

such a way that all classes of people have been highly benefited, and the business situation throughout the country greatly improved.

With the seas cleared of the enemy and commerce again reinstated; with the sign hanging out, "Business as usual"; with the markets of England, France and other nations offering avenues for unprecedented business owing to the war, the Canadian manufacturer and the Canadian farmer should be in a position to increase their export trade, as the opportunities for such to-day are in my estimation better and greater than ever before in our history. I am a firm believer in getting after export business, but I am a stronger believer than ever in getting after the home market in our midst. Nothing can be gained by our standing idle and being pessimists. Let us do our best to meet the unique situation of the present, and there will be good reason for congratulation in after years. As a writer recently stated, "such action means the maintenance of the national workshop, national credit, and national satisfaction." Let us be optimistic, even more so now than ever before in our lives.

Think of poor, unhappy, heroic little Belgium; a few months ago a prosperous, thriving community, secure in the belief that her neutrality would not be violated; to-day her homes destroyed, her priceless works of art ruined, her historic buildings demolished beyond repair, and her people stretching forth their hands in mute appeal to us for help. Think of the unhappy homes in England, France, Russia and Germany; think of the wives and mothers who weep because the husband and son will never return; think of the little children made orphans by the cruel hand of war; and then let us thank God that we live in Canada, and that peace virtually exists on our shores, even though the Empire is at war.

I, for my part, Sir, feel that I am fortunate to live under the protection of the Union Jack. Its silken folds remind me of the freedom that I am enjoying in this country under British institutions—and I know what it means to be a British subject. I am proud of the fact that I was born in Canada, and that I have the same opportunities as all others to make the best of my citizenship in this country of unrivalled resources. To be a British subject is in my estimation a great asset, and I consider it a

[Mr. Weichel.]

great privilege to be a conscious fibre of that compacted force.

Although born in Canada, I am of German origin; and, needless to say, along with many hundred thousand other people living here at the present time, I feel keenly the situation that developed five months or so ago in Europe. For a few minutes, Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak to the members of this House about our German-Canadian fellow-citizens—knowing as I do that I am going to touch on a delicate subject, but also aware of the fact that I am speaking to broad-minded men who desire above everything else the unification of all races throughout Canada to-day into one harmonious whole. For many years you have had in your midst a great many people of German origin, thrifty and frugal in their habits, possessed of energies and business abilities that have aroused the admiration of all classes in Canada. They have always been looked upon as desirable citizens, thousands of them have settled in this fair country along with immigrants from every other part of the globe, and very few of them would leave Canada to-day for any other country of the world should opportunity offer. Since the outbreak of hostilities a few—a very few—newspapers in Canada have been trying to discredit and cast suspicion on the German-Canadians of this country, but, be it said to the credit of the great majority of the Canadian people and of the press of Canada, these insinuations have not carried any weight, and the spirit of British fair play and justice is just as much alive to-day in the hearts of the English, the Scotch, and the Irish, as it was during the days of peace.

Mr. Speaker, I am not here to-day to make any apology for the German-Canadians in Canada; but this I do say, and am pleased to say it with all the energy that I can command at the present moment, that the people of German origin in this country are loyal to their King and loyal to the Empire, and that they have since the outbreak of hostilities given ample evidence to this effect, and evidence of such a nature as cannot be denied. True it is that in certain isolated cases some have been indiscreet, and naturally have had to suffer for their indiscretion; but the rank and file of the German-Canadians in Canada to-day are as true as steel, and, as I stated, are daily giving evidences of their loyalty to the flag and to the Crown. The liberties possessed by