

Marcile) has two sons at the front, and there are many others that I could mention. The only son I have of military age and who is physically fit is now in France. I might mention that he is not over in England with a commission, floating around London enjoying himself, and drawing officer's pay and separation allowance. He is a private. When he got through his college term in July of last year he enlisted as a gunner in the McGill Siege Battery. He told me he had made up his mind to go to the front, and I asked him whether he was going to try for a commission. He said: "No, I don't want a commission. If I go to France I want to do some of the fighting. There are already a number of men with commissions who found no openings when they reached England unless they stepped down in rank and went over to France as privates. Many of them did not want to do that, and consequently they are now in London drawing military pay and wearing military dress, but doing nothing. For my part I want to do some of the fighting." I therefore feel at liberty to speak on this measure without being accused of disloyalty or of being a traitor to my country.

The Prime Minister of this country recently visited England. He went over, I presume, to get information, to exchange suggestions, and ascertain what the conditions were. He comes back and abruptly tells us without any notice that it is necessary to have conscription in this country, as more men and more money are required. If it be true that the voluntary system has failed, that more men are needed and cannot be got except by conscription, we will have to have conscription. Personally, I am inclined to think that the voluntary system has not been fully tried out. I do not wish to be harsh in my criticism, but I feel it my duty to criticise where criticism is due. If in any statements I shall make to-night I shall seem a little harsh or even personal, my object is not to knock the Government, but simply to give honest straightforward criticism where I think it is due.

In any large enterprise, war or anything else, where millions of men and millions of money are engaged, there is something else also required. If any hon. member of this House were engaging in a great enterprise involving millions of men and millions of money the first thing he would do would be to organize. He would get together men in whom everybody had confidence, men of ability who were willing to devote their whole energies to carrying to a successful issue the enterprise with which

they were entrusted, classifying and utilizing to the best advantage all the men and money at their disposal. Is it the opinion of this House and the opinion of the country that such a combination of men as I have described is in charge of the affairs of this country? The affairs of this country should be managed just as is the business of any large corporation. Let us see whether the men in charge of the affairs of this country are competent, whether they are men of large views and long experience and absolute honest intentions, with no graft or protection for friends, but open-handed justice to all. Where a large number of men are engaged in some enterprise no **partiality or favouritism** should be shown. If there is, the men who are favoured are all right, but the men who think they are not favoured do not feel so well about it. This proposition to conscript the manpower of the country without conscripting its resources and wealth is not in the right direction. It is not fair to ask a young man of twenty years of age to go to the front and offer his life as a sacrifice for the protection and good of the country while the other man, who is older and therefore has had more benefit from the country, if benefits there be, makes no sacrifice at all. It is said that the married man with a family should not go to the war, and I think that is right. Yet, there is another side to that question. The man who has a wife and family of young children is more interested in the good government of the country than the young man who has no dependents to think of. Old men like myself and the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir George Foster) cannot go; but we must be just to those who go, and just to those who stay at home.

The Minister of Finance and the Government, in my humble judgment, have failed in their duty, not through lack of judgment, but, I am inclined to think, through lack of courage. When the war broke out in 1914 the Government should have made provision, not only of men to send overseas, but of money to pay them. They should have adopted a fiscal system to raise at least fifty per cent of the necessary funds to maintain the army at the front, especially as this country is at present, and has been for a couple of years past, immensely prosperous. The time is coming at the end of this war—and, I think, has arrived now—when more money will be needed. The minister should have imposed more taxes—I do not mean piling it all on the manufacturers as he has

[Mr. McCrea.]