

do not know, but I would hope that one effect of this sad feature of it might be that this lamentable part of the question would be to soften and make both Great Britain and the United States more tender towards each other, and it may be that Providence is working in that mysterious way; but what we have to do is this, to go right along developing our resources, depending upon our own right arm, and if we follow that line, if we can get these questions settled and these trade relations, all the better, but they are not indispensable to our national welfare, our national growth, or our national existence.

Another important paragraph referred to in His Excellency's speech to which I would invite for a moment the attention of this honourable Senate, is the vote on the prohibition question. I am glad to know that the government have redeemed their pledge and have complied with the Act of Parliament providing for the holding of a plebiscite upon that important question. I may be speaking within the sound of some here who may think that that is not sufficient information to be given. I think the friends of prohibition have every reason to feel glad that that vote was taken and that the result was at least as satisfactory as it was. The lesson that I draw from it perhaps is a lesson which hon. gentlemen have drawn from it—that pretty generally, speaking for the province of Ontario especially and for some of the other provinces, the rural sections of the country appear to be ripe for the question of prohibition, but the opposition to that measure will be very strong in, and is confined chiefly to the larger towns and cities of the Dominion. My own view is this, and I hope I am not singular in that view, that having taken the vote, let it rest where it is for the present and go on educating the people. I believe hon. gentlemen will correct me if I am in error—that as we are to-day, we occupy the proud position of being the most temperate people on the face of the globe, with a well regulated and well enforced license system. Surely our friends, who are very anxious for prohibition, should take great courage by the result of the vote and bide their time and go on educating the people to their views. If they succeed, well and good according to their view; if they do not, they have at least attained so much. I think we have every reason to feel very

proud of this Dominion for the enviable position it has taken upon that question.

The speech has also referred to the indications that we are to have a redistribution bill. I am told that it a misnomer to call it a redistribution bill; that lurking under that phrase the real meaning of it is a gerrymander bill.

Hon. GENTLEMEN—Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. KERR—Hon. gentlemen have very kindly anticipated the word I intended to use. On that subject I feel very strongly. I do not anticipate anything of the kind. I should expect from the present government that has attained such a high standing in the country, that we have no more gerrymander bills from either party in this Dominion. We cannot afford to have them. I wish that that word was abolished from our vocabulary. I do not think it would be a calamity if it were. It is an exotic. It has no place in British institutions so-called. What I want is this, and what I expect the government will do, is to introduce a measure that will equalize the constituencies so far as practicable and restore county boundaries. My idea is this, that a political party had better remain in opposition for ever than to pass a gerrymander bill. As I said before, we cannot afford it. Therefore I would ask the House not to prejudice the character of that measure, but in a sense of British fair play to wait until the measure is introduced and judge of it upon its merits; and I do not feel that I am assuming responsibility in saying that it will not deserve the character which hon. gentlemen have ascribed to it. For my part, I am content to wait and deal with it, but, as one having been hitherto a warm supporter and admirer of the present administration, I hope we will never see a gerrymander bill brought into this chamber. I would not like to support one. I would not support it. I trust I have sufficient independence to take a course of that kind. I have only to refer to two or three paragraphs of His Excellency's speech and then I shall conclude. It would be expected that that part of His Excellency's speech at the opening of this session relating to the penny postage letter rate between this country and Great Britain and the other parts of the empire should receive some considera-