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**The War a Crusade**

From the very beginning Premier King has emphasized the fact that the present war is not merely a struggle between nations, nor adequately described by saying that it is a fight for the continuance of an economic or political system. It is, he says, a crusade, with Christianity itself in the balance. More than a year ago he used these words:

"The Nazi doctrine of force is the very antithesis of what one finds in the Christian Gospel. If it prevails, there will be, as I see it, an end to our Christian civilization. That is why the present war is, for the Allied forces, a crusade. The time has come to save our Christian civilization, we must be prepared to lay down our lives for its preservation. The young men who are enlisting in our forces today, to serve on land, in the sea and in the air, are first and foremost defenders of the Faith. Like others who have gone forth to battle in the past, they are placing their lives at the service of King and country, but theirs is an even greater mission. It is the preservation for our own and future generations of the freedom begotten of persecutions, martyrdoms and centuries of struggle. It is the preservation not alone of national and of personal freedom, but of freedom also of the mind and of the soul."

Those were Premier King's words in October of 1939. Now, after more than a year of war, he retains this conception of the issue. In his Christmas message to the Canadian forces he said:

"In many lands, this year, Christmas bells are silent, altars are dimmed and little lights are not aglow on the Christmas trees of happy children. Nevertheless, in millions of homes, darkened with the shadows of war, the flame of Christianity still burns steadily in the sanctuary of the human heart. As crusaders, you seek to protect that flame. It is your mission to preserve it from extinction."

Mr. King is himself a profoundly religious man, valuing highly the things of the spirit. He does not exaggerate the issues which hang upon the present conflict when he describes it as a crusade for Christianity itself.