

to victory; they had taken possession of Galicia; they had reached the summit of the Carpathian mountains, and they were ready to invade Hungary. Such was the condition of affairs at the end of 1914. The campaign of 1915 was not as favourable to the Allies on the Western front: notwithstanding most brilliant victories won by them, notwithstanding glorious feats of arms in which our Canadian troops won undying fame, the two armies remained practically in the same position without marked advantage either on one side or the other. On the Eastern front the Russians fought at great odds. They were forced to abandon Galicia; they lost Poland; they suffered even an invasion of Russian territory; but at the end of the year they had checkmated the German forces and were prepared to take the offensive, and they have taken that offensive now. We are now at the beginning of the third campaign, and at this stage we may well appropriate to ourselves the invocation of the American poet:

Our fathers' God! from out whose hand  
The centuries fall like grains of sand,  
We meet to-day, united, free,  
Loyal to our land and Thee,  
To thank Thee for the era done  
And trust Thee for the opening one.

In the words of the poet, we meet to-day, united, free. These words were inspired by a very different occasion: they were written on the occasion of the Philadelphia Exhibition of 1876 to perpetuate the first century of the republic. An era was done: a new era was opening. The poet was not alone in his conception, and his hopes and his trust; the most enlightened opinions of the most enlightened countries, England, France and the United States, were full of faith that this era would be one of peace, and that it would see an approach, a permanent approach to that brotherhood of man, long sought, long hoped for and long prayed for, but never attained. These nations, the most enlightened on earth, were so absorbed by this idea and had such an abhorrence of war, that they would not even prepare against it, being full of confidence that the demons of war would never again be let loose on the world. But here was one power upon whom all appeals fell in vain, a power unreasoning in its mad ambition for conquest and domination. And the day came when it opened the gates and let loose its long prepared legions, and all the infernal furies rushed out in their wake. The issue is still pending and, so long as it is pending, so long as Belgium has not been restored to her independence, so long as France has not recovered her lost territory, so long as the enemy has not been thrown back beyond the Rhine, within its own borders, for my part, and I speak again as I have spoken always—my supreme thought will be to give all the assistance in our power to Britain in the struggle which she has undertaken against the common enemy of mankind.