

OPPORTUNITY TO ELIMINATE WORST FEATURES OF POLITICAL SYSTEM.

(Tuesday, Nov. 7.)

In every Canadian home represented in the Canadian forces by father or son, husband or brother, whether those loved ones are in the fighting line in France or Flanders, or in training in England or Canada, or are filling heroes' graves, there is no other feeling than that this country should be spared the horrors and feuds of a bitter partisan election conflict during the period of the war. That is not going far enough, even. If possible, we should put our affairs in such shape and conduct our country's business in such manner as to eliminate the worst features of our political system. And it is possible. Our leading statesmen have but to come together in a mutually honorable spirit, and agree, whatever the mistakes or blunders of the past have been, from this time till peace comes, they will work in harmony for the advancement of the just cause for which our soldiers are fighting side by side and heroically facing the enemy's shot and shell.

Some will say that such a coalition—a union—of political leaders, is now too late. While it would have been better if it could have taken place in the earlier stages of the war, or even a year ago, when The Standard so strongly urged a coalition, it is not too late now. While the war has been on two and a quarter years, there is no sign on the horizon of an early peace. So far as human foresight can penetrate, the war is likely to go on for a year or possibly two, or, peradventure, still longer. It is, therefore, not too late. We may be only at the middle of the war period rather than near its close, and that being the case, no person can say it is too late to lay down in Canada the weapons of political strife and strike earnestly to promote peace at home and a more vigorous prosecution of the war so as to bring it earlier to a close.

The urgency of a coalition of our political leaders and forces is greater today than at any period since the war began. In the earlier stages of the war, the recruiting of a hundred thousand men in Canada was no great thing to accomplish, nor even the second hundred thousand. The third hundred thousand became much more difficult, and it requires the straining of every nerve and effort to reach the total of the fourth hundred thousand. But we have promised still another hundred thousand, and we are compelled to admit that our present voluntary system, under present conditions, has about reached its limit. While such is the case, we find that both political parties are sparring for positions in an expected general election, rather than find a way of coming together, and setting an example to the country at large.

While the party leaders and party press on both sides publicly profess an interest in recruiting and prosecuting the war, the actual work of recruiting is practically paralyzed, so much so that the total does not come within a long distance of filling the gaps. We must have a change somewhere, and it should begin at Ottawa. That change will come if the press will forget for a little while petty partisan advantage and speak out for a cessation of strife in Canada. A truce is not what is needed. That has been tried and largely failed. The coalition in Great Britain has succeeded. It has accomplished what a party government never could have done, and should be an encouragement to a similar movement in Canada.