

if we fail to do so what answer can be made to the charge that this House is of no use to the country?

HON. MR. HAYTHORNE—I wish to make a few remarks upon the Bill. It seems to me that upon questions of this kind a double responsibility attaches to members, a responsibility to the Dominion, and a responsibility to their Provinces. As to the main question, I may say that when this Bill was brought and placed in our hands I perused it carefully, and it struck me as having been prepared with great care, and not a little skill, and upon these grounds I was at first inclined to support it, but when I found that it interfered with the grand principle upon which the Confederation was formed, and with provincial rights, I felt that it was to be dealt with in a very different way. I must look at it as to how it will affect the people of my province—their present and future interests. Its intent is to remove from the local authorities the powers they have been accustomed to exercise, and in many cases exercised with excellent judgment and good effect, both as regards the promotion of temperance and the regulation of the sale of liquor. In my own Province most efficient laws prevail respecting the sale of liquors. The Legislature of Prince Edward Island spent much time and tried many experiments upon different laws for regulating the sale of liquors, and finally adopted a system closely resembling that contained in the Bill now before us. The great difference is that our Legislature adopted the smallest sub-division into which the country is divided as a licensing district. No one in our Province can obtain a license unless he first secures a majority of votes in the school district in which he proposes to pursue his business. This provision operated so well that the people were not troubled with too many places where liquor was sold, but perhaps it rather tended to reduce them to too small a number. I have no doubt that had the matter been left in our own hands we should, in a short time, have supplemented our laws by making provisions for the punishment of offences against those laws, and thereby rendered them complete in every detail. But, hon. gentlemen, one great reason why this species of legislation is to be regretted, is that it is taking out of the

hands of the people what may be called the rudiments of their political education. The system of centralization has a tendency to incapacitate the people of the Province from conducting their own affairs. If this principle be pushed to its extreme you will find that the people instead of improving in their political education, will soon get into such a position that they will not know how to proceed at all.

I should just like to read to the House a very few lines indicating the opinion of one of the first statesmen of the world on the necessity of educating the people in their political duties. It may be in the recollection of hon. members that some few years ago the British islands were greatly troubled with a murrain among the cattle, and Parliament instead of interfering directly from Westminster passed an Act to enable the different localities to slaughter all cattle afflicted with it and thus stamp it out on the spot. Just about this time the present Premier of England, Mr. Gladstone, was entertained at Aberdeen, and alluding to this question of the cattle plague which had recently broken out in the county of Aberdeen, and had been stamped out the way indicated by the law, used these words, and they have a very important bearing upon the question before the House.

After complimenting the owners, and occupiers of land in the County of Aberdeen, on their prompt action in arresting the cattle plague, by the wholesale slaughter of diseased animals, Mr. Gladstone proceeded thus:—

“That transaction, my Lord Prevost, brings to mind the extraordinary value of the principle and practice and habits of local government, and local management of affairs in this country. . . . That is the kind of home rule such as you practised on the occasion of the cattle plague, which every man must witness with satisfaction, and must feel, that it is after all in the energy of individual character, and the sense of individual responsibility for public matters, and the facility of combination in our local community, that we see *laid the broad and solid basis upon which is erected the fabric of national greatness.*”

Now, the tendency of this legislation from Ottawa upon such matters as issuing license for the sale of liquor is just the way to stamp out in the provinces the very embryo of political principles and this is principally the ground upon