

Address, so far as I was able to follow them, appears to have been entirely overlooked, and that is the plebiscite. I am not very much surprised that those hon. gentlemen should have given the go-by to that very delicate subject; but my right hon. friend will remember that a year ago, when this plebiscite was proposed, I ventured to ask him what he intended to do in case a plebiscite was taken. I ventured to express the opinion that the leader of the House and of the Government, before committing the people of this country to an expenditure of a quarter of a million of money—I may overstate the cost, but we will assume that it will be something like that—should have given some indication of the course he intended to pursue. I do not intend at this time to go into the question whether that is an un-English mode of taking public opinion or not; but I say that when the right hon. leader of the House refused to give the slightest indication of what course in any event he would pursue, he struck a deadly blow at the interests of the temperance party in Canada; and I will show you my grounds for making that statement. Every person knows that no party, however powerful and influential, can roll up a great vote on any question without the expenditure of a vast amount of labour and a very considerable amount of money. The necessary expenditure connected with agitating the country upon a question of that kind is very great. I did not ask my right hon. friend to say what he would do if there was a bare majority; but I said, suppose there is a great majority, a two-thirds majority, what will you do? My right hon. friend simply said: "After the plebiscite is taken I will then say what I will do." A position more unfair to the temperance people of this country could not have been taken than that. What is the result? Why, Sir, take an enthusiastic supporter of temperance—a man who believed it was his duty to do everything he could to accomplish the object in view. When he was approached to spend his time and money to promote the object in view, what did he say? "What is the good? The Prime Minister has virtually told us, as he told the deputation who went to see him on the subject, that it would entail an immense amount of direct taxation, and it is quite evident there will be no result." These gentlemen were utterly disheartened. But not only did the Prime Minister refuse to give this House and the people of this country the slightest indication of what he would do in any event, but when, in addition to that, I found the leading members of his Government spreading themselves over the country in the province of Quebec to denounce the plebiscite, and to induce the people to vote it down and prevent it having an effect, I came to the conclusion that it was a shameless imposition upon the temperance people of Canada to lead them to hope that anything could result from this plebiscite except the disappointment that is now stir-

ring the hearts of that great and most important section of this community from one end of the country to the other.

Now, Sir, I want to refer for a few moments to another subject that is introduced in the Address, and that is the Imperial penny postage. I do not intend to go into any very elaborate discussion of that question; but I say this in the outset, that there is no man in Canada who is prouder than I am to be able to claim anything for Canada that it has accomplished. There is no man in Canada more ready than I am to give the most ample meed of praise to any man, I care not on what side of politics he is or what position he occupies in this House, for anything he accomplishes in the interest of Canada. But, I confess, I do deplore and feel humiliated when I find gentlemen in this House and their friends undertaking to put forward claims for them that have no solid foundation in fact. When I find claims made by hon. gentlemen that they have accomplished this or that or the other, which they know right well is the work of other men, and that they are endeavouring to reap where other men have sown, I have no respect for a course of that kind. Now, Sir, I notice in this celebrated speech of my right hon. friend in Montreal to which I have already alluded, this clause:

There is another reform: we have diminished the postal tariff, and the rate has now been reduced to two cents. This is a small thing in itself, yet it represents hundreds of thousands of dollars in the pockets of the people of Canada. We have established that rate for the whole British Empire.

Why, Sir, what does the hon. gentleman mean? We—the Government of Canada—establish the postal rate for the whole British Empire? Why, Sir, it is as unfounded in fact as the statement that "we" got the treaties denounced. And what does he mean by saying that this represents hundreds of thousands of dollars in the pockets of the people of Canada? Hundreds of thousands of dollars in the people's pockets? Is not the postal service to be paid for to-day as it was paid for yesterday? Does anybody suppose that because you transfer the cost, you can make anything free? You could remove the whole postal charge altogether, yet everybody knows that the postal revenue did not then and does not now pay the cost of the service. Everybody knows that that service is a heavy charge on the people of Canada, as it was under the three-cent rate; and to say under these circumstances that it represents hundreds of thousands of dollars in the pockets of the people is to make a statement which I think my right hon. friend will find it very difficult to sustain. But, Sir, what does "we" mean? Do the Government expect to extend the rate to the whole Empire? Does the whole Empire get it now? The hon. gentleman knows that the whole continent of Australasia, including New Zealand, as well as South Africa