

county, and there may be no arrests, and yet more drunkenness. I want to say this, there is less drinking of spirits in the Province of Quebec relatively to the number of people than in the Province of Ontario, and I will venture to say without having the figures by my side here, that there are double the number of municipalities in the Province of Quebec, without retail licenses, than there are in the Province of Ontario without retail licenses. I don't know how it affects this question, but I did not think it was my duty to allow the statement to go by, when it really worked an injustice to the Province of Quebec.

#### NO PRECEDENTS FOR THE REFERENDUM.

Now, we come to this word, or expression, or system, or scheme, this unfailing remedy for politicians in distress on that side of the House, at any rate, called the referendum. The honorable gentleman made some remarkable statements in his speech the other day, statements I was surprised to hear him make. He is usually careful and precise. He usually takes all proper steps to have a proper foundation for the remarks he may make on any great question, but there is one of two conclusions which I must come to with reference to his speech the other day. One is he intended to deceive his listeners, and the other is he had not studied up the question and spoke through ignorance rather than knowledge. I take the latter one, of course, because I cannot come to the former, but I propose to prove the truth of what I have stated just now. He cited in favor of the referendum the question of municipal bylaws in this country; he also cited a liquor bill introduced by Sir William Harcourt, one that was favored by Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, and he also cited Chief Justice Cooley, of the United States, with reference to the idea of the referendum. Now, I ask honorable gentlemen to follow me for a short time, and I will show how utterly inconsequent the speech or argument of my honorable friend was, and I make this statement here and now, and I stand or fall by it in the minds of those equally able to judge with myself, that no statement made by him with reference to the referendum was applicable, or if it was applicable, was correctly stated. (Opposition cheers.) We all know that in municipal by-laws providing for the raising of sums of money there is no principle involved, there is no great moral principle upon which the people are asked to pronounce for or against what they believe to be in the interests of the people of the country. But a municipality, small or large, is given the right, the power and privilege, so to speak, of entering into some public work, of granting a bonus to some industry, and of taxing the properties in that municipality to pay such bonus or grant, and a general power is given; the general power remains on the statute books from year to year, and from decade to decade, and how can my honorable friend apply that to the doctrine by which a law affecting a great moral question is passed by the representatives of the people in this House, and then sent out to the people to be voted upon, and the moment that vote is completed the law relating to the referendum falls to the ground and dies and ceases to exist? Now, Sir William Harcourt's bill and Mr. Chamberlain's bill were just such laws as we have now in this land of ours; they provided for local option in regard to the liquor traffic, and consequently they provided that the votes of the people should govern and therefore they are not applicable. The citation of them does not apply in the slightest degree whatever to the considerations which affect honorable gentlemen in discussing this bill or coming to a conclusion upon it. Chief Justice Cooley, who is well known as a lawyer and a judge, of high standing in the United States, made some remarks of an academic nature with regard to the question of referring matters to the people, and I do not know