

Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to second the motion, in favour of the address.

Rt. Hon. Sir WILFRID LAURIER: Mr. Speaker, all those present in this Chamber must certainly have appreciated the tone and style of the addresses to which it has been their pleasure to listen this afternoon. The speech of my hon. friend from Yukon (Mr. Thompson) certainly reached a high level of patriotic eloquence. The matter contained in those addresses, if I may say so without being invidious, calls for some observations, which, however, I shall forego for the present, as they may be dealt with more fittingly when we come to discuss the two or three measures which are announced in the speech of His Royal Highness the Governor General.

I wish, at the outset, to emphasize the thanks and gratitude we owe to Providence for the bountiful harvest with which we have been blessed this year. The farmer, like all other workers, has to depend chiefly upon his own exertions; but, more than any other worker, has he to depend upon the elements. A little more rain or a little less rain, a little more sunshine or a little less sunshine, may to him mean the difference between disaster and success. This year it would seem that the elements have been particularly favourable; it would seem that the farmer held the key to the winds and the clouds, and obtained exactly the measure that he desired. It would seem, too, as if kind Providence, in order to atone for man's inhumanity to man, designed to compensate the farmer for that loss which he has had to suffer through being denied that profitable market which he has long sought in vain from this Government.

The bountiful harvest has been an offset for sore disappointment in every direction. We meet again under the shadow of the disastrous war in which we have been engaged for something like eighteen months—a shadow which seems to be darker now than it was in the month of April last, when Parliament prorogued. At that time our souls were full of hope that the campaign just then opening would see the advance of the allied forces upon the territory of the enemy. No one expected that in the year 1915 we would see the end of the war, but all expected that we would see the beginning of the end. All these hopes were doomed to disappointment; we are bound to say that our expectations, high as they were, have been sadly unfulfilled. On the western front the conditions are

exactly the same as they were in the month of April last. Though we may say with pride that the allied forces have won notable victories—victories in which our Canadian boys, young as they were, fought like veterans—on some occasions saved the day—and filled Canadian hearts with legitimate pride; still we must admit—and we know only too well that it is true—that the Allies have failed to pierce the line of the enemy and to commence their march towards the Rhine. On the eastern fronts our disappointments have been greater. There our Russian allies have lost positions which they at first attained. They have lost Galicia and Poland; their soil was invaded by the enemy, and similar fears were held for Petrograd as were held in the early stages of the war for Paris. In the Balkans there was a noble resistance to the advance of the enemy, but no victory. Though in these circumstances there are causes for disappointment, there is no cause for alarm or discouragement, for this reason: the successes and victories of the German army have never been complete victories; they have been merely Pyrrhic victories, and there are signs not a few that both in morale and numbers the strength of the German forces, as compared with that of the allied forces, is decreasing day by day, and that in the not distant future the Allies shall at last be able to assume the offensive.

The only complete victory which has been won during the war has been won by the British navy. It is true that there has been no general engagement; but as regards what has been accomplished and is being accomplished every day by the British navy, I recall the words of the soldiers of Napoleon in the campaign of 1805, who used to say that their Emperor won battles without fighting and simply by marches and counter-marches. In the same way Admiral Jellicoe has been able to accomplish victories without any engagement and simply by patrols and by watches he has succeeded in keeping the German fleet isolated, impotent, imprisoned in its own waters; just as useless for the German cause as if it had been sent to the bottom of the sea. The British navy has kept the sea open to the trade of the Allies almost as effectively as in the times of peace. If, as is suggested in the speech from the Throne, more sacrifices will be required in order that we may reach complete and final victory, it may be well that we should assert again, at the opening of this session, the attitude which

[Mr. Paquet.]