

western theatre of war there has been no progress of any great strategic value. In the eastern theatre there was the Russian retirement, the recapture of a great stronghold in Galicia which had previously been captured by the Russians, the fall of Warsaw, the German advance into Russia, the failure of the Dardanelles operations, the entry of Bulgaria into the war and the over-running of Serbia and Montenegro. But I venture to think that, if we look below the surface into the very heart of things, there is not the slightest reason why any one in this Empire or in any of the allied nations should be discouraged as to the outcome.

I do not propose to speak of the economic situation. A great many opinions have been given—not always of an absolutely consistent character—by men who are much more highly qualified to speak on that subject than I could claim to be. Since Parliament prorogued on April 15, Italy has entered the war and has made it necessary that large forces of the enemy should be occupied near her frontiers. We have held the enemy in the west; we have secured time for preparation—and that, I am confident, is the most vital and important factor for bringing this war to a successful conclusion. I do not believe that we in this country—I do not believe that those responsible for the administration of public affairs in Great Britain—realized in the first instance what the German and Austrian preparations for fifty years meant. I shall discuss that more fully in speaking of what the Empire is really doing at present in the organization of its resources to win this war. At the moment let me express my full confidence that the necessary preparation is now being effectively made. Then we have the overmastering facts that the numbers and resources of the allied nations vastly exceed those of the enemy, and that the British and Allied navies have complete command of the seas—a consideration which in itself outweighs, in the balance of victory, all the military successes which Germany and Austria have attained. Then, last but not least, we have a just cause, and that of itself heartens each of the allied nations to the effort necessary for victory.

We remember that when the Russians retired from Galicia and Warsaw fell, the Emperor of Germany sent a somewhat flamboyant telegram to one of his relatives, in which he used these words:

[Sir Robert Borden.]

My destructive sword has crushed the Russians; the war drama is now drawing to a close.

We can not pay too high a tribute to the valour of the Russian army and the resourcefulness of the Russian generals. The great aim of the Germans in invading Russia has failed. When we realize that the Russian troops were fighting almost without arms and munitions; that the man in the rear rank was without a rifle; that when his comrade in the front rank fell the man in the rear stepped forward and took his place and his rifle—when we realize that these were the conditions under which Russia fought in that terrible struggle in which Germany tried to crush her, I think we may have every confidence and hope that the Russian offensive, recently undertaken, will be successful, and that Germany will find that Russia is by no means crushed.

I have enlarged many times since the commencement of this war upon the enormous task which faces any nation in building up a great army under modern conditions. There is the enrolment of the men, the training of the men, the training of the officers, the provision of equipment, and, last but not least—this is, perhaps, the greatest task of all—the provision of guns, rifles and ammunition on a scale undreamed of. I hope that hon. gentlemen of this House and the people of this country will realize what it means for this empire to undertake the task of providing guns, rifles, machine guns, trench mortars, ammunition of every type, for an army twenty times greater than this empire ever expected to send into the field. I am ready to believe—indeed, Mr. Lloyd George has stated it openly and frankly in the British House of Commons—that time has been lost in making that preparation. But when we consider the enormous task that confronted the War Office in Great Britain, let us be thankful that so much was accomplished, and that so successful an attempt was made to deal with so appalling a situation. Our task in Canada with regard to the preparation of our own army was, perhaps, even greater than that of Great Britain, because we lacked the assistance of commissioned and non-commissioned officers of adequate training and experience to a greater extent than they did in the Mother Country. But still, what we have accomplished seems to me to have been a wonderful thing. I am making no boast on behalf of the Government, but I am claiming credit for the peo-