

so strong as in others; that will be the case with every important question that comes up.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. There is a way of getting around that now.

Mr. BLAIN. Well, if there is a way I think it ought not to be found on this question. The government of the day have behind them a large majority both in this country and in this House who would at once support such a Bill. Personally, while I am not much of a supporter of the present government, I would give them my hearty support so far as it goes and my vote as well if a measure was introduced at this session to prohibit the manufacture, importation and sale of cigarettes in Canada, and I believe that the people of this country are favourable to legislation of that kind. I do not think the right hon. gentleman can set aside the views of the people. The people of Canada were very much disappointed, I am sure when, in 1903, so large a majority of the members of this House voted for a resolution and Bill of this kind, and when the right hon. gentleman allowed so long a time to elapse, from April, 1903, when the resolution was introduced down to the present time without any action being taken. The government have been requested on every hand, important bodies of people in every part of Canada have passed resolutions calling upon the government to carry out the expressed wishes of the representatives of the people. The right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) and his government have turned a deaf ear to this request, and today, I believe, the people of this country will expect from the government legislation on this question.

It will not be enough for some hon. gentleman to stand up and say this is a Sunday school question, and should be relegated to the churches and the fathers and mothers in the homes. That is not an answer, that answer long since has been set aside by the people of Canada; we expect the government to deal with these questions, it is their duty to deal with such questions and if the Prime Minister will take hold of this, having behind him a large and strong majority, while he may not be able to get the support of every gentleman on this side of the House, I can say he will have support from a considerable number of the Conservative members on this question. I appeal to the Prime Minister and to his government. It is useless for us to appeal to any other body. It has been pointed out that the legislatures of many of the provinces have made an effort, an honest effort, to deal with this question. They have found it impossible to reach the evil and have not been able to check to any great extent the enormous increase in cigarette smoking in Canada. We must remember that we are

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living alongside a great and growing country where this habit is very general. In the United States the annual growth in the consumption of cigarettes is enormous; the consumption of 1906 was many millions more than in 1905. These people are passing in and out of our country and our Canadian people are going over there. It is the boast of the government that a large number of American citizens are coming into Canada and settling on the Northwest lands. Canadians rejoice at this intercourse. Some of our Canadian people are still going to the United States. With that country lying beside us, separated only by a line, there must be for all time a great intercourse between the two peoples. We are paying large sums to induce immigration from European countries and it is our duty as a parliament to face this important question and prevent the growth of this habit which saps the life of the growing children of this country, as the government and the people understand very well. To-day important commercial institutions are posting notices at their doors that boys who smoke cigarettes cannot be employed by them. What is the use of developing Canada if we are to allow evils of this kind to flourish and destroy the future of our growing young Canadians, who will, of course, make the best citizens we can have. I make an appeal to the government; I hope I shall not be disappointed. I do not wish to weary the government with statistics, but medical men the world over agree that this is a great evil, and I want to pledge myself, in so far as I have the right, in support of such a measure—and I think I can promise at least a fair measure of support from this side of the House if the Prime Minister undertakes to place on the statute books this session a law to prohibit the manufacture, importation and sale of cigarettes.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD (Pictou): I wish to ask my hon. friend a question. I do not rise with any unfriendliness to the idea presented in the resolution, but simply to ascertain—because I assume my hon. friend has given some thought to this subject and speaks for some of the elements behind a movement of this kind—whether he has taken into consideration the proposition mooted in Nova Scotia that this parliament should be asked to pass a Bill which would give to each provincial legislature the power to deal with the suppression of cigarettes. I have under my hand some correspondence from bodies interested in that in my province asking me to support such a Bill.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. Would the hon. gentleman say as a lawyer, that the Dominion government could give to the provinces such jurisdiction as that?

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. The proposition is one I would not like to answer off-