

resolution is that with all possible speed we should immediately put through a Franchise Bill and then appeal to the country in order to get the opinion of the people afresh and obtain a new Parliament and a new Government. Does my hon. friend see no lurking shadows of future disaster to himself and his party if the suggestion should be acted upon and within a fortnight or three weeks we were put to the test of a general election? Was the success of his party at the last general election so great, so striking, that it makes him all of a hunger for another contest? Or is this a bit of fine strategical camouflage under a pretty well-founded assumption, as he reads things, that the vote will not carry in this House and that he will have all the honour of declaring for a bold and vigorous strategy without exposing himself to any of the disaster which might follow from a realization of what he pleads for? However, I am not going to discuss that point further to-night. Having wearied the House to this length, I shall make a few remarks on what is, after all, the gist of this whole campaign with reference to the present Government. The gist of the whole campaign is to get in full swing rumours, headlines, statements, whether true or false, assertions of every kind, allegations, and, in short, anything at all that is calculated to create the impression that this Government has had no strength, has done nothing in the two years of its existence, has been an uncourageous, an indecisive and an inadequate Administration. Is not that the sum and substance of it? Is not that what is sought to be impressed on the people largely in order that, under such an impression, the downfall of a really good and honest and efficient Government may be brought about? I propose, with the indulgence of the House, to devote a few moments to a very brief statement of some things that have been done since the election of 1917, and I think I shall be borne out in the assertion that a campaign of thoughtless and baseless, and in some respects, mischievous, if not malevolent, criticism has been and is being levelled against the Government.

The Government has suffered, and why? Because its members have been too busy to travel over the country to refute these false statements and misrepresentations on platforms. For instance, put a man in the War Department at Ottawa during these last four years of war, with all its responsibilities and trying circumstances, with its nights and days of unremitting toil, and

[Sir George Foster.]

then ask him to leave his desk, his bureau, his directing seat, and go through this country on weary weeks of combatting these criticisms and misrepresentations. He would be recreant to his duty, recreant to the trust the country had reposed in him if he attempted this. It is to his disadvantage, it is to the disadvantage of the Government that this cannot be done. But it is a case in which the Government must do its duty in regard to the work which is immediately before it, no matter what the people may be saying outside. We have taken that responsibility. We have been up against that disadvantage, and we are up against it to-day. But truth is still truth, and the people of this country are, I think, on the whole, sensible, fair-minded and truth-loving. Now that the war is over and some of the hardest problems of peace have been met and put in the way of solution, the Government will find its methods and means to place the whole truth before the country. And when the whole truth is heard and the whole matter is made plain, misrepresentation will not score a victory, but rather an honest and efficient devotion to duty will carry the approval of the great fair-play-loving body of the Canadian electorate. I stand here to-night, with the experience I have had in public life, and make this assertion, which I believe to be absolutely true: That no Government since Confederation has faced greater responsibilities and met them more efficiently, or has so fair a record in performances, as this Government which has carried through the work of the war. No Government that I have known has more fully carried out the pledges that it made upon the platform upon which it was elected than has this present Government; and I propose to prove both these assertions if the House will give me its attention.

We may divide the work of the Government into three branches: The home work and policy, the war work and policy, and that other body of administration and policy which has to do with both home and war work in the way of support, amalgamation, and co-operation; and I want to briefly draw attention to what has been done under these three headings. The first article of the platform upon which the Government went to the people in 1917 was: A vigorous prosecution of the war. What fault has my hon. friend to find with the Government in that respect? Did it lack courage, or initiative, or efficiency, or loyalty, deep and abiding, to the men whom it sent overseas? Did it suffer those men to go into the