

some properly regulated system of selection.

Now, Sir, the league I represent in the City of Winnipeg was called into existence in the month of February last, by the Winnipeg Board of Trade, one of the most representative bodies of business men in Western Canada. This step was taken after consultation with the Commanding Officers of the several units with headquarters in the city, and with their entire approval.

In January, recruiting had been extremely slow. There were upwards of twenty units being recruited in the City of Winnipeg and in other parts of Military District No. 10, which at that time included Saskatchewan. Since that time Saskatchewan has been taken from District No. 10, and is now in No. 12. Recruiting officers all over the district complained of the increasing difficulty of obtaining recruits and the rapidly rising per capita expenditure necessary.

Civilian recruiting leagues were organized not only in Winnipeg, but in Brandon, Portage La Prairie, Saskatoon, and many other places. We got down to real business about the end of February, and pursued the campaign actively throughout March; and I think I can say that so far as merely getting men was concerned, we were eminently successful. Militia District No. 10 in March beat all former records and enlisted a larger number of men than any previous month since the beginning of the war. The record, therefore, seemed to justify the claim that our efforts had met with a large measure of success.

But, Sir, we found that our very success was but the measure of our failure, because we found that the vital industries, agricultural, manufacturing, mercantile and financial, were being bled to the point of exhaustion of their essential help, and that if the present system of recruiting was to proceed indefinitely some of these great industries would be bled to actual exhaustion. At the same time there still remained in non-essential industries, those which cater to the pleasure or luxury of the public, large numbers of men who had not enlisted and who were invulnerable to moral suasion and in every branch of industry many men performing work which might be equally well performed by women.

Sir Robert Borden—What was the character of those non-essential industries?

Chief Justice Mathers—I would call a billiard marker, a picture-show artist, non-essential.

Sir Robert Borden—You would hardly call a picture show an industry.

Chief Justice Mathers—The picture-show business has become quite an industry with us. Generally I would say those manufacturers engaged in the production of articles of luxury or amusement, for example, confectionery, were non-essential.

Mr. Godfrey—The jewelry business also.