

CANADA'S ALL POSSIBLE.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier has stated in an admirable address to the Canadian people that only the all possible will suffice to win the war. Has Canada reached the limit of the possible in her efforts? Unquestionably not. Were conscription put into effect, as it has been in Great Britain, more than half a million men would be added by a stroke of the pen to the armed forces of the Dominion.

But conscription for overseas service in Canada is a measure that both political parties consider impracticable. In Australia, where the population is almost entirely of British origin, the electors rejected compulsory overseas service by a decisive majority. Here, where only fifty-four per cent. of the total population consists of persons of British origin, conscription for overseas service would be even more decisively defeated. Were any attempt made to compel overseas service the effective guarding of the frontier would probably require more men than the measure would yield in recruits.

If conscription is neither practicable nor desirable, does Canada do her all possible by continuing a system of voluntary recruiting that scarcely makes good the wastage in the home training camps, and does not provide for the proper reinforcement of the Canadian divisions on the firing line? The Globe firmly believes that more can be done to strengthen Canada's armies at the front than has been or is being done. There are still in the Dominion under training, according to Sir Robert Borden's figures, 48,312 men who have enlisted voluntarily for overseas service. Many of these men are restive because of the long period spent in comparative inaction on this side of the Atlantic while their battalion officers are trying to recruit to strength. The men would be pleased and the interests of Canada and the Allied cause would be served were the great bulk of the forty-eight thousand sent overseas immediately, and thus made available as reinforcements when the crisis of the war is reached.

Their departure would leave Canada with only a few thousand militia under arms, men called out for home service shortly after the outbreak of the war. The Dominion would not be sufficiently protected against possible attack by the 9,000 militia so employed. The obvious course would be to strengthen this defence force by calling out for home service, under the authority of the Militia Act, forty or fifty thousand of Canada's youth between nineteen and twenty-one.

Every Canadian of military age is liable to be called out for the defence of the Dominion, and also, if necessity requires, for service outside of Canada in guarding Canada's rights. Already nine thousand men have been embodied for guard duty of various sorts—in internment camps, along the canals, on the frontier, and elsewhere. Is there any good reason why this body of men should not be expanded at once to fifty thousand, thus providing the security that would otherwise be materially lessened by the sending overseas of the forty-eight thousand men under arms who have volunteered for service there?

The Globe has no fear that the people of any part of the Dominion would refuse to take their proper share in home defence. Even the most pronounced Nationalists declare that they are prepared to bear arms whenever called upon to do so in defence of Canada within the borders of the Dominion. Conscription for overseas service would unquestionably be difficult to enforce. The calling out of fifty thousand young Canadians for home service would impose no new obligation upon anyone, and would enable the Government at once to despatch many thousands of men to Europe who are eager to serve overseas.

Canada in honor must do everything possible to reinforce her troops at the front. The proposal to call out fifty thousand of her young men for home service is entirely practicable. Parliament is in session, and would doubtless give almost unanimous consent to the measure on assurances that none of the men so called out would be required to serve overseas. If our public men cannot agree on such a measure the people will be inclined to think that the sooner a general election is held and the air cleared the better.