

namely, that they are convinced that their supporters are impervious to argument or that they are determined, no matter how convinced their supporters may be, to compel them to pass it.

The **MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE**. I shall explain it when I am in order.

Mr. BERGERON. Every one can understand that it will cost a great deal of money to carry out the Bill which is presented by my hon. friend. The vote will be taken according to the law governing our Dominion elections, which means expenditure for the payment of returning officers, clerks, and so on. I wish to ask the Government whether they have examined into the constitutionality of their measure in this respect. Supposing that the majority in certain provinces voted in favour of prohibition, and that in some other provinces the majority went against it. Would it be constitutional for this Parliament and Government to enforce prohibition in the one province which may have voted against it? The reason I ask this is because I was present one day at a demonstration where the Attorney General of Quebec, who is supposed to be a very learned lawyer, declared that he looked upon an Act of that sort as unconstitutional, and if the Parliament of Canada should submit this question and it should carry in the Dominion as a whole, while the majority in Quebec voted against it, he, as Attorney General of the province, would move that an address be presented to the Imperial Parliament to preserve Quebec from being subjected to the Act.

The **SOLICITOR GENERAL** (Mr. Fitzpatrick). Oh, no.

Mr. BERGERON. I am not surprised to hear the hon. Solicitor General laugh, because, I suppose, he has not studied the question very much. I think it is a good deal more serious than the Solicitor General seems to think. Let us take it for granted that prohibition will carry and that the Government will carry out its promise and bring before Parliament a Bill to give effect to the vote of the majority. I suppose that the province of Quebec will vote against prohibition—I believe sincerely that it will. I want to know whether, in such a case, this Government is going to impose prohibition on Quebec. And I think this should be known before we go on to expend from \$400,000 to \$500,000 for plebiscite purely and simply to carry out what hon. gentlemen opposite call a promise made at their convention. Before taking this step, we should be perfectly sure that we are not doing something that is unconstitutional.

Mr. MACLEAN. I would like to add: If a province is to have that right, why should a county or a city have it also? I would like to see the city solicitor of Toronto free to send a similar address in case

prohibition is carried, although we vote against it.

The **PRIME MINISTER** (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). I understand that my hon. friend (Mr. Bergeron) will not vote for the amendment which, I understand, is to be moved by my hon. friend from York (Mr. Foster) to the effect that the Bill should contain a declaration that, if there is a majority for prohibition, the law shall have effect as soon as the vote is taken.

Mr. BERGERON. I have not heard of any amendment yet.

Mr. IVES. The temperance people were a good deal exercised until recently by the fear that this measure would be harnessed up with a question that would perhaps militate against an affirmative verdict. But I think that while their minds may be set at rest on that point, they will have equal reason to find fault with the leader of the Government for having harnessed this question up to his odious franchise measure, which is now before Parliament. He must know very well that the Franchise Act is a measure that the Liberal party promised for years, but one which has been opposed by the Conservative party from the first. By harnessing the plebiscite to the repeal of the present franchise law and the adoption of the local lists as the basis of representation in the House of Commons, he is arraying against his plebiscite measure more or less of opposition which he might very easily have avoided. It is quite possible also that the right hon. gentleman, in his astuteness, thinks that this is going to afford a door of escape in case he does not think it politic hereafter to introduce a measure founded on a vote for prohibition. One thing is certain—it is a gag upon this Parliament, and upon both branches of this Parliament, to force them to adopt the Franchise Act. If either House were not to pass that measure *hokus bolus*, without the slightest possible amendment, the hon. gentleman would have an adequate excuse, in his own mind, for refusing to go on with the plebiscite vote or refusing to introduce the measure to make it binding and effective. Supposing the Senate were to amend the measure in any particular, the right hon. gentleman could say: I will not submit this Bill upon a Franchise Act mangled and amended by a Tory Senate that ought to be abolished, and all that sort of thing. But if the hon. gentleman is harnessing this Bill up to something that it should not be entangled with, he is incurring the opposition of strong Conservatives in the country against the harnessed measure, and he is doing that quite unnecessarily. It is evidently in order that he may have a door to escape, if a door of escape he finds it necessary to seek. Supposing the Senate, when the measure comes before them, were to amend that part of the Bill which relates to the