

this Government was elected to office. We are two years and a half ahead, and, therefore very likely the conditions are different—conditions always change in two years and a half. Were not the conditions of 1914 wholly different from the conditions of 1911? When war broke out in 1914 the conditions differed very radically and very suddenly. Was that a cause for appealing to the country? Why we had the leader of the Opposition of that day, and the hon. gentleman himself, and scores of them across the way crying to high heaven against the crime of a war-time election. They said it was just cause for not going to the country, but surely it was just as vast a change of conditions, far vaster indeed, than any that has taken place between December 1917 and the present hour. It is true, and here let me attract, if I can, the attention of the hon. member for Marquette, that the great issue before the country in 1917 was the conduct of the war, but that was not the only issue before the country, as he would seek to impress upon this House. The Government of that day, in a manifesto to which he subscribed, laid a programme before this Dominion that contained somewhere around eleven to fourteen different proposals, and very few of them, if more than one, referred to the conduct of the war—proposals relating to woman suffrage and subjects of kindred character, proposals relating to reconstruction and machinery for the purpose of reconstruction. Reconstruction, the very thing he says we have no right to deal with at all! He subscribed to that manifesto. Yes, the main issue was the conduct of the war. The main issue in the contest of 1911 was the Reciprocity Agreement, but surely the Government elected in 1911 was not forbidden to treat of other subjects besides the Reciprocity Agreement. The main issue in 1904 was the Grand Trunk Pacific deal, of unhappy memory, but surely the Government elected on that issue was not forbidden to manage the affairs of the country up to 1908. The Government elected in 1917 had a mandate to govern Canada, and there were no restrictions or limitations, express or implied, or referred to in speech or in written programme, more than appertained to any government that ever ascended to power. Then why this cry for an immediate election? Because the Prime Minister is ill, and we have an acting Minister of Public Works; there is I now find no other acting minister. But the hon. gentleman says we have to have a general election in Canada right away because he wants to be Prime

Minister. He has been saying that things are uncertain, that there is terrible stagnation, and all the other disasters of the universe in Canada. He has been saying that for months. What are the disasters? What is the matter? What is it that is waiting for treatment by the Government? Does he expect a tariff programme in a speech from the Throne?

He has no time at all to deal with opium, but he had time as the hon. member for Frontenac (Mr. Edwards) said, to go to China about it and miss a whole session himself, the first year he was in this House, and have someone, I suppose, act in his stead. What is it that is waiting for treatment by the Government? What is the subject we are evading? What is the piece of legislation that is so badly needed, and about which there is such great uncertainty and such turmoil?

What else does he say we are suffering from? Instability; that is another disease of the body politic. What is the legislation he is pining for now? Has this Government been afraid to tackle subjects? He says we are a Government by commissions; he told us last Monday that we are governing the country by commissions. Well, I know the last big problem that was before this Parliament. Was it not the acquisition of the Grand Trunk Railway? Was it not the determination of a big thing, something that had to be done to really solve the railway problem in Canada? Who was the party of commissions then? Who then was shifting, and wanting to evade and delay? Was it the Government? It was the hon. gentleman himself. He wanted another commission appointed to handle the biggest question that was before this country at that time. He moved an amendment for the appointment of a commission. No, the amendment was moved by the other leader. At all events, he had a part in the formation of that amendment, and I know he supported it, and I know he won't say it has not his sympathy now. Does he not think we should have appointed a commission? Has he changed his mind on that subject? A commission, he said, was the right thing. He could not make up his mind himself what in the world ought to be done, so he wanted a commission appointed to solve the great railway problem of Canada. But the Government of the day brought down a policy which was supported by this House, and the Government has carried out that policy, has carried out the mandate of this Parliament, and ever since my hon. friend supported that resolution for a com-