

Mr. FOSTER. I just made the criticism as a verbal one. The hon. gentleman speaks of my amendment. I do not call for any amendment.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. I did not mean that.

Mr. FOSTER. I understand that the Government mean to make it thoroughly inclusive—that what they intend to obtain is not simply an expression whether the electorate is in favour of one of these things and not the others, but all of these things. On the first reading of the Bill, I do not intend to enter into its merits or to offer any criticism of it, except to state this, that I think the hon. gentleman will have to add another clause to his Bill in order to give any point to it at all; and I throw this out for him in the meantime, so that when the Bill comes to the second reading he may be prepared; that is, if we are going to the cost of a plebiscite, which will not be a trifling matter at all, to obtain the opinion of the people, a clause should be added that in the event of a majority of votes being cast in favour of prohibition, the Government would then consider it its duty to introduce at the next succeeding session, a prohibitory law to carry out the effect of the popular will.

Mr. CASEY. You cannot put that in a Bill.

Mr. McINERNEY. If I understand the hon. gentleman correctly, he intends that the vote shall be taken under the Franchise Act now under consideration. But suppose that Act does not pass.

Mr. LISTER. It must pass.

Mr. McINERNEY. Suppose that Act were withdrawn. The hon. gentleman knows that there is no such thing as the Franchise Act of 1898.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. The Government have not the slightest degree contemplated that Bill being withdrawn or not passing. The Government have decided, so far as they are concerned, that that Bill shall pass at this session of Parliament; and therefore it is not necessary to raise that question.

Mr. McINERNEY. There are other Bills which the Government determined to pass, which have not passed into law. Every Bill the Government determines to pass does not necessarily pass. What I wish to call the hon. gentleman's attention to is this. This Bill provides that the vote shall be taken under the Franchise Act of 1898, and I call his attention to the fact that when he introduces this Bill, there is no such thing as the Franchise Act of 1898; and if any accident should happen to that Bill—because I believe that when it comes to be considered, the Government will have

good sense enough to withdraw it—or if it should be defeated—

Mr. CASEY. Where?

Mr. McINERNEY. In this House or in another place having the authority to defeat the Bill, then we would have no such thing as the Franchise Act of 1898, and the temperance people of this country would be deprived of any opportunity this year of passing on the prohibition question.

The PRIME MINISTER (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). I do not know whether we are to interpret the words of my hon. friend who has just spoken as a threat that the fate which has already overtaken another Bill that has passed this House this session is to overtake the Franchise Act; but I will wait until the Senate have pronounced against the will of the people once more before I will accept the suggestion of the hon. gentleman. But let me remind my hon. friend that if the Franchise Act which is before this House should be rejected in another House, then this House will have to determine whether to have what I have called before a terror to the members of this House—another revision this year of the electoral lists—or to have the vote of the people on the plebiscite taken on lists four years old. I suppose my hon. friend does not consider that it would be advisable on such an important measure that the vote should be taken on so imperfect an electorate as is provided by lists four years old. Then another question would arise, whether or not this measure would have to be postponed until another year, so that a new revision of the lists could take place, for I may say that it does not enter into the intentions of the Government to have this plebiscite taken on lists four years old, which disfranchise perhaps one-fourth of the rightful electors of this country. Therefore, we have contemplated that the votation under this Act shall take place under the franchise which we hope shall by-and-by be the franchise of Canada.

Mr. DAVIN. Mr. Speaker, I consider that the manifestation of temper which we have had from the Prime Minister—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Mr. DAVIN—in consequence of an attempt of a member on this side of the House to place a member of the Government in a proper position—in consequence of a member on this side of the House, who happens to be the chairman of a committee of ourselves who have been going over that Franchise Act, suggesting, very properly, as I consider, and, with great deference to the Prime Minister's superior experience, very properly as a parliamentarian, that, when initiating legislation in this way, it is not a proper thing to place in the Bill which is introduced a statement that a franchise which has not yet