tative character, and practically bring about government by a single legislative body upon whose action no check would exist. Such a check could be found by means of the referendum, power being given to a minority upon any great constitutional question to demand an appeal to the electors at large.

Or supposing the result of proposed constitutional changes should be the establishment of a second chamber so constituted as to have, with some exceptions such as that of financial control, equal power with the first, there would always be the danger of a deadlock between the two Houses such as now exists, and the referendum might then be made use of for the settlement of the question. It would appear then that there are three contingencies in which the referendum might usefully be resorted to as the final court of appeal in constitutional difficulties, and it will be noted that each of these has recently arisen. These are new features in the political horizon, and to meet them there is now no provision existing. How far the proposed remedy would, if adopted, be effective remains to be seen.

In considering the application of the referendum to any political question it must be remembered that the members of the Imperial Parliament are not mere delegates sent to represent the views of some particular set of people, and to carry out their behests—they represent the nation at large, they are entrusted with the interests of the whole community, and it is their duty to act according to what they believe to be right regardless of the varying shifts and changes of public opinion. They are responsible for the government of the country; and would not, therefore, the reference of any question to a popular vote relieve them of that responsibility, and throw the whole parliamentary system into confusion? Again what certainty would there be that the popular vote would really represent the sober thought of the electorate?

The same popular clamour which turns the scale at a Parliamentary election might be as easily excited in the case of a referendum, only on a much larger field, and therefore more likely to defeat the object in view. In trying to secure an ob-