

hon. friend and, assume the responsibility of legislating upon the question of prohibition, I will give a frank and fair answer. I am not in that position just now, and consequently I am not called upon to do it. I told my hon. friend last session, when this question of plebiscite was before this chamber, that it was a fraud; that it would result in a fraud, that it was the most cunningly devised scheme that was ever concocted by public men to get rid of a difficulty and cheat the people of the country. That is what I said then and that is what I repeat now, that when I am asked to legislate upon this question, if my hon. friend will introduce a bill to prohibit the importation and manufacture of spirituous liquors, then I will tell him what I think about it. In the meantime I propose to deal exclusively with the position of the government upon the question. Even at the risk of being tedious, I will read to the House this letter; because it is admirably written, forcible in style, and will be interesting to my hon. friend who moved the answer to the Address. I know it will if he has not read it. This is written by a Queen's Counsel, Mr. J. G. Bulmer. I have no doubt the hon. senior member from Halifax knows him. I believe he is a prominent man there, and for the edification of those who have not read it I will take the liberty of reading it. I do so to show my hon. friend that he is mistaken when he says the temperance people are delighted and pleased with the manner in which the government fulfilled their promise to the people when they submitted this question to them. Perhaps he has forgotten that the Dominion Alliance people, nor the prohibitionists, ever asked for this plebiscite. On the contrary, Mr. Spence, at the convention held in this city, told them that while they would accept it and vote for prohibition, it was not asked for by them, and consequently they would not consider themselves responsible for any vote which might take place upon it. But upon the assurance by the Premier and of others that the will of the people would be carried out, they went to work in order my to secure a majority. We all know that hon. friend opposite (Mr. Mills) is opposed to prohibition. I have in my desk an extract from a speech in which he said he was totally opposed to prohibition, believing it to be impracticable in this country or in any other country; and, entertaining those views, I hold him responsible, as one of the

government, for submitting a question to the people that he believes, if attempted to be carried out, would be impracticable. In doing that he was not acting honestly and in accordance with his own conscience. Why did he not do as my late chief, Sir John Thompson, did in an interview with a temperance delegation in one of the committee rooms? When they waited on him he pointed at once, like an honest man, to the difficulties that presented themselves, and the utter impossibility of successfully adopting a principle of that kind.

Hon. Mr. MACDONALD (B.C.)—He made no promises.

Hon Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—No, on the contrary, he intimated that he would not do it, knowing that it could not be enforced. However, I am getting away from Mr. Bulmer's letter. It is very well written and highly interesting. He commenced it with a quotation which reads this way:

"Ah! May God grant me life, and may Jesus pardon me, I will raise a gibbet a hundred yards high, I will take hammer and nails, and I will crucify this Beauharnais called Buonaparte, between this Leroi called Saint-Arnaud and this Fialin called Persigny."

Editor Citizen.—The above was used by Victor Hugo in exile as a shout of defiance at the third Napoleon after the infamous December days of 1851, in which he had broken all pledges and by the coup d'etat assassinated the French republic. It is not only a description by a master of the man of the hour, but it is a description of one Frenchman by another, exactly applicable at this moment to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and probably represents the feelings of a hundred thousand voters in Canada. In his letter Sir Wilfrid Laurier has tested his party as an engineer tests a bridge; he has loaded it with infamies; will the party stand it? Even party honesty recoils with a sort of dread anxiety before the outrage on which they are entering, and a leading man of their party in the local legislature said to me yesterday, "This is too bad." Yes, it is too bad, and any one raising the cover a hundred years hence for the purposes of history will smell the stench. It is the most terrible attempt at a thrust backward which Canada has ever received, and the moral obliquity of the act surpasses a hundredfold all the questionable acts committed in the name of politics by both political parties since 1867. That letter leaves everything in ruins, as complete as though the thunderbolt which rent had been answered by the earthquake which scattered. A party platform, the solemn promise of the leaders, the encouragement and support of the party press, the debates in Parliament, the pledges of hundreds of representatives elected since the adoption of the platform at Ottawa in 1893, all are now repudiated. We are told by the leader of the Liberal party, to-day in power and governing Canada, himself, by twenty-nine per cent of the whole vote of the Dominion, in effect, that before we can have a solemn pledge carried out we must have above fifty per cent of the whole vote of the Dominion, in other words, a liquor vote of fifteen per cent shall govern Canada. Surely the impudence of this