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The War and our Canadians at the Front

We in Canada have, following the policy of our Government, enlisted, organized and partially trained our forces. Then we send them overseas, where they complete their training, and when that training is complete they pass over to France to take their part in the struggle. We have had two principal training camps in England, Shorncliffe and Bramshott. At Shorncliffe was completed the training of reinforcing battalions; Bramshott has been used principally as a training camp for battalions that are going to form new divisions.

The western front, on which our Canadian troops are fighting, is 500 miles long. The extreme western end is held by the Belgians, supported partly by French troops. The next section, from the Belgian line down to the junction with the French army at the Somme, is held by troops of our Empire—from England, Ireland, Scotland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India and elsewhere. Our Canadian corps was holding part of the Ypres salient when I was there, and none had as yet gone to the Somme. I cannot say how many miles we were holding; it was really a comparatively small section of the front, and we held these few miles with 70,000 men. When you pause to think that the battle line on the western and eastern fronts together is considerably over 2,000 miles in length, it gives you some faint conception of the magnitude of this great struggle.

It would look as if the young men of the progressive nations of Europe, assisted by citizens of the other sections of our Empire, were face to face in a death struggle for individual supremacy. Indeed at many times it is a struggle for individual supremacy; but it is really vastly more than that. Do not lose sight of the fact, as an inspiration to continue in this struggle, that while fighting for individual supremacy they are settling the whole character of the civilization which our children shall enjoy. Our fathers through the years and centuries of blood, struggle, toil and sweat, have won the liberties which we inherit. Shall we pass them on unimpaired to the generations yet to come? That is the task of this generation.

We had then at the front an army corps of three divisions, with 70,000 men. It is a complete fighting unit, comprising infantry, cavalry, artillery, Army Service Corps, Army Medi-