

what the hon. gentleman sought to obtain by reciprocity in the way of helping us to sell goods, we have got to the extent of 90 per cent, and now having obtained that he wants to take off our duties 100 per cent and so aggravate the trouble we suffer from to-day. If he wishes duties lowered, surely it must be in order to buy more, not less, from the United States.

So much for the subject of exchange. Let me come for just a moment to the amendment that is before the House. The leader of the Opposition moves this House for what? Have hon. members stopped to consider what he is moving this House for? What he wants is an appeal to the country—at least that is what he says he wants. The hon. member has appealed to the country before, and I do not know that his memories are any too sweet. But according to the terms of this amendment he wants to appeal to the country again. On what question does he want the country appealed to? Has he submitted a principle that he wants debated before the electorate of Canada? Has he told us what he proposes to do that is not being done? No, all he wants is an appeal to the country, and the only conviction he seems to have is this, that this nation is hungering and thirsting to make him Prime Minister of Canada.

This is the first ground of the appeal:

The regrettable protracted absence of the Prime Minister, the widely accepted belief that it is not his intention to return to the duties of his office.

That is the first condition that he wants appealed against. That is the first reason he gives in his resolution for going to the country. What would the people say about that? Does the hon. gentleman say that it would be well for Canada, because her Prime Minister is ill, that he should immediately resign; that there should be no suzerainty at all; that there should be no time to determine whether he will be able to return to his great duties or not? Does he want the people appealed to on that question? What is the next question he wants them appealed to on?—

The makeshift arrangements for the direction of important departments to which no minister has been regularly appointed.

Because there are certain men acting ministers at the present time. I forget how many there are, but I think there are two. The hon. member was a member of a Cabinet that was in office for fifteen years. Can he tell me a single month in which there was not an acting minister in the whole fifteen years? I do not think there

[Mr. Meighen.]

was one month. I have not had time to go back over the record, but I doubt if he can find a whole month in the fifteen years when there was not an acting minister. Were those "makeshift arrangements"? I have heard criticisms from hon. gentlemen opposite that we had too many ministers of the Crown. If we have, the only way to remedy that situation would be to have one minister take charge of two departments. But as soon as we do that, he says that is a "makeshift arrangement".

He says that there are three provinces unrepresented. I think there are two, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, but I am inclined to think that the province of Nova Scotia is fairly well represented in the Prime Minister of Canada even although he is absent. But that, he suggests, is a cause for appeal to the country. Let me remind my hon. friend that no sooner were the three western provinces created by the administration to which he belonged, than the very calamity which he now deplors began to exist and continued to exist through the whole course of that administration. Never from the hour that the three western provinces were created until the day that administration was hurled from power were there ever less than three provinces unrepresented in the Government of the day. One would think that if he were really sincere in his conviction, that such was an awful state of affairs; that he would not have sat in that administration. He was an additional member that edged in from the province of Ontario. Why did he not resign and make room for somebody from the unrepresented provinces? Every hour that he sat as a Minister of the Crown, three provinces of the Dominion were unrepresented in the Government of that day. When Manitoba had a representative, Alberta had none, Saskatchewan had none, Prince Edward Island had none. When Alberta had a representative, Saskatchewan had none, Manitoba had none, Prince Edward Island had none: Did he think that was cause for an appeal to the country? If not, why does he think so now? Then he says:

These and other things—

He has got to the end of them, but he says:

These and other things operate to produce a condition of uncertainty an instability from which a vigorous and efficient administration of the Dominion's affairs cannot be expected.

Just before that he says that there are new conditions now that did not exist when