

at the polls, on the abstract principle of prohibition, or this initial step being taken now, at the cost of several hundred thousands of dollars, at least a quarter of a million of dollars, to the people of this country, probably get an affirmative answer, and then, perhaps, be told that there are grave constitutional questions involved, offering difficulties, and in consequence matters cannot proceed further. I say, face the difficulties first, let us hear what they are before the expense of a plebiscite is incurred, which appears to any reasonable mind as business, and we are then certainly in a better position to fight it.

We have had expressions of opinion, from hon. members in this Chamber, that we should meet this question fairly and squarely, in a business-like manner, not in a fault-finding spirit, in a measure, but free from all friction and political bias, and free and unfettered from all complications of a constitutional character as referred to, then I feel the temperance body in fighting this battle would have an easy victory, as they would be inspired with the feeling of having right on their side and fighting for a noble and just cause, which if entered into with indomitable courage and perseverance, must result satisfactorily and meet all our expectations.

I must certainly, and in all sincerity say, that I consider the Government are taking an expensive and unwise course in calling for a plebiscite now, without first satisfying themselves as to any and all complications and difficulties that may present themselves in the effort to bring about the desired end.

We have had plebiscite appeals in a number of the provinces, Nova Scotia included, also a Royal Commission throughout this Dominion, both at a heavy cost, without anything having been accomplished, and now we are told we are to have a plebiscite again in the face of a refusal from the right hon. the leader of the Government to give a straightforward answer to a direct question, as to "whether the country can have the assurance given them, that if the plebiscite is taken and results in showing a majority for prohibition, the Government will at once bring forward a prohibitory Bill and submit it to Parliament next session." This question having been submitted by the ex-Minister of Finance to the right hon. the leader of the Government, was answered as follows, in these words:—

The Government, when they have the will of the people before them, will have to take such steps as will give effect to the will of the people. There is the question of revenue to be considered; there is also the constitutional question to be considered; there are different questions which will have to be considered.

Now, in the face of an answer of this sort, so indefinite, I ask, is it honest to incur all this trouble, all this expense to the tune of several hundred thousand dollars, and then

Mr. KAULBACH.

be told that it cannot be carried out? I say, remove the difficulties first, or satisfy all minds that they can be overcome, and then face the question squarely like men.

Or put the straight question of prohibition now squarely to this Parliament, yeas and nays. Or dissolve the House and appeal to the people and let the answer come in that way. This is economy and business as well. We are not even told, if this plebiscite means the majority of the electors of the entire Dominion, or only a majority of the votes polled to decide the question. Surely the country is entitled to better satisfaction than they have at present. Now, in conclusion, may I venture to ask as to whether it would not be well for the hon. Minister in charge of this Bill to use the word "alcoholic" cider, instead of "cider." I do not desire to unduly press this suggestion, neither do I wish to eliminate the word cider from the Bill as one of the restrictions, but I am impressed with the idea that if this change is not made, or the distinction shown, that it will be the means of defeating the object intended.

A very large number of the farmers and orchardists in Nova Scotia manufacture cider from the pure juice of the apple, without any adulteration, or additions of alcohol, and I feel that if the hon. Minister is sincere in his effort and really wishes the plebiscite a success at the polls, he will accept my suggestion and make this change.

Motion agreed to, and Bill read the third time and passed.

It being Six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

## After Recess.

### THIRD READINGS.

Bill (No. 130) further to amend the Dominion Lands Act.—(Mr. Sifton.)

Bill (No. 132) further to amend the Land Titles Act, 1894.—(Mr. Sifton.)

Bill (No. 133) to make further provision respecting grants of land to members of the Militia force on active service in the Northwest.—(Mr. Sifton.)

Bill (No. 144) to amend the Indian Act.—(Mr. Sifton.)

Bill (No. 145) further to amend the Railway Act.—(Mr. Blair.)

### SONS OF ENGLAND BENEFIT SOCIETY.

Mr. BERTRAM moved that the House resolve itself into committee on Bill (No. 122) to incorporate the Supreme Grand Lodge of the Sons of England Benefit Society.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE (Mr. Fielding). Before this Bill is passed, the attention of the House should be drawn to the circumstances under which it comes before