

August last we were unexpectedly called together on account of the sudden declaration of war throughout the Empire. At that time a great many thought that this war would be over within a short time, and that the session for which we were then called together, and the measures that we had then to sanction, in order to enable the Government to carry on the affairs of the country, would be an exceptional session, and that when we met this time we should be able to attend to the general business of the country. But now nearly six months have passed, and we are called again together for the purpose of dealing entirely with matters of war, and the administration of the country, owing to that condition of war. We recognize the great gravity of the struggle in which, as part of the British Empire, we are all engaged, and we realize, perhaps to-day more than ever before, that this is no ordinary fight, but a struggle in which the very existence of the Empire and of ourselves is concerned. It was almost impossible for those who have not had any opportunity of studying the feelings and the training that the people of Germany have gone through for so many years—the teaching of their public men, of their philosophers and of their professors—to realize that they have trained and led their people to think that they have a right to the position of dominance in the world, and that that is the object for which their whole training is put forward, and for which to-day they exist.

It is difficult for those trained up with the views that are put into the minds of the British people, and of the people of this country, to realize that any people should to-day think that they have a right to enforce their will, civilization, and culture, on Europe and eventually on the whole world. Such thought was almost inconceivable before we saw what happened in August last. To-day we realize that we are engaged in the struggle in which we are fighting for the liberty and the freedom of the smaller nations, and for the democracy of the world; and we have to bend all our energies and all our power to bring about the result, that this nation against which we are fighting shall realize that they cannot force upon the world the particular civilization that they think is best, and their particular will, in the way they had expected to do it. It came as a great surprise to them that the British Empire could stand together in the way it has done. In their training and

in their examination of the conditions under which the British Empire exists they had come to the conclusion that the Empire was failing, that it was falling to pieces, and that it would quickly go to pieces whenever an attack was made upon it. But much to the surprise, and I may say to the disappointment of the Kaiser, he found that instead of the British Empire going to pieces, it came together in a way that astonished not only himself, but other people throughout the world. To-day we see a united front presented to the forces of Germany. We are also to take into consideration the wonderful unanimity that exists among the allies, in carrying on this fight. In spite of the endeavours that have been made to bring about disagreements between the nations that are allied together for the purpose of this war, they have stood together and fought together in a way that has caused the admiration of the whole world. Such being the example that is set before us, it behoves the people of the different parts of the Dominion to show the same unanimity, and to endeavour in every way to show that we are all agreed on the line of action that is being taken, and that we are working together for this one particular end and object. As we said in the session of August last, we are all working to help, as far as we possibly can, the Government in the work of the administration of the country. We do not propose in any way to hamper the working of the Government in carrying on the heavy administration that necessarily falls upon them at the present time. The Government must accept the full responsibility for all the administration, and realize that we will have a right to criticise when a more favourable and better opportunity occurs; that although we may not entirely agree with what they do at the present time, it is in the interest of the country that we should withhold most of the criticism that we have to offer. In the future when the terrific struggle in which we are now taking part has been brought to a final conclusion we may have an opportunity of examining the record of the Government, and showing the country wherein we think they were wrong in what they have done. At the present time we propose only to offer such criticism as is reasonable, and should be of assistance to the Government, and let them know that we are as desirous of helping them, and the country, as they are themselves. The work that has been done by the Govern-