

by the valour of the Canadian troops. When I was in France in July, 1915, there was one Canadian division at the front. I then had the honour and privilege of seeing the Canadian troops and of speaking to them at that time near "Plugstreet," opposite Messines. When I was in France on this occasion, twenty months afterwards, there were four Canadian divisions at the front, a full army corps—up to strength, and then 6,000 over strength. There were 130,000 Canadian troops in France when I was there, if one includes the lines of communication units, the Canadian Cavalry Brigade, the Canadian Railway Construction Corps and the Canadian Forestry Corps. I need not speak to you of their record; the record speaks for itself. I was there during the preparation for the Vimy fight and I saw the men rehearsing the work which they were to undertake. It was a splendid compliment to the Canadian troops that they were selected to make that attack upon a ridge which had been assaulted many times, but had never been taken; and it is even a greater tribute to the valour, the discipline and the resourcefulness of those troops that they took Vimy Ridge without being stopped once in their attack. I saw the plan of the operations. We knew that the attack was coming, but we did not know when it was coming. We were full of apprehension, because, as I have said, the ridge had been assaulted many times, but every attack had been repulsed with great loss. It must be said, however, that never was an attack upon Vimy Ridge or upon any other position preceded by such tremendous artillery preparation as that which preceded the Vimy attack. General Smuts, distinguished both as a soldier and as a statesman, who was in France on the day when the artillery preparation began and during part of the following day, told me that in the history of modern warfare there was nothing approaching the bombardment with which that attack was heralded. He said something further which may be of interest to this House: that he had called for the records showing the amount of munitions on hand after that bombardment had proceeded for 24 hours, and he had been astonished to find the arrangements so excellent that they had more shells on hand than when they commenced the bombardment. Canadians at the front, in the British Islands, and I hope, everywhere, have learned the value of discipline. They have learned that discipline is necessary in an army, and I believe that it was because of their good discipline, as well as of the confidence reposed in them by their officers, that that attack was so successful. The plans which I saw showed the