

thing to say against Canada's standing behind the Mother Country is simply absurd. Any one who talks that way should be reminded of the history of Canada in connection with matters of this kind. We all remember what took place in 1884 when the great Tory chief, Sir John A. Macdonald, was in charge of the destinies of this country. England was then at war, and suggested to Sir John A. Macdonald that it would be well to have assistance from Canada along certain lines. Did Sir John A. Macdonald give any assistance to the Mother Country at that time? Nothing of the sort. He turned the suggestion down cold. Not a ship, not a man, not a dollar was sent from Canada at that time, but Sir John and his supporters in Ontario were never accused of being disloyal because of his action at that time. It remained for Sir Wilfrid Laurier when the Boer war broke out in 1899 to make the great departure of sending soldiers from this country to fight the battles of Great Britain. It is not very likely that the man who took upon himself the responsibility of first sending soldiers from this country to fight the battles of Great Britain, in the face of what might be regarded as strenuous opposition in some parts of this country, will go back on the precedent which he himself created, and behind which the people of this country firmly stood. The Minister of Labour said that nothing further could be done to support our soldiers at the front unless this Bill was passed. I would expect him to have some knowledge of the facts when he makes a statement of that kind, but when he was asked by the hon. member for St. John how recruiting was going, he knew nothing whatever about it. He did not know that 8,000 men had been recruited in Canada in the last month, yet only the moment before he had been proclaiming to the world that the voluntary system had fallen down in this country and nothing further could be expected from it. The next question he was asked was why recruiting for the artillery had been stopped in this country. It is reported that in Great Britain and France they have more artillery men than they require, but the hon. gentleman knew nothing about it, and all he did was to launch a volume of words upon this House and country without knowing what he was talking about. If it is a fact that we can get more artillery men in Canada than we have room for, it does not look as if the voluntary system had fallen down in this country.

[Mr. McKenzie.]

Nobody knows better than the minister knows—or ought to know—that there is no better arm going to the front than that of the artillery. If we have as much artillery as we require—and it is said that we have and that of the very best kind—why should the minister seek to impress upon us the belief that recruiting by the voluntary system has fallen down? I submit that the facts go to show that if the voluntary system were given a fair show we should get all the men we want, and we should retain the pride, and dignity, and honour, of having done our part under the voluntary system and not by compulsion.

The Minister of Labour told us that labour was in favour of the war. He read letters from a certain committee, but he knew nothing about them, their position, or their tendencies, and so what he said on that point was perfectly in line with the rest of his speech. Nobody need be disturbed by any of the noise we have heard this afternoon in connection with conscription or voluntary service. I think it only right to remind the hon. gentleman (Mr. Crothers) that as Minister of Labour he has not done much to keep the labour element, which is a very important element, in proper shape for the service they have to do at home, or in proper temper for the service they might do their country at the front. The record of the hon. gentleman in connection with labour questions shows that he does nothing at all with regard to any problem until it is too late—he is rather of the post mortem variety. A few days ago we had a gathering of labour leaders in the city of Ottawa, the men who are supposed to know the conditions of labour, and the feelings of labour, with regard to the Government and with regard to the war. These men presented to the Prime Minister a memorial setting forth what they thought of the action of the Minister of Labour and of the Government generally. The contractors for munitions are under Government control and subject to Government regulation—for this we have the word of the Prime Minister. This being so, the relations existing between labour and these contractors should be governed, and governed as far as possible to the satisfaction of labour. The memorial that these labour leaders presented was brought to the attention of the House by the hon. member for Richmond (Mr. Kyte). So far the allegations made have not been denied, but, on the other hand, we do not hear that anything has been done to improve the conditions under which labour is carried on. As