

and pass it without evading responsibility by sending it to the people. That question of prohibition has been on the tapis for how long?

Hon. Mr. POWER.—The plebiscite is not as good as a royal commission, I suppose?

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL.—That is quite true, but royal commissions are recognized under our system both in England and here, and the only place where a plebiscite has been recognized, as far as my recollection goes, has been in France, when they wanted to decide who should be their emperor and who should not. It has never been known in England. Royal commissions, forsooth! Does the honourable gentleman object to royal commissions? I hope he will change his opinion. I have no doubt he will when that return for which I have moved comes down, for there never has been a time in the history of this country when so many royal commissions to investigate nothing, had been appointed as during the short period that my honourable friend has been supporting the present government. Just as soon as ninety or one hundred thousand majority of the voters in Ontario had recorded themselves in favour of prohibition, my honourable friend opposite found that he had not the power to carry it out, and he referred it to the Dominion government, promising to carry out to the fullest possible extent of their powers as might be defined by the law lords of the Privy Council. You have all read the little episode which has lately taken place between the present premier of Ontario and the prohibition people in Toronto. I am not prepared to say that those who went there representing the temperance people behaved as they should have done. The liquor men, who went a few days afterwards, behaved much more correctly and in a more gentlemanly manner than the prohibition men. They neither contradicted the premier nor hissed him when he gave expression to his opinions. My honourable friend opposite (Mr. Vidal) will agree with me that their conduct was no credit to those whom they represented on that occasion. In Manitoba they had a plebiscite and when the people were heard from, the government found that they had no power. If the plebiscite is taken in Canada the present Minister of Justice, I am satisfied, will find that there is a negro in the fence somewhere. If he does not find some

excuse for not carrying out prohibition, then I not only misapprehend him, but I have an incorrect opinion of his powers of manipulation under circumstances of the kind. Like many others, in the early period of my life, I was an ardent prohibitionist. Perhaps I was something like the mover of the address in the House of Commons. He said those were his opinions when he was a younger man but in a "moment of weakness" he had changed his view. I happened to pick up an extract from a Hamilton paper dealing with this question, in which the writer points out how often those who have been advocating prohibition in the past when placed in a position to put their views on the statute-book have evaded the question. I am not going to refer, as Mr. Hardy did the other day, to my hon. friend who sits opposite me (Mr. Vidal), when he asked him how long he had been in parliament and what had he done towards enforcing prohibition in this country. My hon. friend did not reply to him and very properly, but every one who knows anything of parliamentary practice must know that my hon. friend was never in a position to do anything. He might have replied that had he been a member of the government he might have insisted upon the adoption of a certain policy or left the cabinet. He might have added further that he is simply a private member of this House and that he has never failed, on all occasions, to express his views fearlessly on the subject whenever it has come up for discussion. Until the plebiscite takes place, of course I cannot express any opinion as to its success, but I trust I may live long enough to cast my vote upon that question, and that my hon. friend the Minister of Justice may have the delicate task of dealing with it when he has a large majority in his favour. I frankly confess that I do not desire to undertake the responsibility which he will have to assume in carrying out that law should he have a majority in its favour. I agree with my hon. friend in saying that I hope the time has arrived when these Behring Sea claims will be paid, and I also congratulate this country on the magnificent donations which have been made by the people from one end of the country to the other towards the Indian Famine Fund. The most pleasing feature, perhaps, of the whole of it is the fact that some 30,000 children in the different schools of Canada have contributed their