

this war broke out. The fact of the matter is that this is one of the most important lessons that we can learn from the war. We on this continent of all men ought to take our share in teaching this lesson as one of the lessons of the war. We are in the happy position of being the citizens of one great nation to the north of the forty-ninth parallel, having another great nation to the south of us. If armaments were the way to keep the peace, the three thousand-mile boundary line between these two great nations should be studded with fortresses from end to end, but we have not a fortress on the whole of that line, and we are just about to celebrate one hundred years of peace between these two great nations. We have a right, therefore, to point to that condition of affairs and to say to the backward nations of Europe: we have arrived at a better condition of civilization upon this continent and it is for you to come up to our platform and live in the more enlightened society which you can find on this side of the Atlantic.

The little dispute between my two right hon. friends might very well be left as they left it; but I was very much interested, as one who has studied the question of Imperial federation, in what I venture to call that little dispute. I was struck, when I read the Prime Minister's speeches, with his reference to the fact, by way of a very mild prophecy, that he was still hankering after a closer connection, by Imperial legislation or arrangement, with the mother country. I must say that the answer of the right hon. the leader of the Opposition this afternoon was perfect in argument and perfect in form in every way. The defence of the Prime Minister for having made his remark was very good, so far as a tu quoque defence can ever be. He defended the remark, which, after all, was a very harmless one, by stating that my right hon. friend and leader (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) had made a similar remark eighteen years ago. I reflected that it is just possible that a successor of my right hon. friend's might make that remark eighteen years from now, and if that is all that ever comes from this scheme I cannot see, from such harmless remarks at such long intervals, any great chance of a gigantic scheme of Imperial federation being evolved. I have, on previous occasions, dwelt on this question at considerable length, and do not propose referring to it further.

There was so little of a debatable nature either in the address or in the speeches which we have heard this afternoon that,

[Mr. H. Clark.]

as I said to begin with, I did not rise to make any lengthy remarks. There are, however, one or two plain things that as a plain man I may be allowed to say. In my judgment, as in the war session last summer and in the interval that has elapsed from that session until now, so now, there is one paramount duty before Parliament and the country, and that paramount duty is to get behind the men in the trenches and to keep behind them. That I think to be the paramount duty of Parliament and the country. If we wanted any encouragement along these lines, we should find it by looking at what is going on in the Imperial Parliament. If we needed further stimulation along these lines we should certainly find it in the people of the old land and of the whole Empire, and we should find it in the remotest hamlets of this Dominion of Canada. I am pleased to testify, as coming from the West, that if you call a meeting anywhere there you find but one spirit at the present time: whether the meeting be for the support of the Belgian relief fund, the Patriotic fund or the Red Cross, we find every man, woman and child in arms impressed with this thought, that we are in the presence of a gigantic task and that nothing must be allowed to distract our attention from that task.

There is one rule of conduct which, as far as I am concerned as a member of this Opposition, I have laid down for myself, and that is to do nothing and say nothing that will interfere with our presenting a united front to the common foe. That is the primary duty of the Opposition as it is the primary duty of Parliament and of the country. There are, however, subsidiary duties which lead up to the discharge of the main duty, and I take it that the Address raises these subsidiary duties in a very acute form. The first of these duties is one which we shall discuss more fully upon the Budget itself: It is that of raising money; and the second is the duty, which devolves more particularly upon the Government, of expending money. With regard to the amount that the Government proposes to raise, I think I can say for the gentlemen on this side of the House that no challenge will be offered to their policy. Whatever they ask for, whatever is necessary for carrying out Canada's share in the great war in which we are engaged, we, of the Opposition, shall offer no objection. If wrong methods, according to our views, are used to raise the money, as I said to begin with, I do not conceive that war leads Par-