

say, therefore, that in the extension of United States territory and in the better understanding that has arisen between the Imperial Government of our Empire and the United States, we have hopes that their shell will be softened and that they will be disposed to deal with us from feelings of self-interest on fairer terms than they were disposed to do under other circumstances.

My hon. friend has referred to the question of prohibition. Well, I am not going to discuss that, because while he read to us the opinions of others, whose opinions perhaps might be of very great consequence—

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—They are Liberal opinions.

Hon. Mr. MILLS—My hon. friend would have satisfied himself, and I am sure others on this side of the House more, if he had devoted a little more attention to the exposition of his own which he declared, like Desdemona, he was determined to conceal. My hon. friend, however, was not very successful, for he reminded us of the views expressed, which are in entire accord with his own, by the former Prime Minister, the late Sir John Thompson. And he said Sir John Thompson informed these people he did not favour prohibition, that he was opposed to it, and that he intended to stand on that ground. My hon. friend says that our position was a fraud; that in fact our course in proposing a vote on the subject of prohibition was a fraud. But my hon. friend forgot that he himself supported it with alacrity. If my hon. friend held last session the views that he has uttered with so much perspicuity to-day, he ought to have resisted the proposition. He ought to have fought against fraud here. He ought to have endeavoured to prevent the triumph of fraud in this House. But my hon. friend thought the government was marching to their execution, and fraud or no fraud, villany or no villany, my hon. friend was ready to submit to anything and to do anything, for the purpose of allowing the government to commit suicide.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Oh, I would not do that.

Hon. Mr. MILLS—Then my hon. friend read letters, but he did not tell us whether he adopted them as his own views or not, and I did not see that they had much relevancy unless he adopted them. These let-

ters stated that the rule with reference to the plebiscite vote was exactly the same as the rule for the election of members to the House of Commons. I dissent from that view. The object is different. You must have a House of Commons. You must have representatives of the people constituting one assembly, and you accept the return of those who have polled a majority of the votes. How did this vote stand? My hon. friend will see we were not electing anybody. There was no act of necessity connected with this vote. The object of the vote, as I take it, was for the purpose of seeing whether the state of public opinion was such that it would justify the government in legislating. We had no doubt but what a measure might be carried through Parliament, especially if hon. gentlemen thought it was going to kill us. But my hon. friend will see that beyond that there is the question of the enforcement of the law, and I say that a measure put upon the statute-book that you cannot enforce is very much worse than no measure at all. When you look at the vote how does it stand? You had 21 per cent of the electors of Canada declaring against prohibition; you had 22½ per cent declaring in favour of prohibition; and you had nearly 56 per cent who did not vote at all, who certainly were not enthusiasts in favour of prohibition. On the contrary, I would be inclined to draw the inference that they were, on the whole, hostile to such legislation. It being six o'clock, and as I have yet some further remarks to make, I move the adjournment of the debate.

The motion was agreed to.

The Senate then adjourned.

THE SENATE.

Ottawa, Tuesday, 21st March, 1899.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

Prayers and routine proceedings.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.

INQUIRY.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON rose to inquire :

Whether the suspension of the deliberations of the international conference, between Great Britain and