

ALERT BUT NOT ALARMED.

In these days of national seriousness and anxiety he is a true patriot who keeps his heart, keeps his head, and keeps his tongue. The man who loses his heart adds to the deadweight on the public. The man who loses his head adds only to the general confusion. The man who lets loose his tongue may add to the interest of a social hour, and may even get himself mentioned in the newspapers, but he is the greatest nuisance of all. Canada needs to practise the British habit: alert but not alarmed.

The situation the world over is sufficiently disturbed to sober the most thoughtless. In Canada no place should be found for the flippant. The happenings of what once we called the com-monday are so touched with the stern realities that even for the least of us life has been lifted out of the vulgar round of selfish pleasure. The facts of the world's great conflict and sore travail have penetrated to the most secluded corner and touched the most self-centred family. All of a sudden life has become very earnest, very simple, and very great.

It is at such a time of strained alertness that gossip circulation of dark suspicions and groundless rumors is not only an impertinence but a crime. Last week a letter from a gentleman in Buffalo, an entirely proper and considerate letter, warned The Globe of a German plot to blow up the Welland Canal and the railway tunnel at Hamilton. The publication of that warning would have caused fear to thousands of people and damage to public interests. Careful investigation through several days and nights in Buffalo, Niagara Falls, and other points in New York State and along the canal and railway on the Canadian side disproved all fears of even the possibility of any invasion, and yielded assurances that at every point the authorities are alert—alert but not alarmed.

Alert but not alarmed! That is the attitude every officer and every citizen everywhere should maintain. Any loose tongue can cause alarm. A scare-story is easily told, and its fearsomeness grows as it passes from tongue to tongue. Hundreds of such stories from people who profess to "know," who have received a "tip on the quiet," come to every newspaper office. To print them would cause useless alarm and the demoralization of business and traffic. Of course, all such rumors should be sifted. Even the wildest deserves to be investigated. No chances should be taken. No risks should be run. This is the time for special alertness and ceaseless activity on the part of every officer and agency charged with detective responsibility. Every possible spy--the detestable spy--should be tracked. Every suspicious situation should be investigated—not talked about, but reported and investigated. Alert but not alarmed--that is the attitude.

It is not improbable that alarms are raised and rumors started by alien enemies in order that the people of Canada may become panicky about home defence, and so decline to send a hundred thousand Canadian soldiers to the battle-front overseas. That dodge will fail. Alert everywhere but alarmed nowhere, Canadians will do their full duty both at home and abroad, and having done all shall stand.