

Sir Robert Borden—"Are you aware that in the month of March we enlisted 32,000 men, and since the first of the year we have enlisted at the rate of 1,000 a day?"

Mr. Washington—"I have heard it so stated, Sir. My answer is that you are getting the wrong men. I was not aware of those figures, but I know that in my district the numbers are very small."

Sir Robert Borden—"It is a question then of selection and locality rather than number?"

Mr. Washington—"We may get them, but at very excessive cost. We are getting volunteers as low as sixteen years of age. They are fit neither mentally nor physically for the work. We are getting men of over forty-five who are married men, and are imposing a greater cost to the country than is advisable. We are doing worse than that: we are demoralizing the industries of the country. A man told me the other day, the manager of a large textile industry in Hamilton, that one of his foremen had come to him and said: 'I feel it my duty to enlist.' He answered that they could not get along without him and that it would disorganize the whole factory. Others in that factory whose services were not essential had not responded to the call of duty, but that man went, who could not be spared. The worst of it is that he has a delicate wife and five children, and he is now blowing a bugle in the band, work which could be done by a boy. Manufacturers in Hamilton have begged recruiting men to keep away from factories. Not only the best men morally, but the best men considered as regards their usefulness to the community are going. Let me give you an instance. A man on an hundred-acre farm has only one son. He goes to the front and leaves the old folks to run the farm. A man on the next farm has four sons. Not one of them goes. I say, Sir, that this is what we want remedied. We have on a street in Hamilton seven brothers and they are all in uniform. In the next block there are seven brothers and there is not one in uniform. That is not right, not just, not in the interests of the country. It is not right that the best men should go to fight for their country when others less needed stay at home. It may be argued that the voluntary system is a great success, and that it is a magnificent sight to see three million men volunteering to defend their country. It is a magnificent sight, but there is a sight that would fill me with greater pleasure than that, the sight of one million slackers compelled to do their duty. Let me illustrate. Sir John Gibson of Hamilton had two sons. One went to the front and returned wounded. When he recovered he went back. His second son also went to the front and was killed. Why should Sir John Gibson sacrifice that son when hundreds of men equally eligible and under the same obligation to go are left who shirk their duty. A gentleman told me the other night that he went into a barber shop. While there two or three score of young men passed into a pool room at