

of Parliament presented an address of appreciation for his eminent services during his stay amongst us, and on that occasion he bade an official farewell to the people of Canada. But before the date set for his departure war broke out, and then, it is understood, at the request of high authorities, he consented to remain for the duration of the war. When the usual term of five years had expired, for reasons unknown to me, and as to which I have no opinion to offer, it was thought preferable to follow the usual course and to appoint a successor to His Royal Highness. "The King is dead; long live the King!" Such was the form by which, under the old French monarchy, announcement was made to the people of the close of one reign and the beginning of another. In these words we might well express our welcome to the Duke of Devonshire. Following the long line of precedent, the British authorities have sought a Governor General of Canada from the most illustrious families of the realm. The Duke of Devonshire has the honour of being the bearer of a name made famous by a long line of statesmen, who, for centuries, and especially in the time of the Stuarts, have been prominently connected with the events which have brought England to the proud position she occupies to-day. The family to which he belongs has in all generations displayed those qualities of firmness, moderation and courage, qualities which certainly afford a splendid augury for the welfare of the Canadian people. It was not our fortune to be acquainted with His Excellency the Duke of Devonshire otherwise than by reputation. We knew of his family, but we did not know him. We are more fortunate in the case of Her Excellency the Duchess of Devonshire. We had known her when she was a young girl in the house of her father, when he occupied Rideau Hall as Governor General of Canada. Again she takes up her residence in Rideau Hall, but now as the lady of the manor, and she can feel assured that to her we offer a double welcome for the sake of *auld lang syne*.

It is the misfortune of the Duke of Devonshire, our new Governor General, and it is our misfortune that on the occasion when he first opened the session of the Canadian Parliament we should still live under the shadow of the terrible struggle which has been going on now for thirty months, and which is still extending the circle of its baneful activities. It would be beneath our own dignity, it would be unworthy of the place we wish to occupy in this war, if we were to close our eyes to the stern reali-

ties, if we were to view the situation in any other than its true light, or to indulge hopes which events might not justify. We must confess that the expectations which the splendid opening of the campaign of 1916 had caused were not realized—because the campaign of 1916 did open most splendidly. It opened with the roar of the guns at Verdun, where the Crown Prince of Germany, day after day, week after week, and month after month was launching the flower of the German army against that noble fortress. After six months of this terrible battering he had to abandon the contest and withdraw into his own lines, having left on the hills of Verdun no less than 500,000 men. These figures are appalling in their immensity, but, appalling as they are, there is every reason to believe that by actual computation they would be found to be well within the reality. Then followed the offensive on the river Somme, when the Allied nations of England and France made a dash upon the German trenches and swept the enemy back several miles, with immense losses to the Germans in men and material. On the eastern front the campaign opened by an attempt of the Austrians to invade Italy. That attempt was easily repulsed. The Austrians were thrown back across the mountains into Austria, and the Russians in Asia Minor and in the Balkans carried on successful operations almost in the heart of that country. And then came the entrance of Rumania into the contest, an event that had long been looked for. We had hoped that it would come, and when it came we were inclined to look upon it as portending the beginning of the end. But, alas, our expectations in that respect have been sadly disappointed. After a few months fighting Rumania has been invaded and its capital taken; it has met the same fate as that of Belgium and Poland. I should add that, on the part of the Allies, the only decisive battle during the campaign of 1916 was the resistance at Verdun, which caused to the enemy a loss of something like 500,000 men and gave them no compensating advantage. On the other side, it must be admitted that the overrunning of Rumania by the German armies gave them a new prestige, and we know that prestige in war always counts. But, Sir, though this is the case, is there any reason to be discouraged? Is there any reason why we should not hope? On the contrary, it seems to me that there are circumstances which may lead us confidently to expect that at the end of this year, 1917, we shall see

[Sir Wilfrid Laurier.]