

was sorry if a day had been lost in the gaining of that information. Such was not the intention in appointing the commission; neither was any political object to be served in referring the question to a royal commission. The inquiry had been exceeding searching. A preliminary report would be laid before Parliament within a few days, and a final report before the end of the session. As to what the report would probably be he could not say, but he agreed with the deputation that it would not be conclusive. Whatever the finding of the commission was Parliament would have to exercise the responsibility of considering the report and acting upon it. In advance of this information, which he confessed he needed, he begged to say with all respect, it would be impossible for him to give a pledge as to what measures in the direction of absolute prohibition would be taken by the present Government. In reference to the French treaty, whether Parliament ratified it or not, there would be no provision adopted which would prevent the adoption of prohibition in this country. There were no obligations in the treaty itself which would restrict or hamper Parliament in that line and if it were necessary to remove any doubt on the subject that would be made perfectly plain when the policy was announced in regard to it. He thanked them again for the honor they had done the Government in waiting upon them. Every possible weight which sympathetic minds could give would be given to the sentiments and arguments which had been expressed.

It will readily be understood that this reply was not at all satisfactory to the deputation, and after the retirement of the hon. gentlemen strongly worded resolutions were adopted expressing regret and disappointment that more satisfactory statements had not been made, and pledging the members present to make special efforts to secure in