

was turned over to English troops, the Durham Light Infantry, who fought and went into action that morning right fresh from England, never having seen a trench before, not knowing the difference between a hedge and a trench. They fought for nearly two weeks in those trenches at the cross-roads, where I had previously been, and held the place. Nobody can cast any reflections upon any of those officers and men in my hearing with my consent. This war has seen a great deal of sacrifice, and it is most unfortunate that some people at home have done nothing but scandalize and slander the living and the dead. Why should I say anything against Sir Arthur Currie? I maintain, Mr. Speaker, that he is a wonder, and the fact that he managed to come through with all the intrigue that I saw going on—not amongst the soldiers, mind you, but there was intrigue going on—the fact that he, a civilian soldier, like myself, a militiaman, came through with the highest honours and led the Canadians to victory, I think is a marvel. It should encourage every other citizen in this country to perfect himself in the study of arms, so that should the time ever come when their country is in danger they will be able, as the old Greeks said, to take their place in the ranks.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have covered that phase of the matter. I do not know, Sir, but I trust that we have heard the last of all this talk. I agree with the hon. minister, who suggested that some substantial recognition should be granted to Sir Arthur Currie. I think, Mr. Speaker, that the very first thing this House should have done—and I regret there was nothing at all pertaining to this matter in the speech from the Throne—was, after offering thanks to Almighty God for saving us, was to tender the thanks of this young nation to the officers and the men who have fought so bravely for us in those foreign fields in this great war, and written the name of Canada with victory and with glory. There is no man living in the Canadian forces that I can feel in my heart for one minute would do anything wrong, or anything that might injure his country. If he did wrong—and after all we are only human—it would be with the motive of doing good; and if a man makes a mistake in war when he is trying to do good, I think our forgiveness should be extended to him. But I cannot recall a single case of the kind.

The Canadians have had great losses. The living are coming home, many of them to find their homes virtually desolate, their

[Mr. Currie.]

business gone, and hardly knowing which way to turn. To them we should offer every encouragement. It should not be our part to seek in any possible way to minimize their employment. They fought for this country, and they did so, not because they expected that Canada was going to get any territory added to its already broad acres, or that it was going to have any wrongs righted; they fought because they were fighting for humanity, and making the future of this country sure, making sure that Canada would never become an adjunct or an appendage to any other country in the world. That is the feeling they had, and that is why they went overseas and sacrificed their lives. To these officers and men the thanks of this House are due, and I hope that the leader of the Government will take the earliest opportunity to have the House pass a unanimous vote of thanks to our army, such as the British nation always does after its army is victorious in a great war.

Attempts are made right and left to set the men against the officers, and I have heard remarks in this House, and read statements in the Canadian press, trying to disparage the officers, and saying that the pensions of the men should be the same as the officers, or that the officers should not get more than the men. In my view there is nothing too good for the men, but you must bear in mind, Mr. Speaker, that the officers of the Canadian army that went overseas in the first place—it is true their pay has been increased a trifle—on the basis of the same pay as the English officers; in fact their pay was less than that of English officers, while our men received four times the pay of the English private. I do not begrudge our men four times the pay of the English Tommy—they were always willing, if necessary, to do four times the fighting of any other man in the field. But as far as the officers were concerned a lieutenant-colonel, occupying the same position as I occupied, in the British army received a dollar a day more pay than I did. And those young men who led the troops over the top, the bravest of the brave, our subalterns, our lieutenants, what did they get? They did not get enough to maintain their wives on, they did not get as much money, Mr. Speaker, as the armourer corporals in the Canadian Forces got in pay. And still there is talk about the big pay of the officers! I trust that this House will not hear any more talk about the difference in pay or pension between the officers and the men. They all