

judgment and to sit here as recording machines, simply to register the decisions of the Government. We are still of the opinion that the War is the supreme issue; but if we believe that in the method of carrying on the War, in the policy proposed by the Government, there be errors of judgment or otherwise, then it is our imperative duty to cry, 'Halt;' to show the mistakes, to point out the true course, and to use every endeavour to prevent the mistakes from being carried into effect. When we come to matters of this kind, it is always well to refer to England, where parliamentary government is certainly better understood than in any other part of the world."

The Situation in Great Britain.

"The situation in Great Britain is exactly the same as in Canada. There the duty of the Government and the rights of the Opposition have been again and again discussed, and the judgment of the country has sanctioned the course pursued by both parties. It may be well here that I should quote in this respect an article of great authority, published in the Saturday Review, giving opinion upon the very question which exists in England as it exists here to-day. I commend to the House the following language:

"The brilliant speeches of Lord Curzon and Lord Selborne last week will help to remind the Government that the right of criticism and inquiry is claimed in war time as well as in peace. It would be quite fatal to the Parliamentary system if this right were for a moment in question. It would reduce our political system to absurdity if the duty and function of an Opposition automatically ceased whenever the Government of the day was called on to grapple with a big and critical problem. In time of war, as in time of peace, it is the duty of the Opposition to watch constantly and jealously the men to whom the task is given of employing to the best of their ability the resources and wisdom of the country. In time of war this task mainly resolves itself into finding the right men for the work in hand, and in securing that they shall have all the support they require in material and in authority

"The Opposition must consider itself as deputed to guard against any wasting of the nation's manhood or treasure. Should the Opposition become aware of, or should it reasonably suspect, incompetence or bad faith in any responsible minister or in any political group, it is its duty to speak out and call the accused to a strict account. Such action has nothing to do with party politics

"The Opposition cannot surrender its right of criticism and thorough inquiry into such matters as these without grossly failing in its duty to the country

"An Opposition in war time must not be factious, but it must be watchful, critical

"The Opposition is bound to reserve to itself the right to question the Government, to watch closely and perpetually its political conduct of the War, to express any misgiving or disagreement it may feel frankly and distinctly."

"To this I may add the comment of a paper published in this city, a paper which is not unfriendly to the Government; I refer to the Evening Journal. In its issue of a recent date we read:

War and Party Politics.

"Australia and New Zealand have had general elections since the War broke out, and some of our Canadian papers are pointing to these as illustrating the fact that domestic politics do not need to be suppressed in war time. Would it not be better to look to the view of both parties in the Mother Country? When the Imperial Parliament met in November, "This," said Premier Asquith, "is not a proper time for dealing with any matter of domestic politics," and the view he thus expressed was taken willingly by both sides. Practically the whole attention of the House was devoted to the War and matters arising out of the War.

"A fine example of the surrender of party to patriotism was given by Mr. Austen Chamberlain when, with the approval of the leader of the Opposition, he accepted Mr. Lloyd George's invitation to co-operate with him in making the Budget proposals as workmanlike as possible. These proposals were not such as he himself would have submitted, but once they were laid before the House he consented, without prejudice to his own views, to resume the Treasury consultations which proved so useful at the outbreak of the War. By this proceeding the path of the Finance Bill was set free from difficulties which might have hindered its progress.

"Mr. Bonar Law held as an exception that every member and every newspaper had a right to attack any member of the government who might be doing his work inefficiently. And nobody questioned that."

British Government Consulted Opposition.

"I commend these words to the attention of the House. You will see that in Great Britain the Opposition were consulted by the Government as to their financial proposals. This is a matter of record and of history. I might go further than this newspaper goes and say that at all stages of the War, from the first to the present day, the Opposition have been kept in constant consultation by the powers that be; they were consulted as to military operations, and at every step were asked to give their advice. It was not so in this country. We were not consulted. If we had been honoured in the same way—not that I claim anything in that respect, but representing here a great party comprising almost half of the population, having views of their own on many of the financial problems which now confront us, claiming to be as patriotic as the other side, and claiming to have done their duty as amply as was in their power—I say that, if we had been consulted, we should have been happy to give our views as to the policy to be pursued. I do not say that our views would have been accepted; but certainly there would have been an effort on my part at all events to give way on some of my own views, and I might have felt it right to ask the other side to give way on some of their views also, so that we might have been unanimous in policy as we have been unanimous in the objects which policy is to serve. But we were not consulted. I do not complain of this; I have no right to complain. But my hon. friend the Finance Minister has no right to complain either if to-day we have to take issue with him, and take issue sharply, upon the resolutions which he has laid before the House.

The Financial Condition of Canada.

"In his opening speech in presenting these resolutions to the House, my hon. friend laid the financial situation of the country before us, and everybody admits that that situation is a serious one. He told us that for the year which is to close on the 31st of this month he expects a revenue of \$130,000,000 and an expenditure of \$140,000,000 leaving a deficit of \$10,000,000 upon consolidated fund account. Besides this, there is \$50,000,000 of expenditure on capital account and \$50,000,000 of war expenditure, making a discrepancy, a chasm, between revenue and expenditure of \$110,000,000. The situation for next year is still more serious. The hon. gentleman tells us that for next year he does not expect a revenue of \$130,000,000, but of \$120,000,000 only, while he expects a total expenditure of \$200,000,000, leaving a deficit of