

REPLY

OF

HON. G. W. ROSS

To the Deputation of the Dominion Alliance on 26th
February, 1902, in reply to Rev. Dr. McKay,
who introduced the Deputation

On the 26th of February a deputation of the Dominion Alliance waited on Mr. Ross. The deputation was introduced by the Rev. Dr. McKay. The following is Mr. Ross' reply:—

You have put your case with a great deal of force and point and earnestness, as we expected you would have done. I have not had time to read the report of the meeting yesterday, except briefly to glance over it, and from what I did see, I assume that the convention yesterday was as enthusiastic as the deputation to-day—

DR. MCKAY and others: More, more. (Laughter.)

THE PREMIER: Probably more so. Well, between yesterday and now you surely could not have cooled off very much. (Laughter.) Enthusiasm is a good thing, and is needed in a cause like this. When we approached the question of prohibition—partial prohibition as it is, and as Dr. Carman characterizes it—we were confronted with this condition of things: We had a good license law, though susceptible of improvement, as all laws are—otherwise parliaments would cease to exist. The country had twice pronounced in favor of complete prohibition, that is, the prohibition of the importation, manufacture and sale. We had before us a law for partial prohibition, which was little more than could be accomplished under our license law alone. It was not what the temperance men had asked for, it was not what many of the temperance men of Ontario had been led to expect, and we had to decide whether, even although the country had pronounced on prohibition out and out, it were wise for us to cast aside the license law—and that is what this means if prohibition prevail—and take upon ourselves as a Government the responsibility of adopting partial prohibition. You may say