

into the conflict than your military leaders appeared at our review grounds and at our officers' training corps; your gallant soldiers were seen fraternizing with our kilties on the streets; we lent you military instructors of all ranks and services familiar with actual fighting at the front, and our returned soldiers were frequently called to your public meetings to describe the situation in Belgium and France. And to-day some of us dwellers in the larger communities in Canada have been asked to come here and try to tell something that might help your communities from what we have seen and felt during these last sad but glorious three years and a quarter.

FIRST EFFECT OF THE WAR

The first effect of the war upon us is something you will never have,—a stunned sense of disastrous surprise. You also were surprised at that time, but you were not yet struck. You had some stock exchange panic, it is true, but we had far more; we knew we were actually plunged into a stupendous conflict, for which we were absolutely without preparation. For months our banks shut down on even the most ordinary enterprises. One banker expressed it—"We may all go to pot together." A well-known capitalist sat in tears in a leading club of Montreal after vainly trying to raise a few thousand dollars to save hundred of thousands of good property. "I have lost everything: I am entirely ruined," he moaned. And he was but a type of many. But the general commercial panic—fortunately soon surmounted—was but secondary to other things, the military anxiety over the fateful fighting in France, the possibilities of invasion at home, of explosions, of destruction of our canals, railways, and buildings, and above all the anxiety over our sons and other relatives destined for the front. But the blood that runs in our veins and yours is not given to fear or loss of will. We immediately gathered thirty-three thousand eager young men in khaki and shipped them to England, with the pledge of more. We were pleased to learn that you watched their progress as kinsmen. There were not a few of you among even those immortal first crusaders. They could not resist the call of chivalry and liberty.

Then first we knew what war, though far off, meant in our cities. The wrench of the heart of the mother, and then her noble pride in the sacrifice of her son; the young wife's fears, but her trust in her brave man; the father's silent consent; the forebodings and excitements of parting. Afterwards the feverish interest in every incident of the war affecting in any way "our boy." All these you have lately had like ourselves. And here I can say something that will help each anxious parent. Do not read the news of every fight with the thought that your boy may have come to harm. On the contrary you may conclude that nothing has hurt him. Because, assuming that your war department system is like ours, the earliest news of a casualty to him will come to yourself by a govern-