

Fisheries told me that he would call attention to the point.

The **MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE** (Mr. Borden). The hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries sent me a note informing me what the hon. gentleman wanted, and I handed it to my deputy, and supposed that the information had been sent in. I will make another inquiry to-morrow and see that the information is brought down.

Mr. McDUGALL. I would ask to be permitted to call attention of the hon. Minister to the statement just placed in my hands. There is no information here beyond that I gave to the House myself, as to the dismissal of these people. I cannot understand the Minister undertaking to trifle with the intelligence of the House by presenting such a return as this.

The **MINISTER OF FINANCE**. I think the hon. gentleman (Mr. McDougall) had better discuss the matter in fair terms. I handed him the memorandum sent me by the department. If it does not cover the ground, if the hon. gentleman will be good enough to give me the page of "Hansard" in which the information he asks for is described, I will undertake to give him the information to-morrow or tell him the reason why.

#### THE PLEBISCITE ON PROHIBITION.

The **MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE** (Mr. Fisher) moved third reading of Bill (No. 121) respecting the prohibition of the importation, manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors.

Mr. FOSTER. Before the Bill is read the third time, I take the opportunity of again very shortly trying to impress upon the Government, as I tried on one or two occasions before, that the securing of a fair vote as well as the comfort and best interest of the electorate as a whole would be furthered if the hon. gentleman (Mr. Fisher), for the Government, would give some definite information as to the time when this plebiscite is supposed to take place. My hon. friend may probably have noticed that there is considerable call for this from the public. The people think they should have information on this point. If this is to be a vote upon which any definite results are to hang, it is very necessary that there should be the fullest discussion of the questions involved, and that the electorate should not in any way be taken by surprise. I think it is also unfortunate if, now that the Bill has been put into shape, there should be any long delay. My hon. friend knows what it means in any election contest, and especially in a contest of this kind; so I hope that before we read this Bill the third time, he will be able to make a definite statement as to when the vote will be taken. I urge this in

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the interests of the temperance people particularly, who, I know, feel strongly on this point.

The **MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE**. My hon. friend (Mr. Foster) wishes me to make a statement. I shall be glad to say a word, at all events. Since the Bill was passed through committee, the Government have received a number of communication with regard to the date of the vote. These communications expressed very little difference of opinion. The writers of all seemed to be perfectly satisfied with the statement which was made either by the right hon. leader of the Government or myself at the time the Bill was read a second time, viz.: that the election would take place as early in the fall as would meet the convenience of the people, consistent with their harvesting operations. I may say further that the Government will give due notice; so there can be no reason for uncertainty and no danger that the people will be taken by surprise. Notice of certainly six weeks or two months will be given, so that there may be abundant opportunity to prepare for the vote.

Mr. FOSTER. It should be at least two months.

The **MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE**. I think so myself; I will say two months. I think that this announcement ought to be sufficient and ought to meet the views of the hon. gentleman. He cannot expect, I am sure he does not expect, that we should to-day name a date, but the announcement I have made is entirely in accordance with the views of the Government.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I regret very much that I was unable to be present during the discussion which took place in reference to this important measure, and, therefore, have not had the advantage of knowing more precisely the position in which it stands. The proposal to take the opinion of the electorate of Canada is of course a very novel proposition. It is not one, I believe, that has ever before been resorted to in the Dominion of Canada; but I presume the Government have arrived at the conclusion that it was desirable to adopt this course after having given it very careful consideration. The question itself is surrounded with a great many difficulties, and my object in rising now to make a few observations, is for the purpose, if possible, of clearing away some of those difficulties. I am sure every member of this House will agree with me in the opinion that the public who are called upon at great expense and great personal inconvenience to deal with this question in the form in which it is proposed, should have some clear and definite idea of what the result of these proceedings is to be. The Minister of Justice has given the opinion, as I see it stated in the press, that it is in the power of every