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DURATION OF THE DOMINION PARLIAMENT AND THE WAR.

SUSPENSION NOT ALTERATION OF THE B.N.A. ACT.

A memorable and interesting event took place at Ottawa on the 8th ult., when the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada asked the Imperial authorities to extend the life of the present Parliament for one year to avoid the necessity of a general election during the present war. The resolution was presented to the House of Commons by the Premier, Sir Robert Borden, and was carried without a dissenting voice.

The occasion was not only memorable and interesting in itself, but additionally so as there are said to be only two precedents for the extension of a Parliamentary term. The first was the Septennial Act of 1716. By the Imperial Act of 1694, the duration of the British Parliament was limited to three years, and involved the extension of the Parliamentary terms from three to seven years. As stated by Sir Robert Borden, the constitutionality of that Act was questioned, but had been upheld on the ground that it was in the public interest of the State. The second and only other precedent was that offered by the legislation passed by the British Parliament recently, in view of the great war now in progress.

The extension now asked of the present House of Commons was to lengthen the life of this Parliament to October 11th, 1917. It was also explained by the Premier that the Dominion Parliament had to depend upon the Imperial Parliament for this extension. The resolution was, therefore, a request to the same body that gave effect to the British North America Act. Sir Robert concluded as follows:—