

day, that that minister made that particular promise to the archbishop." My hon. friend from Montcalm (Mr. Lafortune) smiles. He is an expert on proof, and I am satisfied that he is absolutely convinced that that is proven. The next time he wants to prove that I have announced my intention of setting fire to the Parliament buildings, it will be the simplest thing in the world for him to do so after this fashion; an hon. member will ask this Government: "Has there been any correspondence between any minister, say, and his wife with regard to the Parliament Buildings?" The Government will answer: "This Government has had no official correspondence with the lady, and it does not investigate correspondence between its members and their wives." There is, of course, nothing further to be said. It will be conclusively demonstrated to the hon. member for Montcalm and the hon. member for Laval, that I wrote to my wife a letter, in which I announced my intention of burning down the Parliament buildings. Was it worth while to try to make an utterly contemptible use of a fair answer to a fair question, for the purpose of arriving at that conclusive demonstration? So much for the pledges.

I wish to advert for a moment to the condition which, in our judgment, made it imperatively necessary to provide without delay an additional number of men. I desire to read to the House a paragraph from a letter which came under my notice to-day. I do not know the writer beyond that he is apparently an American in the Ambulance Service writing home from France. His letter describes so accurately a condition of affairs that this House has had intimated to it by the Prime Minister in terms as clear as it would be becoming for a man occupying his position to use, that I venture to read it here. The writer says, as descriptive of the conditions on the French front to-day and as indicating the need for men:—

France has up to this time fought with a bravery unprecedented in the history of the world. Her men have sacrificed themselves with almost reckless abandon. Her losses have been tremendous. Now France is tired out, dead tired. Most of her young men have gone, and the older classes are being called out to fill their places; and this work is simply too much for men of advanced years. Then America enters the war. A new dawn appears to these old men. At last they can get back to their field, or go into some less strenuous back line work. At last there is a chance that some members of this wonderful nation will survive this war and continue this race which has stood for so much in art and literature. But what is America doing?

And then the writer goes on to criticise the action of America in sending ambulance corps which can be useful behind the lines and in not sending men to go into the front trenches. He goes on to say:—

If America wishes to see France stagger and fall from loss of blood; if she wants to go into the future with the stigma that she moved too late to save France, let her continue to send automobilists to joy ride along the French front and consume French food and fuel. If she wants the name of a fighting nation, let her send shiploads of aviators and planes and follow these with a backbone of artillery. Also let her provide some means by which her sons in France now serving as ambulanciers or in other positions may get into some more warlike work and fight as good Americans should.

That is not addressed to us, but has it no message for us? After all, what is it more than the message that the great Maréchal Joffre, who, with very little English at his disposal, emphasized again and again to the soldiers in Montreal, as he passed them in review: "Send us more men; send us more men?" Did Maréchal Joffre know what was needed, or perchance does the hon. member for Montcalm (Mr. Lafortune) know better? That is the situation over there. It is only another man's expression of what we all knew, but it describes the situation very aptly, and, I have not the slightest doubt, very correctly. The Prime Minister, in terms fitting for him to use, has told this House of the crying need for men. Perhaps some of us have heard the story more in detail. Perhaps some of us have heard things that it might not be wise to give to the public. Perhaps some of us have a more keen sense of the critical nature of the present situation than the people of Canada, before the visit of the Prime Minister to England, had conceived. I am no pessimist; I have no desire to create unnecessary alarm; I have no desire to say anything that would create the impression that conditions were more desperate than they are.

But I do venture to say that to my mind—I give this, of course, for what it is worth as my own conviction—this war to-day is anybody's war. I do not say that I have no longer confident hope; I have, but that confident hope rests upon everybody who is in this war doing his utmost. We have been told: Oh, the United States has come into the war. That is given as a reason why we should let up. I have a great admiration for our friends of the United States. I have faith in their bravery, faith in their resources, faith that they will do their utmost. But when they have done their utmost they will be proud men if,