

tion of so large an amount of the public domain, and that too of a kind and character out of which it is believed millions of dollars can be made. My hon. friend asked me a moment ago if I approved of the regulations. This I do know, that if the public statements be true, this favoured company is to pay a royalty of one per cent upon the products of the different mines which they may sell, or which they may operate, while the hard working miner has to pay ten per cent. The man who goes there, and develops the industry, the man who discovers it would have to pay ten per cent, while this favoured company, with its four million acres of land supposed to be gold producing, would have to pay only one per cent. I leave that question at present until the whole statement comes up before us. There are three other matters referred to in the speech, superannuation, the plebiscite, and the franchise. I am glad to see that the government intend to make some changes in the Superannuation Act. That is like many of their other principles. Some of the ministry in 1869 were its strongest supporters—not to say adherents—of a Superannuation Act. Being at that time in the House of Commons, I voted against it, for reasons which it is not necessary to repeat now, but the manner in which the Superannuation Act has been abused within the last twelve months, should induce its strongest advocate to suggest some changes. I shall take occasion to bring before the House one illustration at least in my own city of the manner in which the Superannuation Act has, to my mind, been most grossly abused, and I question whether they have acted in accordance with the law. The plebiscite I have already expressed my opinion upon. I am opposed to the principle in toto. I believe it is an abnegation of the functions of parliament. I believe it to be the duty of a government, under our responsible system, to come down to parliament, if they believe prohibition to be right, with a well defined scheme, and ask the approval of parliament, and if parliament disapproves, to go the people and ask them to sanction it, and stand or fall by what they consider to be a great moral principle. Whether it be moral or immoral, it is the duty of the government, to my mind, to have opinions upon the subject, to have a policy upon the subject, and to come down to parliament and ask for its verification, or not to touch it

at all. Is it anything but a shirking of responsibility for the government to go to the people and say: "If you want so and so we will do so and so." Is that the principle of responsible government? If they had gone to the country upon the question of prohibition and taken their political lives in their hands, individually and collectively, upon that question, then it would be quite right, quite proper to come down to parliament, and either propose or reject it. And so it is with the whole system. I believe it to be a violation of the principles of responsible government, the shirking of a responsibility which devolves upon the Ministers of the Crown. I do not mean that offensively, although it may, perhaps, sound offensive. As to the franchise, I am in favour of a uniform franchise. I care very little what it is at present, but I have never been in favour in my life of what you call manhood suffrage or universal suffrage. But when we consider the extent to which the suffrage has been extended to the people of the Dominion, it is a grave question whether it would not be better to have one uniform system over the whole Dominion, with manhood suffrage with certain restrictions as to age and residence, rather than have a franchise different in each province. I believe it is universal suffrage in P.E.I. and the same in British Columbia, with restricted suffrage in the province of Quebec and a complicated suffrage in the province of Ontario, and so on throughout the whole Dominion. I am speaking for myself and not for any other party. I have come to this conclusion, that it would be much better, and particularly for the Dominion Parliament, where every young man pays into the treasury of the country in proportion to his consumption of imported goods, or the consumption of excise goods, and where every man is subject, under certain ages, to military duty in defence of the Dominion and of the empire. The principle, to my mind, is not so strong when you apply it to the provinces, because their taxation is based upon property and income, almost exclusively, and many of the younger men pay no taxes at all, they having no property or income sufficient to tax. So that the principle as applied to the Dominion is quite different from that applied to the different provinces. There are many other points to which I would very much like to allude from a political stand-