

election as a verdict in favour of compulsory service. And such is my hon. friend's appreciation of his constituents that he argues—I epitomize—"What is the good of a referendum? We held one in Dorchester and Dorchester has spoken the verdict of all the electors of Canada. When Augustus had imbibed, Poland was full. Quand August avait bu, la Pologne était ivre." The argument is more creditable to the electors of Dorchester than to the minister's powers of interpretation.

The part of his speech to which I refer is to be found at page 2747, unrevised Hansard, and reads as follows:

What does the vote given at this election mean from a constitutional point of view? Does it not mean that the war policy of the Government was approved, as it has been approved by the members for the past three years, and has not this policy of the Government been to make every sacrifice to carry the war to a successful end, as far as conscription if necessary?

I agree with the whole paragraph save the following words: "As far as conscription if necessary." To that statement I take the most strenuous objection, because those who did cast their votes for my hon. friend had in their minds not the statement made by the Prime Minister in his letter to workmen dated December 27, 1916, but the one he made long ago on the floor of this House, which was quoted by the right hon. leader of the Opposition and which may be found at page 2747 of revised Hansard:

My right hon. friend has alluded to conscription—to the idea in this country or elsewhere that there may be conscription in Canada. In speaking in the first two or three months of this war I made it clear to the people of Canada that we did not propose any conscription. I repeat that announcement to-day with emphasis.

If my hon. friend insinuates that the electors of Dorchester, by their vote, wished to approve of conscription, I must tell him that he would not be sitting on the Treasury benches if at the election he had so declared himself.

Thus does the hon. member for Labelle reduce to naught the hon. minister's pretensions, that his election was an approval of conscription. The hon. minister must be in quite a quandary to resort to such a shift, for during this election he more than once readily declared himself opposed to conscription.

Here is now what I find in *La Patrie* of January 22, 1917. If he ever did tell the truth, it was on that occasion, for he was speaking in the Sacred Temple, close to the parish priest, who actually presided, if you please. This was at Ste. Rose. That parish was destined to become famous during this election; indeed, it was there also that another minister displayed his leaning toward the Borden government's conscription when he advised the people to run away to the United States.

But, Mr. Speaker, let us return to the hon. Minister of Inland Revenue. I read in *La Patrie*, an organ of the Govern-

The Rev. Father Tremblay's patriotic appeal to his parishioners.  
A priest presides.

As there is no convenient hall in the village, Saturday's meeting was held in the vestry and the parish priest, Rev. Father Tremblay, not only had the kindness of permitting this invasion of his domain, but he even presided over the meeting, with a perfect ease, indeed, and no one would have thought that he was filling such a part for the first time.

The good parish priest also made a short speech: Gentlemen and voters, I will introduce to you the speakers who are your two representatives. It is not for me to commend them, it will be yours to do it for one or the other by the vote you will honestly and conscientiously give. Do seriously reflect upon the duty you are called upon to perform as citizens. Please carefully listen to your candidates with a view to gathering information and ideas for guidance on polling day. I need not ask you to observe due decorum, just remember that you are in the house of God. Mr. Sévigny admits that, in 1911, he was opposed to the Naval policy and against any participation of Canada in the wars of the Empire. He was then only thirty years old, he had no experience, but he believed in the principles he advocated, he was sincere and candid, not knowing the future more than any one else.

And, further on, Mr. Sévigny charges Mr. Cannon with taking undue advantage of the issuing of the National Service cards; he solemnly asserts that the census taken by the Commission has no relation whatever to the military service. That among the 400,000 soldiers whom Canada has to-day under arms, not one has been forced to enlist, neither shall any be conscripted in the future; there shall be no conscription, declared the new Minister.

Let us now take *Événement*, the hon. minister's recognized mouthpiece, the newspaper which has made the most strenuous fight for the hon. Minister of Inland Revenue and we will see the various attitudes it shows him to have taken. I am reading *Événement* of January 22, page 4, column No. 4, referring to that same Ste. Rose meeting:

The hon. Mr. Sévigny repeated the statements he had made on the opening of the campaign about the political errors he might have committed in the past. He also sincerely admitted he had trespassed in 1911 when he had declared himself against Canada's participating in the wars of the Empire, but he added that the terrifying events which are at the present time creating a general upheaval among the nations of the world fully justify him for having modified his views as to the war policy. He recalled the fact that the Liberal party has approved and still approves the war expenditure and that such expenditure would be continued if, one day or another, the Liberals should be returned into power in Ottawa.

Mr. Sévigny also spoke of the National Service question and repeated, once more, that we would not have any conscription.

The same paper reports another meeting held at Ste. Justine, and there, the hon.