

such an overwhelming preponderance of sound public opinion in support of this measure that he has not it in his heart to vote against the Bill. It is because the overwhelming mass of his own party, concurrently with his own conviction, is behind the Bill; it is not because there is a difference of opinion but because there is a substantial unanimity throughout this country in support of the measure.

I deplore that cleavage should even be predicted, but I do not believe that there will exist in this country disunion to the extent of resisting the law of the land passed by a majority of the representatives of the people. I see no reason still for such a thing existing; I do not believe it will exist; but I repeat now what I have said before, that I would prefer—ininitely prefer—to have disunion between the forward and the backward portions of this country where we can settle it within our own borders than to have disunion between this nation on the one hand and this nation's defenders on the other. That is a type of disunion, a kind of disintegration, a tearing up by the roots of Confederation to use the words of the leader of the Opposition—that I do not want to see. There is a backward and a forward portion of the population of every country that ever existed in

5 p.m. this world. You cannot point to any nation, even though it be an autocracy, much less can you point to any nation whose institutions are built on the bedrock of democracy, where there does not exist a distinctly forward and aggressive portion of the people in all national aims, and where there does not exist a portion that lags behind, a class which has to be brought forward and who are rather an impediment than an assistance in any national movement. Does the leader of the Opposition believe that the only way in which we can get on harmoniously is to move just as fast as the slowest? Is that his contention? Is that his position? Undoubtedly that is what he is doing; he is moving with the slowest. In Canada, in the midst of a war that demands the utmost speed that any war ever demanded of a nation, if we can only produce union by walking at the speed of and abreast with the backward portion of the Canadian people, then I do not want union in Canada; I am ready rather to face disorder or dissension. Is our arm in this conflict in which our liberties, our very lives are involved to be measured by the strength of the arm of those who do not want to be in the conflict at all?

If there is one man between the shores of this country who is responsible for the shadow of disunion I say it is the leader of the Opposition. It is only two months ago since an offer was made to the right hon. gentleman, which, if it had been accepted, would have cemented together all, or almost all, in this House and throughout Canada who stand behind this war. That offer he declined—an offer, than which a more generous was never laid at the feet of a political opponent by a statesman in power—and he declined on one ground only: that we should insist on walking in this conflict with those who hold back instead of walking with those who would go forward. Let the leader of the Opposition beware, let him not deceive himself; the coalition that he refused in the Commons and in the Government of Canada has infinitely more effect to-day than he has any idea of. There is a coalition among the people of the country that will astonish the leader of the Opposition when the word of the people is heard. This coalition has gone on among the people, although it has failed amongst the members of this House by virtue of the conduct of the leader of the Opposition—attributable to him, and almost to him alone.—The people that he feign would divide are united now, and they will stay united until this war is won. They will decide that the Government which vigorously carries forward the war is the Government which represents them no matter whether it be Liberal or Conservative, or both. It is the fault of the leader of the Opposition, and on his head the charge will rest so long as time endures that in this, the vastest, most perilous struggle in which this or any other nation ever engaged, there was not such a union of those who want to win the war as would produce for the sons of Canada the greatest assistance in their struggle to the death in Flanders. That is a responsibility that I would not want to have becloud my memory after my days on earth are done. It is a responsibility that the leader of the Opposition lightly and airily assumes.

There was a time when the influence of no man in this country, whether in the province of Quebec or elsewhere, was so great as that of the right hon. gentleman. I beg of him this afternoon to go where his influence still is great and speak of this measure as this measure is. Let him not speak of it as hon. gentlemen of his own race have spoken of it in recent weeks at Sunday meetings in their province, but let him tell the people of his own province that within