

at all from my own observation that there is an increased responsibility resting upon the Canadian people with respect to the pensions of returned men. I have found men I knew very well, now young men less than forty, who went through the war, and upon whom the shock of war is now only beginning to make itself apparent. I can readily understand the difficulties of the pensions board in such cases, but where you have well defined disease in men who served the country in the theatre of war I cannot see why it should not be presumed that such condition is referable to their war service.

There are references in the speech from the throne to several commissions. Two years ago we were told we were to have a radio commission. Last year we were told the commission was unable to report before the house rose. We then received a report, which I think was tabled to-day. Will the members be good enough to look at the language in the speech from the throne? It does not state that a bill giving effect to the recommendations of the commission will be prepared and presented to this house. It merely says a report will be presented for consideration, without any statement as to whether legislation will be framed upon it. What is the opinion of the government? It is their responsibility, not ours. Is a bill to be introduced in accordance with the recommendations of the commission, or not? Why appoint a commission if you are going to disregard its recommendations? These are the questions the people are asking every day. I have letters, and I am sure other members have too, asking whether or not legislation is to be framed on the lines of that report. The speech does not indicate that such will be the case. We have the report of the commission dealing with the classification of technical and professional positions in the civil service, and we are told the report will be presented for our consideration. Is appropriate legislation to be framed upon it or not? Is effect to be given to the recommendations or not? In the speech from the throne, when they dealt with matters of this kind in days gone by, governments have said that appropriate legislation based upon the findings of such commissions would be introduced. We have no such thing here. Then if you look at the paragraph dealing with the conference held in accordance with the recommendations of the imperial conference of 1926 you will observe on the last line thereof that the report of the commission "will be submitted," but not "for your consideration." Well, that is a very great difference; the government has control of the business of parliament, and

[Mr. Bennett.]

any report can only be considered if the government so wills. The speech from the throne declares, with respect to the commission dealing with technical classification of civil servants and with respect to the radio, that those reports will be submitted for our consideration, but the report with respect to the status of Canada and the legislation that is to be passed at Westminster "will be submitted," and the other words are left out. I should like to ask why that is so.

Then may I ask one further question. Here is an imperial conference which in 1926 made certain recommendations which involved a committee being set up, which committee was set up and which committee has dealt with these matters and made recommendations. All parties to the transaction have signed the report, as I read it. That report makes certain recommendations, but, sir, can there be any such thing as equality of status in this Dominion and no subordination of one parliament to another if this parliament is deprived of the right to frame our own constitution? That is the test, the supreme test of equality of status, and I ask this house if it is prepared to go that far without consulting the provinces. This commission that met in London certainly should have included representatives of the provinces of Canada as the provinces had the right to express an opinion there. Why? Because the British North America Act is a treaty, a pact made between four provinces, that guarantees the privileges of minorities for all time while safeguarding the rights of majorities, and now we are told that this committee that met in London in 1929 made certain recommendations which are to be passed into law by the imperial parliament. Such recommendations impinge upon the provisions of the British North America Act, yet only the Dominion was represented. My position is and always has been that you cannot change the constitution of this country by that method and in that manner without affording to the provinces directly affected an opportunity to be heard. It is a misnomer to use the words "equality of status" so long as this Dominion has no power to amend its constitution. South Africa and Australia have that power; this country has not. Is that power to be conferred, and are we thereby to gain that equality of status with other parts of this empire to which we are entitled? These are matters about which the people of Canada are thinking and with respect to which we should have some information when this report is submitted; because I need hardly remind you, sir, that without the action of the government there is no opportunity for