

man activity—and that is the present war with Germany. This war is being waged by nations that have become great in inventions and discoveries, in science and arts, in music and painting, in commerce and industries, in all the conveniences and comforts that constitute modern life. The nations involved represent the highest type of civilization probably since the beginning of the world, and it is a regrettable fact that all the power and greatness and intellect of these nations should be employed in killing one another. Yet from our point of view the war was forced upon us. We could not possibly avoid it and maintain our honor unimpaired among men and nations. This war was primarily caused by a dominating caste in Germany, supported by the powerful influence of a servient press—a caste that spelled militarism directed against Britain from the days of the Boer war—a caste that, led by Bernhardi and many other insane pan-Germans, promulgated the pernicious doctrine “that might is at once the supreme right and the dispute as to what is right must be decided by the arbitrament of war.” In pursuance of this principle that might makes right, Germany as you know violated the neutrality of Belgium, although she, in conjunction with the great powers, had solemnly guaranteed such neutrality, and because the Belgians refused to betray Europe and become the tool of a powerful neighbor their country is now a “wilderness of smoking ruins.” Doubtless every teacher I see before me has had little difficulty in eliciting from the older pupils the statement that Great Britain had no other alternative than a declaration of war, or in making those pupils see that Great Britain with her allies is fighting not for Belgium alone, but that she is fighting at the dictates of honor for the preservation of the law of nations, which is ultimately for the peace of all nations and the right of the weaker to exist.

Such a war is as vitally important to us in Canada as it is to our Mother-

land. Although we are a self-governing colony, we are a part of the British Empire; our thoughts, our sentiments, our speech, the calls of kinship makes us one in reality with the other sons of Britain, and their cause is our cause, their foe is our foe, their war is our war, and their glory is our glory.

A British statesman once said that Canada was the fairest jewel in the crown of Britain. I do not know whether this assertion was a diplomatic platitude tending to raise our self-esteem or not, but all the same its fulfilment is near at hand. At the conclusion of this war Canada, a little sooner or a little later, will become a great nation—linked, it may be, in the solidarity of the British Empire—yet a great nation. Her ships will plough through every sea, her manufactured products will be distributed to all parts of the earth, her great natural resources will be enormously developed, her fields of golden grain will fill the land with a golden shower; yet our participation in this war will cost us much—the blood of men, the sorrows of women—but there must be no turning back; everything must be borne with heroic constancy and patience, for at all hazards and at all costs the lust of any nation for universal dominion, the right of any nation to tyrannize over other men and nations, must be for ever smashed.

We as Canadians are taking part—and no mean part, either—in this act of righteous retribution, and when the great day of rehabilitation for shattered nations comes, we will have the proud satisfaction of knowing that we did our duty as we see it, nobly and ungrudgingly, and side by side with us as representatives of Imperial Britain will be found the men of India, of South Africa, of Australia, of New Zealand—all animated by one common love for the dear old flag that represents justice and mercy and freedom for all mankind.

And now one word of caution in this connection. This war may last longer than we expect, but in any case it is bound to entail considerable changes