

As to our duty we are all agreed;

No dissenting voice.

We stand shoulder to shoulder with Britain and the other British dominions in this quarrel. And that duty we shall not fail to fulfil as the honour of Canada demands.

Mark the words: As the honour of Canada demands.

Not for love of battle, not for lust of conquest, not for greed of possessions, but for the cause of honour; to maintain solemn pledges, to uphold principles of liberty, to withstand forces that would convert the world into an armed camp; yea, in the very name of the peace that we sought at any cost save that of dishonour, we have entered into this war; and while gravely conscious of the tremendous issues involved and of all the sacrifices that they may entail, we do not shrink from them—

Are any of us proposing to shrink from them to-day?

—but with firm hearts as we abide the event.

Further on he said:—

But, let me say that while we are now upborne by the exaltation and enthusiasm which comes in the first days of a national crisis, so great that it moves the hearts of all men, we must not forget that days may come when our patience, our endurance and our fortitude will be tried to the utmost. In those days—

Those days are upon us now.

In those days let us see to it that no heart grows faint and that no courage be found wanting.

Those words show that the Prime Minister saw into the future. The right hon. leader of the Opposition on that occasion spoke as follows:—

The gravity of the occasion which has called us together makes it incumbent upon us even to disregard the formalities and conventionalities which in ordinary times the rules of the House written and unwritten enjoin as a wise safeguard against precipitate action, but which, on such an occasion at this might impede us in dealing with the momentous question before us. This session has been called for the purpose of giving the authority of Parliament and the sanction of law to such measures as have already been taken by the Government, and any further measures that may be needed to insure the defence of Canada and to give what aid may be in our power to the mother country in the stupendous struggle which now confronts her. . . . If in what has been done or in what remains to be done there may be anything which in our judgment should not be done or should be differently done, we raise no question, we take no exception, we offer no criticism, and we shall offer no criticism so long as there is danger at the front. It is our duty, more pressing upon us than all other duties, at once, on this first day of this extraordinary session of the Canadian Parliament, to let Great Britain know, and to let the friends and foes of Great Britain know, that there is in Canada but one mind and one heart, and that all Canadians stand behind the mother country conscious and proud that she has engaged in this war, not

[Mr. Crothers.]

from any selfish motive, for any purpose of aggrandisement, but to maintain untarnished the honour of her name, to fulfil her obligations to her Allies, to maintain her treaty obligations, and to save civilization from the unbridled lust of conquest and domination.

We are British subjects, and today we are face to face with the consequences which are involved in that proud fact. Long we have enjoyed the benefits of our British citizenship; today it is our duty to accept its responsibilities and its sacrifices.

We have long said that when Great Britain is at war we are at war, to-day we realize that Great Britain is at war and that Canada is at war also.

He said further:

From the day war was declared—nay, from the day the possibility of war was first mooted—our shipping to Great Britain and to Europe has been interrupted. Ships were lying at the docks fully loaded and ready to put to sea, but unable to do so because of the fact that when England is at war Canadian property on the high seas is liable to capture. . . . More than once I have declared that if England were ever in danger,—nay, not only in danger, but if she were ever engaged in such a contest as would put her strength to the test—then it would be the duty of Canada to assist the motherland to the utmost of Canada's ability.

When we came to this House, on the 18th of August, 1914, the right hon. leader of the Opposition and every other member of this House must have had in mind the provisions of the Militia Act. Let me read certain of those provisions:

10. All the male inhabitants of Canada of the age of 18 years upwards, and under 60, not exempt or disqualified by law, and being British subjects, shall be liable to service in the Militia; provided that the Governor General may require all the male inhabitants of Canada, capable of bearing arms, to serve in the case of a levée en masse.

69. The Governor in Council may place the militia, or any part thereof, on active service anywhere in Canada, and also beyond Canada, for the defence thereof, at any time when it appears advisable so to do by reason of emergency.

The question was raised last night by my hon. friend from Rouville (Mr. Lemieux) as to whether we have authority to send our forces to France to fight. At the time the Militia Act was being amended in 1904, the then Minister of Justice, the present Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada expressed this opinion:

The Governor in Council may send the militia of Canada out of Canada at any time when deemed necessary for the defence of Canada. If, in the opinion of the Governor in Council, it should be necessary, because of a war going on in India, to send our militia out there for the defence of Canada, they may, in the exercise of their discretion, do it, because they are the sole judges of what is necessary to be done in defence of Canada.