stay in Canada.

Mr. OLIVER: And what does that mean? It means that the fit men shall stay and that the unfit men shall go. Are you going to beat the Hun with an army made up on such a principle as that? We have an efficient army at the front to-day, not because our unfit men went, but because our fit men went. That is the sacrifice that Canada has made. She sent not of her worst, but of her best, and the consequence is that we have an army of which any country might be proud. And we are going to maintain such an army as that by a conscriptive system the very basic principle of which is that the good man shall stay in

Canada and that the man who is not good enough for Canada shall go to the firing line.

It is the same principle that was recognized in the decision of a city magistrate which I laid before the House some time ago. A man convicted of horse stealing was pardoned or granted ticket-of-leave to enlist in the Engineers for overseas service. I am told—it may not be true, but the Solicitor General will know whether it is or not—that the very jails of Canada were combed and promises given of pardon or ticket-of-leave if men would go to the firing line. If those are the principles under which this Conscriptio Bill is to be enforced, I do not think it will be of any credit to Canada, and I do not think we shall have any efficient reinforcement of the fighting line.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Perhaps it is as well to refer to the latter suggestion of the hon. member, which is exactly on the same basis as the letter he read to the House on Saturday from a man he did not know, and which had absolutely no truth in it. The only difficulty I find in answering my hon. friend is in piecing together from his remarks such connected and tangible sentences as possibly might be placed together as an argument to be refuted; I find great difficulty in doing that. When he says that he cannot have confidence in our tribunals I understand him, because I do not think he would have confidence in anything established while the present Government is in power. With any hon. gentleman who reasons in the haphazard manner of my hon. friend from Edmonton it is all a matter of luck whether he supports the Government or not—all a matter of luck what conclusion he happens to come to first. My hon. friend from Edmonton has come to the opposite conclusion, and we will let it go at that. But because the principle of the Bill is as it was plainly stated to be, namely, that a man who it is decided can best serve the national interests in France shall go to France, and the man stay at home who can best serve the national interests by working in Canada, he says the effect will be to send the cripples to France and keep the strong men in Canada. There is no sense whatever in that argument.

Mr. OLIVER: Would my hon. friend be good enough to keep within a thousand miles of the facts when quoting me? My hon. friend surely knows that it is the spirit within the man that counts, and that that is more important than his bodily condition.