

Captain Papineau's
Letter

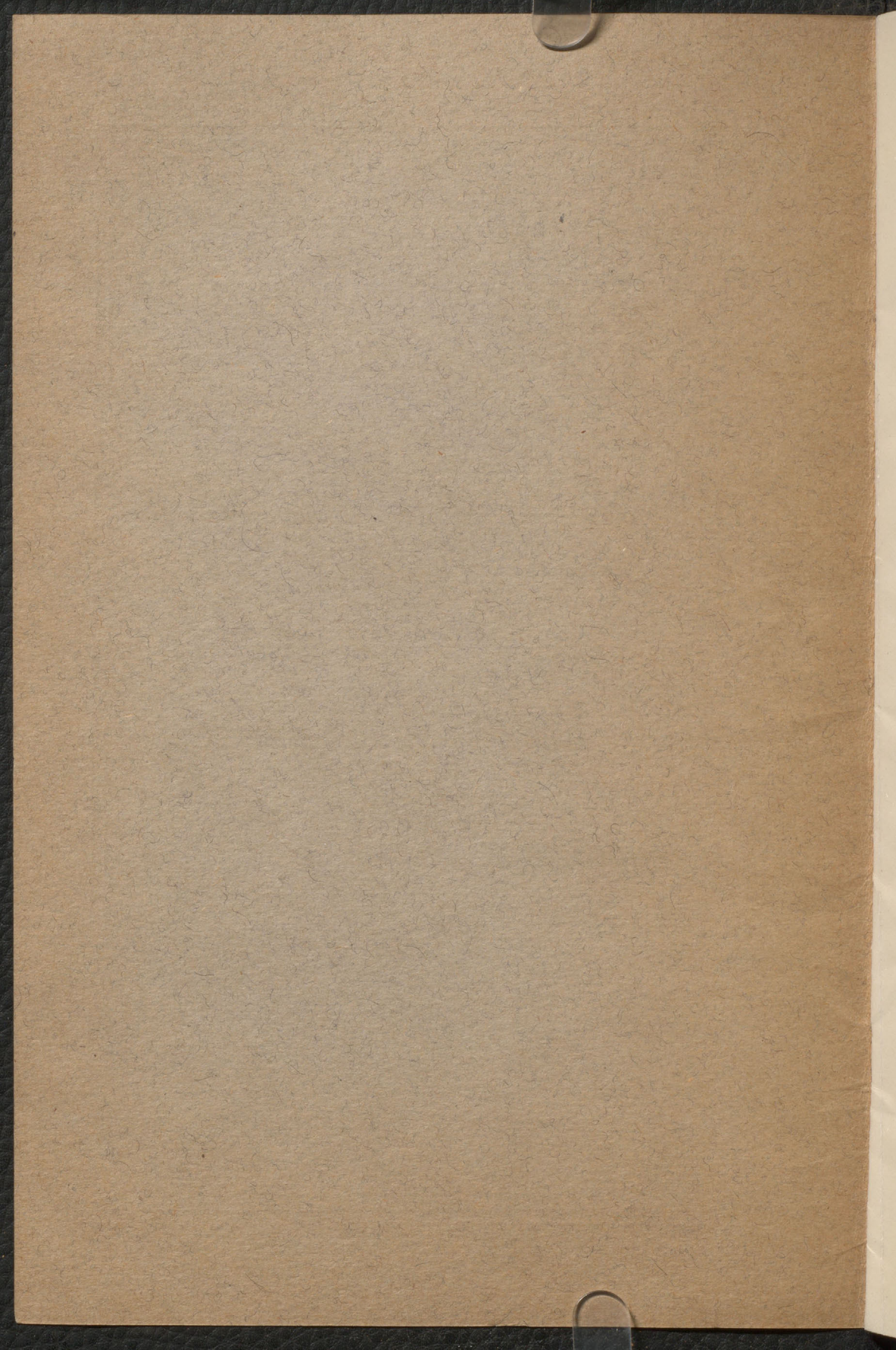
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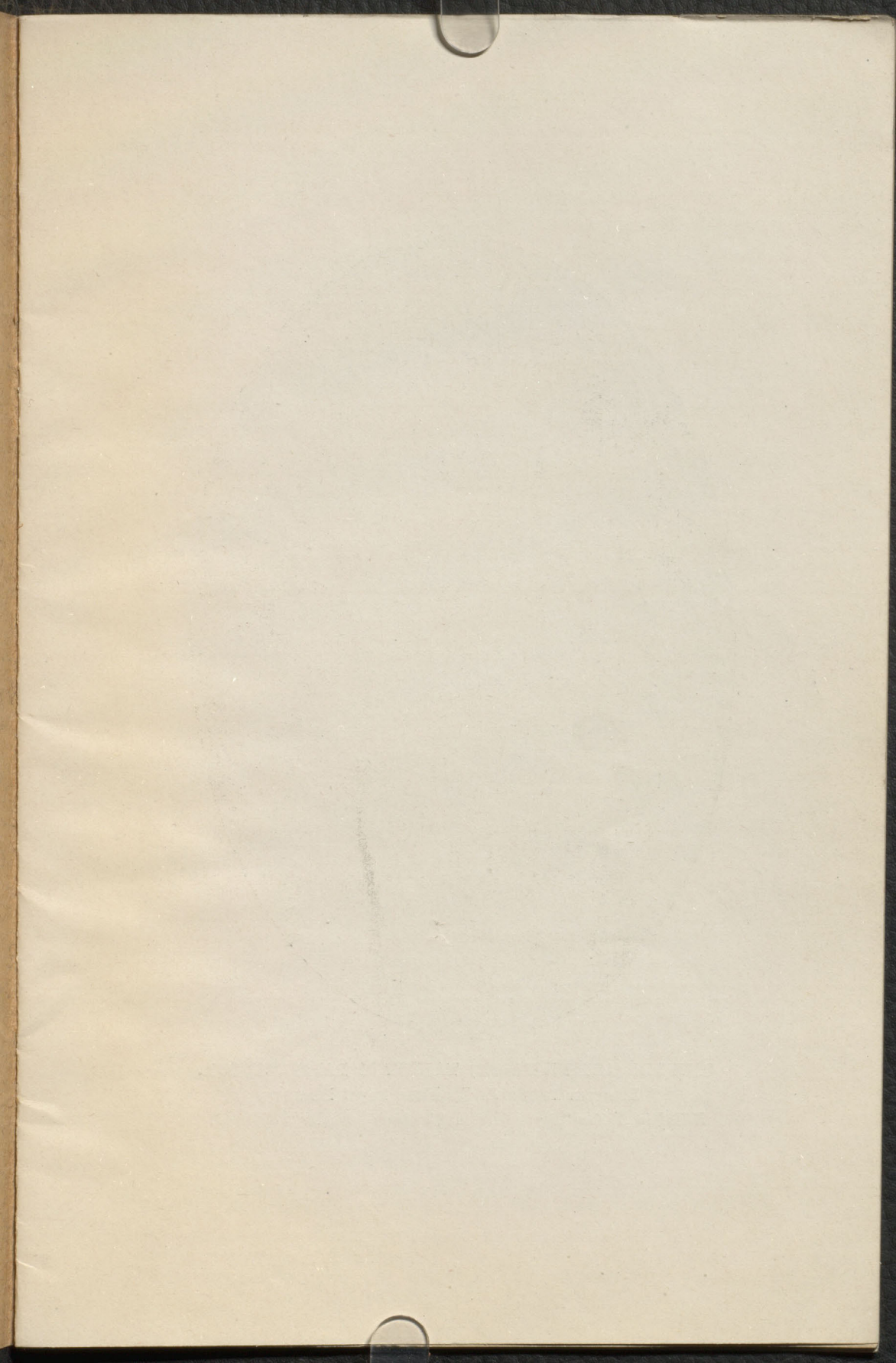
M. Henri Bourassa

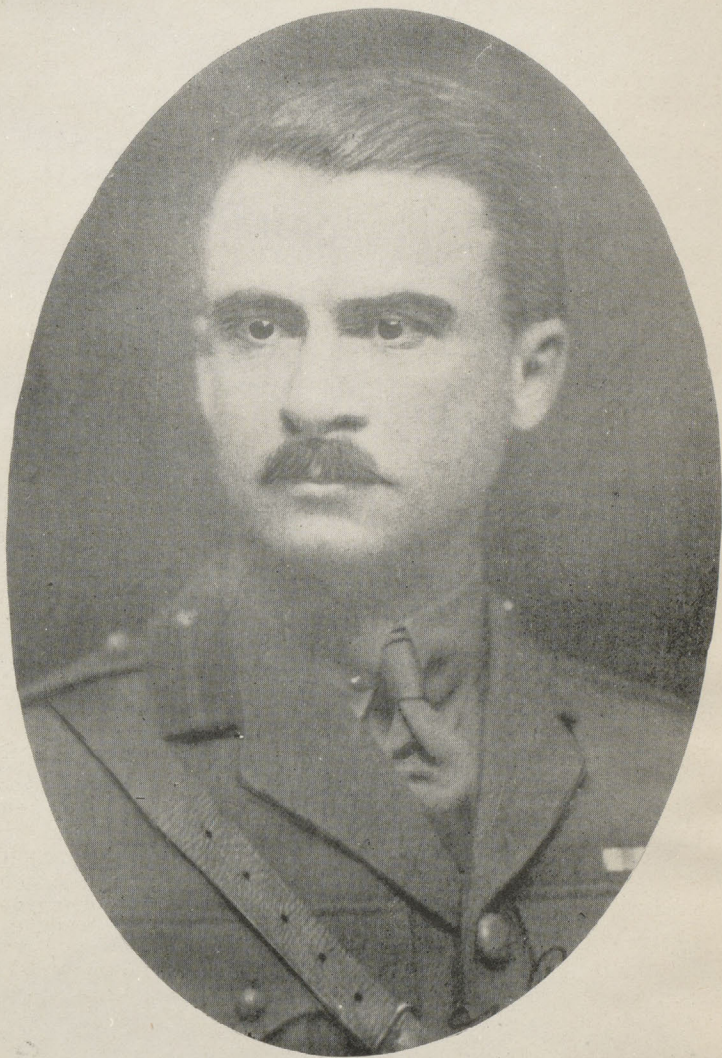
(Editor of "Le Devoir")



BELLIGERENTS-
CANADA.







CAPTAIN (ACTING-MAJOR) TALBOT M. PAPINEAU, M.C.,
Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.
Killed in Action "Somewhere in Flanders," October 30th, 1917.

LETTER FROM CAPTAIN PAPINEAU TO M. BOURASSA,
EDITOR OF "LE DEVOIR," MONTREAL.

IN THE FIELD,

FRANCE, MARCH 21ST, 1916

TO MONSIEUR HENRI BOURASSA,
EDITOR OF "LE DEVOIR,"
MONTREAL.

MY DEAR COUSIN HENRI,

I was sorry before leaving Quebec in 1914 not to have had an opportunity of discussing with you the momentous issues which were raised in Canada by the outbreak of this war.

You and I have had some discussions in the past, and although we have not agreed upon all points, yet I am happy to think that our pleasant friendship, which indeed dates from the time of my birth, has hitherto continued uninjured by our differences of opinion. Nor would I be the first to make it otherwise, for however I may deplore the character of your views, I have always considered that you held them honestly and sincerely and that you were singularly free from purely selfish or personal ambitions.

Very possibly nothing that I could have said in August, 1914, would have caused you to change your opinions, but I did hope that as events developed and as the great national opportunity of Canada became clearer to all her citizens, you would have been influenced to modify your views and to adopt a different attitude. In that hope I have been disappointed. Deeply involved as the honour and the very national existence of Canada has become, beautiful but terrible as her sacrifices have been, you and you alone of the leaders of Canadian thought appear to have remained unmoved, and your unhappy views unchanged.

Too occupied by immediate events in this country to formulate a protest or to frame a reasoned argument, I have nevertheless followed with intense feeling and deep regret the course of action which you have pursued. Consolation of course I have had in the fact that far from sharing in your views, the vast majority of Canadians, and even many of those who had formerly agreed with you, were now strongly and bitterly opposed to you. With this fact in mind I would not take the time from my duties here to write you this letter did I not fear that the influence to which your talent, energy and sincerity of purpose formerly entitled you, might still be exercised upon a small minority of your fellow countrymen, and that your attitude might still be considered by some as representative of the race to which we belong.

Nor can I altogether abandon the hope—presumptuous no doubt but friendly and well-intentioned—that I may so express myself here as to give you a new outlook and a different purpose, and perhaps even win you to the support of a principle which has been proved to be dearer to many Canadians than life itself.

I shall not consider the grounds upon which you base your opposition to Canadian participation in this more than European—in this World

War. Rather I wish to begin by pointing out some reasons why on the contrary your whole-hearted support might have been expected.

And the first reason is this. By the declaration of war by Great Britain upon Germany, Canada became "ipso facto" a belligerent, subject to invasion and conquest, her property at sea subject to capture, her coasts subject to bombardment or attack, her citizens in enemy territory subject to imprisonment or detention. This is not a matter of opinion—it is a matter of fact—a question of international law. No arguments of yours at least could have persuaded the Kaiser to the contrary. Whatever your views or theories may be as to future constitutional development of Canada, and in those views I believe I coincide to a large extent, the fact remains that at the time of the outbreak of war Canada was a possession of the British Empire, and as such as much involved in the war as any country in England, and from the German point of view and the point of view of International Law equally subject to all its pains and penalties. Indeed proof may no doubt be made that one of the very purposes of Germany's aggression and German military preparedness was the ambition to secure a part if not the whole of the English possessions in North America.

That being so, surely it was idle and pernicious to continue an academic discussion as to whether the situation was a just one or not, as to whether Canada should or should not have had a voice in ante bellum English diplomacy or in the actual declaration of war. Such a discussion may very properly arise upon a successful conclusion of the war, but so long as national issues are being decided in Prussian fashion, that is, by an appeal to the Power of Might, the liberties of discussion which you enjoyed by virtue of British citizenship were necessarily curtailed and any resulting decisions utterly valueless. If ever there was a time for action and not for theories it was to be found in Canada upon the outbreak of war.

Let us presume for the sake of argument that your attitude had also been adopted by the Government and people of Canada and that we had declared our intention to abstain from active participation in the war until Canada herself was actually attacked. What would have resulted? One of two things. Either the Allies would have been defeated or they would not have been defeated. In the former case Canada would have been called upon either to surrender unconditionally to German domination or to have attempted a resistance against German arms.

You, I feel sure, would have preferred resistance, but as a proper corrective to such a preference I would prescribe a moderate dose of trench bombardment. I have known my own dogmas to be seriously disturbed in the midst of a German artillery concentration. I can assure you that the further you travel from Canada and the nearer you approach the great military power of Germany, the less do you value the unaided strength of Canada. By the time you are within fifteen yards of a German army and know yourself to be holding about one yard out of a line of five hundred miles or more, you are liable to be enquiring very anxiously about the presence and power of British and French forces. Your ideas about charging to Berlin or of ending the war would also have undergone some slight moderation.

No, my dear Cousin, I think you would shortly after the defeat of the Allies have been more worried over the mastery of the German consorts than you are even now over a conflict with the Ontario Anti-linguists. Or I can imagine you an unhappy exile in Terra del Fuego eloquently comparing the wrongs of Quebec and Alsace.

But you will doubtless say we would have had the assistance of the Great American Republic! It is quite possible. I will admit that by the time the American fleet had been sunk and the principal buildings in New York destroyed the United States would have declared war upon Europe, but in the meantime Canada might very well have been paying tribute and learning to decline German verbs, probably the only thing German she could have declined.

I am, as you know, by descent even more American than I am French, and I am a sincere believer in the future of that magnificent Republic. I

cannot forget that more than any other nation in the world's history—England not excepted—she has suffered war solely for the sake of some fine principle of nationality. In 1776 for the principle of national existence. In 1812 for the principle of the inviolability of American citizenship. In 1860 for the preservation of National unity and the suppression of slavery. In 1896 for the protection of her National pride and in sympathy for the wrong of a neighbouring people.

Nor disappointed as I am at the present inactivity of the States will I ever waiver in my loyal belief that in time to come, perhaps less distant than we realise, her actions will correspond with the lofty expression of her national and international ideals.

I shall continue to anticipate the day when with a clear understanding and a mutual trust we shall by virtue of our united strength and our common purposes be prepared to defend the right of humanity not only upon the American Continent but throughout the civilized world.

Nevertheless we are not dealing with what may occur in the future but with the actual fact of yesterday and to-day, and I would feign know if you still think that a power which without protest witnesses the ruthless spoliation of Belgium and Servia, and without effective action the murder of her own citizens, would have interfered to protect the property or the liberties of Canadians. Surely you must at least admit an element of doubt, and even if such interference had been attempted, have we not the admission of the Americans themselves that it could not have been successful against the great naval and military organizations of the Central Powers?

May I be permitted to conclude that had the Allies been defeated Canada must afterwards necessarily have suffered a similar fate.

But there was the other alternative, namely, that the Allies even without the assistance of Canada would not have been defeated. What then? Presumably French and English would still have been the official languages of Canada. You might still have edited untrammelled your version of Duty, and Colonel Lavergne might still, publicly and without the restraining fear of death or imprisonment, have spoken seditiously (I mean from the Prussian point of view of course). In fact Canada might still have retained her liberties and might with the same freedom from external influences have continued her progress to material and political strength.

But would you have been satisfied — you who have arrogated to yourself the high term of Nationalist? What of the Soul of Canada? Can a nation's pride or patriotism be built upon the blood and suffering of others or upon the wealth garnered from the coffers of those who in anguish and with blood-sweat are fighting the battles of freedom? If we accept our liberties, our national life, from the hands of the English soldiers, if without sacrifices of our own we profit by the sacrifices of the English citizens, can we hope to ever become a nation ourselves? How could we ever acquire that Soul or create that Pride without which a nation is a dead thing and doomed to speedy decay and disappearance.

If you were truly a Nationalist — if you loved our great country and without smallness longed to see her become the home of a good and united people — surely you would have recognized this as her moment of travail and tribulation. You would have felt that in the agony of her losses in Belgium and France, Canada was suffering the birth pains of her national life. There even more than in Canada herself, her citizens are being knit together into a new existence because when men stand side by side and endure a soldier's life and face together a soldier's death, they are united in bonds almost as strong as the closest of blood-ties.

There was the great opportunity for the true Nationalist! There was the great issue, the great sacrifice, which should have appealed equally to all true citizens of Canada, and should have served to cement them with indissoluble strength — Canada was at war! Canada was attacked! What mattered then internal dissensions and questions of home importance? What mattered the why and wherefore of the war, whether we owed anything to England or not, whether we were Imperialists or not, or whether we were French or English? The one simple commanding fact to

govern our conduct was that Canada was at war, and Canada and Canadian liberties had to be protected.

To you as a "Nationalist" this fact should have appealed more than to any others. Englishmen, as was natural, returned to fight for England, just as Germans and Austrians and Belgians and Italians returned to fight for their native lands.

But we, Canadians, had we no call just as insistent, just as compelling to fight for Canada? Did not the Leipzig and the Gneisau possibly menace Victoria and Vancouver, and did you not feel the patriotism to make sacrifices for the protection of British Columbia? How could you otherwise call yourself Canadian? It is true that Canada did not hear the roar of German guns nor were we visited at night by the murderous Zeppelins, but every shot that was fired in Belgium or France was aimed as much at the heart of Canada as at the bodies of our brave Allies. Could we then wait within the temporary safety of our distant shores until either the Central Powers flushed with victory should come to settle their account or until by the glorious death of millions of our fellowmen in Europe, Canada should remain in inglorious security and a shameful liberty?

I give thanks that that question has been answered not as you would have had it answered but as those Canadians who have already died or are about to die here in this gallant motherland of France have answered it.

It may have been difficult for you at first to have realised the full significance of the situation. You were steeped in your belief that Canada owed no debt to England, was merely a vassal state and entitled to protection without payment. You were deeply imbued with the principle that we should not partake in a war in the declaration of which we had had no say. You believed very sincerely that Canadian soldiers should not be called upon to fight beyond the frontier of Canada itself, and your vision was further obscured by your indignation at the apparent injustice to a French minority in Ontario.

It is conceivable that at first on account of this long held attitude of mind and because it seemed that Canadian aid was hardly necessary, for even we feared that the war would be over before the first Canadian regiment should land in France, you should have failed to adapt your mind to the new situation and should for a while have continued in your former views;—but now — now that Canada has pledged herself body and soul to the successful prosecution of this war — now that we know that only by the exercise of our full and united strength can we achieve a speedy and lasting victory — now that thousands of your fellow citizens have died, and alas! many more must yet be killed — how in the name of all that you may hold most sacred can you still maintain your opposition? How can you refrain from using all your influence and your personal magnetism and eloquence to swell the great army of Canada and make it as representative of all classes of our citizens as possible?

Could you have been here yourself to witness in its horrible detail the cruelty of war — to have seen your comrades suddenly struck down in death and lie mangled at your side, even you could not have failed to wish to visit punishment upon those responsible. You too would now wish to see every ounce of our united strength instantly and relentlessly directed to that end. Afterwards, when that end has been accomplished, then and then only can there be honour or profit in the discussion of our domestic or imperial disputes.

And so my first reason for your support would be that you should assist in the defence of Canadian territory and Canadian liberties.

And my second would be this:—

Whatever criticisms may to-day be properly directed against the Constitutional structure of the British Empire, we are compelled to admit that the spiritual union of the self-governing portions of the Empire is a most necessary and desirable thing. Surely you will concede that the degree of civilisation which they represent and the standards of individual and national liberty for which they stand are the highest and noblest to which the human race has yet attained and jealously to be protected against destruction by less developed powers. All may not be perfection —grave and serious faults no doubt exist — vast progress must still be

made — nevertheless that which has been achieved is good and must not be allowed to disappear. The bonds which unite us for certain great purposes and which have proved so powerful in this common struggle must not be loosened. They may indeed be readjusted, but the great communities which the British Empire has joined together must not be broken asunder. If I thought that the development of a national spirit in Canada meant antagonism to the "spirit" which unites the Empire to-day, I would utterly repudiate the idea of a Canadian nation and would gladly accept the most exacting of imperial organic unions.

Hitherto I have welcomed your nationalism because I thought it would only mean that you wished Canada to assume national responsibilities as well as to enjoy its privileges.

But your attitude in the present crisis will alienate and antagonise the support which you might otherwise have received. Can you not realise that if any worthy nationality is possible for Canada it must be sympathetic to and must co-operate with the fine spirit of imperial unity? That spirit was endangered by the outbreak of European war. It could only be preserved by loyal assistance from all those in whom that spirit dwelt.

And so I would also have had you support Canadian participation in the war, not in order to maintain a certain political organism of Empire, but to preserve and perpetuate that invaluable spirit which alone makes our union possible.

The third reason is this: You and I are so called French-Canadians. We belong to a race that began the conquest of this country long before the days of Wolfe. That race was in its turn conquered, but their personal liberties were not restricted. They were in fact increased. Ultimately as a minority in a great English-speaking community we have preserved our racial identity, and we have had freedom to speak or to worship as we wished. I may not be, like yourself, "un pur sang", for I am by birth even more English than French, but I am proud of my French ancestors, I love the French language, and I am as determined as you are that we shall have full liberty to remain French as long as we like. But if we are to preserve this liberty we must recognise that we do not belong entirely to ourselves, but to a mixed population, we must rather seek to find points of contact and of common interest than points of friction and separation. We must make concessions and certain sacrifices of our distinct individuality if we mean to live on amicable terms with our fellow-citizens or if we are to expect them to make similar concessions to us. There, in this moment of crisis, was the greatest opportunity which could ever have presented itself for us to show unity of purpose and to prove to our English fellow-citizens that, whatever our respective histories may have been, we were actuated by a common love for our country and a mutual wish that in the future we should unite our distinctive talents and energies to create a proud and happy nation.

That was an opportunity which you, my cousin, have failed to grasp, and unfortunately, despite the heroic and able manner in which French-Canadian battalions have distinguished themselves here, and despite the whole-hearted support which so many leaders of French-Canadian thought have given to the cause, yet the fact remains that the French in Canada have not responded in the same proportion as have other Canadian citizens, and the unhappy impression has been created that French-Canadians are not bearing their full share in this great Canadian enterprise. For this fact and this impression you will be held largely responsible. Do you fully realise what such a responsibility will mean, not so much to you personally — for that I believe you would care little — but to the principles which you have advocated, and for many of which I have but the deepest regard. You will have brought them into a disrepute from which they may never recover. Already you have made the fine term of "Nationalist" to stink in the nostrils of our English fellow-citizens. Have you caused them to respect your national views? Have you won their admiration or led them to consider with esteem and toleration your ambitions for the French language? Have you shown yourself worthy of concessions or consideration?

After this war what influence will you enjoy — what good to your

country will you be able to accomplish? Wherever you go you will stir up strife and enmity — you will bring disfavour and dishonour upon our race, so that whoever bears a French name in Canada will be an object of suspicion and possibly of hatred.

And so, in the third place, for the honour of French Canada and for the unity of our country, I would have had you favourable to our cause.

I have only two more reasons, and they but need to be mentioned, I think, to be appreciated.

Here in this little French town I hear all about me the language I love so well and which recalls so vividly my happy childhood days in Montebello. I see types and faces that are like old friends. I see farm houses like those at home. I notice that our French-Canadian soldiers have easy friendships wherever they go.

Can you make me believe that there must not always be a bond of blood relationship between the Old France and the New?

And France — more glorious than in all her history — is now in agony straining fearlessly and proudly in a struggle for life or death.

For Old France and French civilization I would have had your support.

And in the last place, all other considerations aside and even supposing Canada had been a neutral country, I would have had you decide that she should enter the struggle for no other reason than that it is a fight for the freedom of the world — a fight in the result of which like every other country she is herself vitally interested. I will not further speak of the causes of this war, but I should like to think that even if Canada had been an independent and neutral nation she of her own accord would have chosen to follow the same path of glory that she is following to-day.

Perhaps, my cousin, I have been overlong and tedious with my reasons, but I shall be shorter with my warning — and in closing I wish to say this to you.

Those of us in this great army who may be so fortunate as to return to our Canada, will have faced the grimest and sincerest issues of life and death — we will have experienced the unhappy strength of brute force — we will have seen our loved comrades die in blood and suffering. Beware lest we return with revengeful feelings, for I say to you that for those who, while we fought and suffered here, remained in safety and comfort in Canada and failed to give us encouragement and support, as well as for those who grew fat with the wealth dishonourably gained by political graft and by dishonest business methods at our expenses — we shall demand a heavy day of reckoning. We shall inflict upon them the punishment they deserve — not by physical violence — for we shall have had enough of that — nor by unconstitutional or illegal means — for we are fighting to protect not to destroy justice and freedom — but by the invincible power of our moral influence.

Can you ask us then for sympathy or concession? Will any listen when you speak of pride and patriotism? I think not.

Remember too that if Canada has become a nation respected and self-respecting, she owes it to her citizens who have fought and died in this distant land and not to those self-styled Nationalists who have remained at home.

Can I hope that anything I have said here may influence you to consider the situation in a different light and that it is not yet too late for me to be made proud of our relationship?

At this moment, as I write, French and English-Canadians are fighting and dying side by side. Is their sacrifice to go for nothing or will it not cement a foundation for a true Canadian nation, a Canadian nation independent in thought, independent in action, independent even in its political organisation — but in spirit united for high international and humane purposes to the two Motherlands of England and France?

I think that is an ideal in which we shall all equally share. Can we not all play an equal part in its realisation?

I am, as long as may be possible,

Your affectionate Cousin,

TALBOT M. PAPINEAU.

APPENDIX

EXTRACTS FROM EDITORIAL REFERENCES IN THE CANADIAN PRESS TO THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN TALBOT M. PAPINEAU, M.C.

("The Citizen," Ottawa, November 5, 1917.)

"MAJOR TALBOT PAPINEAU, M.C.

"In these days it seems almost invidious to single out for special mention any individual casualty of the war but the death in action of Major Talbot M. Papineau, being a special calamity, constitutes a special case. It is given to few men in their early thirties to be reckoned among the most distinguished members of their race but to such a position both on this continent, in Britain, and on the battlefields of France and Flanders, Major Papineau had already attained. In their secret hearts even the most fervent French-Canadian Nationalists felt a certain glow of pride at the varied brilliance of his career in different walks of life. *Nihil tetigit quod non adornatit.* Born and nurtured in Quebec, a grandson of her favorite hero, Louis Papineau, educated at McGill, and steeped in the best traditions of his race, Talbot Papineau was chosen as one of the earlier Rhodes Scholars and entered Brasenose College, Oxford, where he took a good degree, distinguished himself at sports and achieved great popularity. He had the rare capacity of absorbing and identifying himself with any new atmosphere into which fate led him, and his years at Oxford, while he kept sternly free from false imperialist allurements, left him with an undying respect and affection for the ideals, spirit, and temper of the British people. Returning to Canada, he completed his legal studies, was called to the bar and became a member of the firm of Campbell, McMaster and Papineau, in which a career of great success was already assured him when war broke out. He had many other interests besides his profession—he was devoted to athletic sports of various kinds, being one of the best canoeists on this continent; he was fond of books and reading and was deeply interested in politics, having made able speeches on the Liberal side in various campaigns.

"When war came in August, 1914, he never hesitated to examine constitutional problems about Canada's position but clamored for and obtained a commission in the Princess Patricia's Light Infantry as their only French-Canadian officer. After a narrow escape from death by burning on Salisbury Plain, he proceeded to France with his regiment and fought with it all through the desperate struggles of the spring of 1915. His daring leadership of a raid won him the Military Cross but he seemed to bear a charmed life and was soon left as almost the sole survivor of the original officers. His abilities fitted him specially for staff work and for a period he undertook this duty, being now a captain. Later on he was sent back to Canada to assist in the recruiting campaign, which his presence and example did stimulate to a certain degree. Many readers of *The Citizen* will recall his historic controversy with his cousin, Henri Bourassa, concerning Quebec's attitude toward the war. There have been few finer expositions of a political creed and discussions of a public problem than Papineau's original letter; it made his name known all over Canada and won the distinction of an editorial in the *London Times*. He grew weary of the apathy of most of his race and returned to France. His heart had always been with his old regiment the Princess Pats and declining all offers of staff appointments which were his by right of three years service, he rejoined it with the rank of major to fall at its head as second-in-command. He had been so long

amid the perils of the battlefield that his friends had come to regard him as supernaturally preserved for the future service of his race and country but it was not to be.

"There will be widespread compassion for his family but there ought also to be deep sympathy for the Canadian people and in particular for the people of Quebec. Talbot Papineau was the very flower of the French-Canadian race—he had all its finest traits, its elan, its high spirits, its grace and clarity of thought and speech. But he had a foot in both civilizations; he was French by birth and training but he was a Protestant and he was British in temper and outlook; the estrangement of his province from the rest of Canada wore heavy on his heart. Penetrating and despising the windy frothiness of much that is called Imperialism, he had a passionate belief in the British Commonwealth and was prepared to die for the ideals it stood for. A clear thinker and a convinced Liberal, he resented the intolerance of certain Anglo-Saxon elements in Canada but he also deplored the narrow obscurantism of many sections of Quebec. Without doubt he was destined to fill a high place in the public life of his province and country; and many people, who had no personal acquaintance with him regarded him as the one man specially fitted by his unique career and special training, to lead in the task of reconciling the two races, which must some day be undertaken. His life cannot now be given to this honorable end but the memory of his life may hasten its accomplishment.

"He who diest quiet with his face to the foe,
In the heart of his friends must needs die slow,
Over his grave shall be heard the call,
The battle is won by the men who fall."

("The Globe," Toronto, November 5, 1917.)

"PAPINEAU—SOLDIER AND PATRIOT."

"The death of Major Talbot Papineau, of the Princess Patricia's Light Infantry in Flanders removes a young French-Canadian leader who, because of his aptitude for public affairs as well as his ancestry, commanded the respect and support of many of the younger generation throughout the Province of Quebec. The grandson of the leader of the Rebellion of 1837, and a cousin of Mr. Henri Bourassa, Talbot Papineau was a keen soldier, a devoted patriot, and an ardent supporter of the justice of Britain's cause. No finer or more logical defence of the attitude of Canada and the Empire toward the war has been penned by any Canadian than Papineau's letter of remonstrance against Mr. Bourassa's disloyal and dangerous utterances.

"And now the gallant gentleman who tried to stem the tide of anti-war sentiment among his fellow-countrymen of Quebec has given his life for the cause he so whole-heartedly espoused. He might have lived in ignoble ease had he so desired. He might have chosen, without reproach after his fine record of active service, to be known as the Canadian historian of the war, for that post would have been his had he continued to do the Staff work to which he had been assigned. But Papineau was a fighting man, not a bomb-proofer. He went back to his battalion feeling that by so doing he could set an example to others as well as perform the service most congenial to him. For Talbot Papineau the bugle will not sound again. May his death in freedom's cause stir like a bugle call the people of his beloved Province, whose failure to rise to a great opportunity saddened and perplexed him, but never destroyed his faith in and affection for the French-Canadian race. English-speaking Canadians will not soon forget that from the same historic stem sprang Henri Bourassa, the anti-British demagogue, and Talbot Papineau; soldier and patriot, who died that liberty might not perish from the earth."

("The Montreal Daily Star," November 5, 1917).

"TALBOT M. PAPINEAU.

Captain Talbot M. Papineau, M.C., of the Princess Patricia Light Infantry, killed in action, has made the supreme sacrifice at a time when his countrymen have excellent reason to estimate justly his talents and his character. Canada can ill spare this youthful hero, who, in 1914, turned his back on a home career of as brilliant promise as any young Canadian sees before him now, to follow the gleam of an ideal.

"Future generations of our people will pride themselves in the fact that, at the present testing time, there are native-born Canadians, inured to the luxury of peace, great enough to contemplate with equal complacency the comfortable road to fame, made easier by pronounced and recognized ability, or an untimely, painful sacrifice for others. Had Talbot M. Papineau been other than he was—a man worthy of occupying an exalted place in his day and generation—he would not have been equal to the test he has just met with undying glory.

"A son of Quebec Province, a citizen of Canada, inspired by an ancestry which contributed no suggestion of weakness, Talbot M. Papineau adds materially by his untimely death to the sum of his country's sacrifice."

("La Presse," Montreal, November 6, 1917).

"HONNEUR AU CAPITAINE TALBOT-M. PAPINEAU.

"La liste des héros canadiens-français tombés sur les champs de bataille s'allonge toujours. La gloire de notre pays et de notre nationalité en grandit d'autant, il est vrai, mais elle nous coûte extrêmement cher, quand même. Après tant d'autres qui l'ont précédé dans l'immortalité, le capitaine Talbot-M. Papineau, l'un des descendants en ligne directe de feu l'hon. Louis-Joseph Papineau, vient de tomber au champ d'honneur, probablement à l'attaque des collines de Paschendaël, où la première division canadienne a conquis de nouveaux lauriers.

"Officier du régiment Patricia, l'un des plus braves et des plus brillants que le Canada ait produits, il a prouvé par ses hautes qualités militaires et son ardeur au feu qu'il était bien digne des illustres compagnons de lutte qui lui avaient été donnés.

"Parmi ceux qui regretteront amèrement la mort de ce vaillant capitaine, se trouveront certainement tous les membres du Barreau de Montréal, qui le tenaient en haute estime et qui ajouteront au dossier de leurs gloires passées celle toute fraîche et belle entre toutes que la guerre leur a procurée en immolant un héroïque confrère.

"Le défunt, on s'en souvient, avait fait publier, dans la presse canadienne, certaines exhortations où il invitait ses compatriotes à sacrifier leurs vies pour le triomphe de la liberté et de la justice. Il ne s'est pas contenté de prêcher en paroles. Il a mis le sceau à sa prédication patriotique par un acte grand et sublime, que nous saluons avec respect et admiration.

"Le capitaine Talbot-M. Papineau, de sang français et de formation anglaise, réunissait, pour ainsi dire, en sa personne les meilleures qualités des deux grandes races qui dominent en Canada. Tout en gardant du français la vivacité d'esprit, l'enjouement, la vaillance, la grâce, la clarté de pensée et de parole, il avait de l'anglais le tempérament et la manière de voir, tant dans le domaine de la religion que dans celui de la politique.

"Tout en voyant d'un mauvais oeil certaines formes d'impérialisme qui nous sont parfois prêchées, il avait une admiration profonde pour les institutions anglaises, et disait à qui voulait l'entendre que les idéals britanniques étaient assez beaux pour susciter tous les dévouements et pour que l'on mourût pour eux.

"Le héros disparu comptait aussi parmi les Canadiens qui ont le plus à coeur le problème des races et qui soupirent après le jour où Canadiens de sang anglais et de sang français fraterniseront dans l'égalité, la justice et la paix. Malheureusement, la mort est venue le prendre au moment où il faisait les plus beaux rêves pour ses compatriotes et son pays. Il est tombé avant d'avoir pu contempler de ses yeux le soleil de la victoire, avant d'avoir pu toucher le but pour lequel il se battait de toutes ses forces et de tout son coeur. C'est là un des côtés les plus tristes de son trépas glorieux, qui, espérons-le, ne sera pas inutile au triomphe des nations actuellement aux prises avec l'hydre germanique.

"A tous ceux qui pleurent la mort du brave et patriote capitaine qu'était Talbot-M. Papineau, nous offrons nos plus cordiales sympathies."

("L'Evenement," Quebec, November 5, 1917).

"DEUX EXEMPLES."

"Les deux petits-fils les plus en vue du fondateur du parti libéral, Louis-Joseph Papineau, auront donné l'exemple d'une antithèse politique d'un intérêt dramatique considérable. Nous voulons parler, on l'a déjà compris, du feu capitaine Talbot Papineau et de M. Henri Bourassa.

"Le premier, par amour de sa patrie canadienne, par attachement aux institutions britanniques, et par sentiment chevaleresque, a choisi de servir dans les armées d'outre-mer qui sont allées aider à l'Angleterre et à la France à vaincre nos cruels ennemis, les Allemands.

"Par dévouement à une noble idée, il a quitté sa famille, sa carrière, son pays; après avoir ainsi fait le sacrifice de sa liberté, il s'est soumis durant trois longues années, à de rudes épreuves physiques et morales; finalement, il a donné sa vie pour son idéal, modeste héros tombé au champ d'honneur avec des milliers de ses frères d'armes.

"Le second, par haine de l'autorité légitimement constituée, par esprit de révolte, et par son immense orgueil, a combattu de toutes ses forces ceux qui, comme son cousin, ont cru de leur devoir de répondre à l'appel de leur Souverain et de leur Patrie.

"Pour satisfaire à sa dangereuse passion, il a troublé la paix et fomenté l'émeute; il a sollicité des fonds, dans son milieu et à l'étranger, pour l'aider à mener cette campagne odieuse et anti-patriotique; et il a tiré sa subsistance et sa triste gloire de cette oeuvre de violence, d'agitation, et de félonie.

"Il y a dans ces deux existences tous les éléments d'un drame poignant et d'une terrible leçon. Ils frapperont probablement plus tard le génie d'un Eschyle canadien, et nous n'avons aucun doute que le dramaturge flagellera cruellement le superbe révolté de notre âge.

"En attendant le jugement vengeur de l'Histoire, inclinons-nous avec respect sur la tombe du capitaine Talbot Papineau. Il a représenté humblement et courageusement, aux yeux de ses contemporains, ce qu'il y avait de meilleur dans le sang et le cerveau de sa famille.

"Il est mort en soldat, et la France, terre de l'idéal, a reçu dans son sein, avec amour, respect, et douleur, les restes mutilés de ce brave officier canadien.

"Quand, à son tour, M. Bourassa verra venir la mort, que les mérites de son cousin lui vaillent l'occasion de réparer le mal qu'il fait à son pays!"

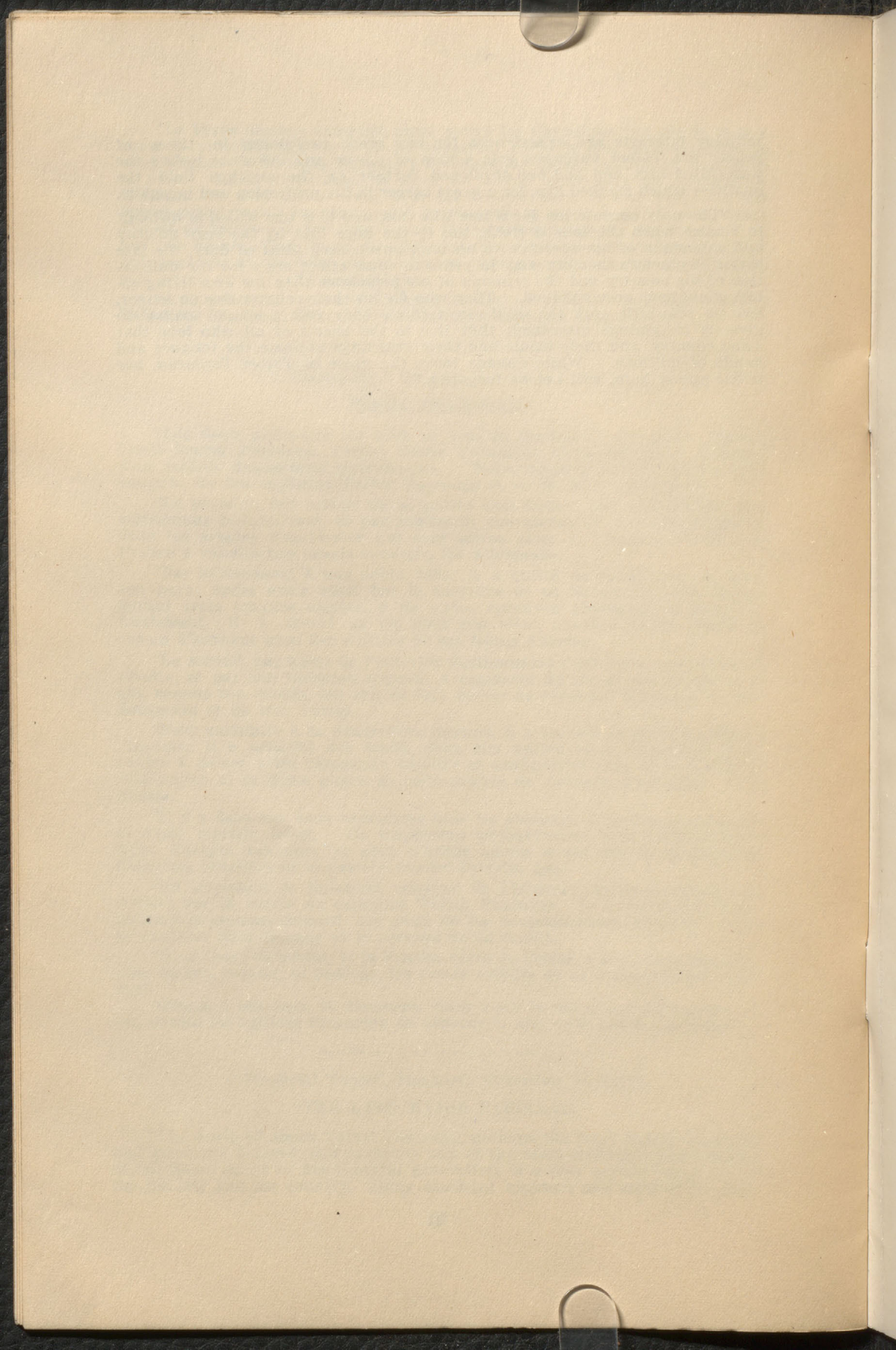
("Financial Times", Montreal, November 10, 1917).

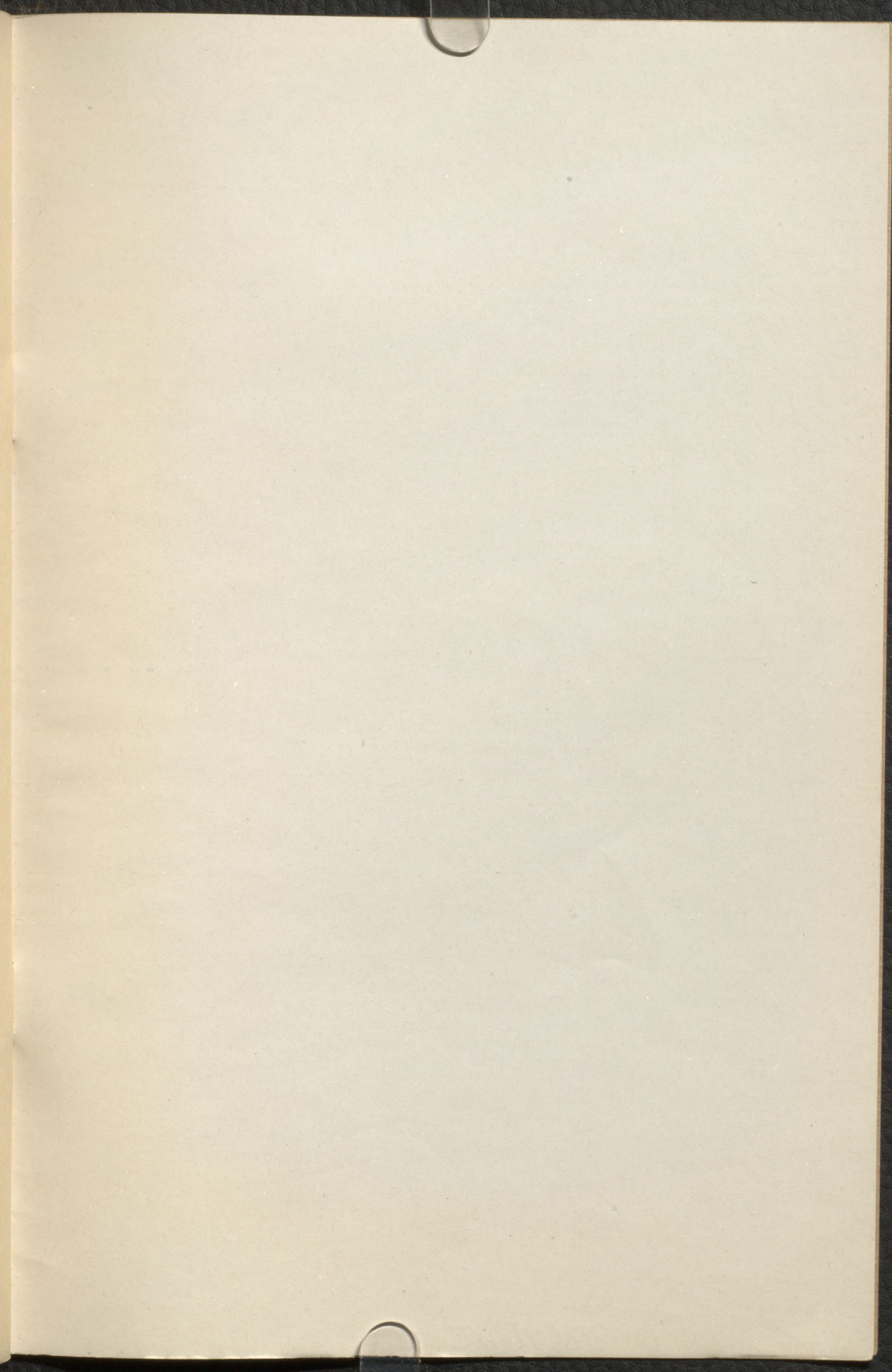
"THE LATE MAJOR PAPINEAU.

"The death of Major Talbot Papineau, perhaps the most widely esteemed and generally beloved, and certainly one of the most estimable and lovable, of the Montrealers of his youthful generation, is a loss beyond computation for his city and his country. Many excellent warriors are unfitted by their

military interests and experiences for any great usefulness in times of peace; but Talbot Papineau was a man of power and influence before the war called him, and had but developed further on the stricken field the qualities which marked him for a great career in his profession and in public.

"The only consolation for a loss like this, and it is one which is difficult to realise when the loss is fresh, lies in the hope that by the very nobility and splendour of his sacrifice to an uncompromising ideal of duty, the late Major Papineau's memory may in years to come effect more for the unification of his country and the triumph of his principles than his own living effort could have accomplished. They who die for their country live no longer, like us who still walk the earth, in a single body with a single tongue to give its imaginings utterance; they live in the hearts of all who love that same country, and their ideals and their yearnings animate the tongues and hands of millions. While Canada lasts, the name of Talbot Papineau, her tragic young hero, will not be forgotten."





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