

in connection with the Conservative convention. I may say to my hon. friend that if he would only stop to consider what might happen during a national Liberal convention—if any credence is to be given to what is being rumoured in the lobbies of this house with reference to the proceedings at Liberal caucuses being held these days—he would remember that those who live in glass houses should not throw stones.

At the convention held in July last, I stated that if the Conservatives wanted to secure again the votes of French-Canadians—which they obtained in large numbers in the times of Cartier and Tupper—it was imperative for them to consider more favourably certain French-Canadian claims and opinions. I have nothing to withdraw from what I said on that occasion, and if I were to address a convention, meeting or caucus to-morrow, I would say the very same thing, and in identical terms. But, Mr. Speaker,—and in this I differ from some of my French-Canadian friends who sit at your right,—I am not so blinded by party politics and I am not so tied that I should have to vote for the party against what I should deem to be the best interests of the country, of my province or of my constituents. When I offered myself as a candidate in February, 1938, I asked my electors to give me full liberty of action; this they did, giving me twice the majority which had been obtained by any of my predecessors. I am thus their representative and I am constantly endeavouring to reflect their opinion. I shall vote in conformity with certain essential political principles in which I do believe and in accordance with the best interests of my constituents, even though this should bring me into conflict with certain statements made by influential members of my party. That is my conception of my duty as a member, and I shall ask my constituents to judge me by what I have done and shall do until the end of the session. I feel that I have not been unworthy of their trust and I am prepared to face them again at any time.

My hon. friend, the member for Portneuf (Mr. Gauthier), expressed the fear that the situation of 1911, 1914 and 1917 would repeat itself. For my part, I hardly think that possible. We have developed and grown older since that time. The cruel experience of that period is so fresh in our memory that our compatriots could not submit willingly to the ill-usage due to the strange attitude of public men of both parties at that time. If the two older parties wish to avoid the creation of a third party which, as Hugo would say, "is already boiling in an over-

[Mr. Héon.]

flowing urn," they will have to give greater consideration to the purely Canadian sentiment and they must admit, more than they are prone to do at the present time, the opinion of those who believe that, as André Maurois said, "Men of canonical age do not possess the absolute right to legislate with regard to the ultimate fate of those of cannon-fodder age"—*l'âge canonique n'a pas le droit absolu de légiférer sur le sort ultime de l'âge canonable*—.

On that condition only will the two great parties preserve their prestige and keep the confidence of the electors. If my hon. friends on both sides of the house question the truth of my words, let them inquire from their unbiased organizers, their relations, their friends, the man in the street, the young men and women, the mothers and the wives. They will then learn the real sentiments of the Canadian public.

It is useless to go on deluding ourselves: the two great parties are losing their hold on the Canadian people. If they are to endure, and I think they must endure, it is high time for them to awaken to a realization of the facts and to regain the confidence of the industrial worker, the farmer, the business man and more particularly of our youth.

This house must remember that it truly remains the representative body of the people only so far as it reflects and expresses the people's opinions, only so far as it legislates in accordance with the present needs of the nation. If this government proposes to enact measures relating to matters that were not discussed during the electoral campaign of 1935, and if they fear a situation where they would consider themselves bound to pledge the revenues, the lives and the future of the nation, they should go back to the people in order to get the popular endorsement of every item of their new policy before binding themselves further. Having consulted the electors, and only then, the newly elected government will be in a position resolutely and constitutionally to follow the lines laid down for them by the Canadian people.

The five French-Canadian ministers, who I regret to say are not in their seat except the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Michaud), will understand my meaning perfectly. I may remark in passing, and in all sincerity, that I can well understand their anxiety. And perhaps they, too, can now better understand the true situation of the French-Canadian Conservative ministers during the last war.

It may be that at last we are to see the end of the everlasting charge of war and conscription with which our hon. friends of the Liberal party have managed to get into