

the duty of the Government to have a policy, upon which it is their duty to mark out for themselves the line in which they intend to travel, with a view of meeting the public sentiment, it is with reference to the question which is now before us. Sir, we remember very well when another Administration occupied the position which these gentlemen now occupy, that an hon. member from the Province of Manitoba, who has now a seat in the other House, proposed to this House a resolution declaring that it was the duty of the Government to take up the question of prohibition, and to guide the House and the country upon that subject. That resolution, if I rightly remember, received the support of every gentleman now on the Treasury benches who was then a member of the House. The Government of the day did take the question up, and introduced in the following Session the measure known as the Canada Temperance Act. That measure, which is still on the Statute-book, and which some hon. gentlemen who are not members of the Government are endeavoring to make a more perfect and satisfactory measure, was enacted as one relating to the peace, order and good government of the country, and our jurisdiction in passing it was sustained by the courts on the ground that it was a measure of that character. There can be no longer any doubt, therefore, that it is within the jurisdiction of this Parliament to deal with the subject; and yet these hon. gentlemen, who were ready to take up the license question, which did not belong to them, have, during the past eight years, been shirking their responsibility with regard to this question. Now, I think the time has come when we have a right to know where these gentlemen stand. I think the time has come when the hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries should declare himself on this question. That hon. gentleman peregrinated through this country advocating the principle of prohibition. He pressed upon the attention of the country the propriety of supporting no man for a seat in this House who would not pledge himself to vote for prohibition. More than ten years ago he declared that the public opinion of this country was sufficiently ripe to have such a measure placed upon the Statute-book. Well, Sir, how is it that the hon. gentleman has not been heard from on this question since he has occupied a seat on the Treasury benches? The hon. gentleman still poses as the apostle of prohibition. He is still put forward as the light of this country, if not of the world, on this particular question; and how is it that with his splendid opportunities, with a seat in the Cabinet, with a majority of this House to sustain the Government of which he is a member, he has not ventured to assume the responsibility of proposing to this House a measure upon a question admitted to be so important by a vast number of the people of this country, and by many of the supporters of the Administration? Why should this important question, affecting the public revenues as it does, be eliminated from the policy of the Government, and be transferred to the hands of a private member? There are questions upon which it is, no doubt, the right of an Administration to differ, and which may be left as open questions; but, Sir, any question affecting the public revenue is not a question of this sort; it is the duty of the Government to have a policy upon such a question. A Government is not bound to direct the general legislative policy of the House; upon all ordinary questions individual members, and even members of the Cabinet, may be left to take such a line as they see fit; but upon a question which has been held to affect the peace, order and good government of the country, a question relating to the morals of the people, ought not to be left in the hands of a private member. Upon such a question it is the business of the Government to have a policy and to enunciate that policy to the House; yet these hon. gentlemen have not yet spoken on this question. We would like to know what course the Government intend to take. Are

they going to support a policy of free traffic in liquor? Are they going to furnish facilities for the encouragement of this particular manufacturing industry, or are they going to adopt the views of the hon. gentleman who has proposed this motion? They cannot shirk their responsibility. Why, Sir, a large portion of the people of this country are scarcely satisfied because the Opposition, who are in a minority, do not undertake to direct the affairs of the country on this subject. How much more are these gentlemen, whom the public have entrusted with their confidence, and who are supposed to direct the affairs of the country on this subject, responsible, than gentlemen on this side of the House? They can no longer shirk their responsibility, and I trust the House and the country will insist upon their having the courage of their convictions, whatever those convictions may be.

Motion agreed to, and Bill read the first time.

#### APPOINTMENT OF SOLICITOR GENERAL.

Mr. THOMPSON, in moving for leave to introduce Bill (No. 42) to make provision for the appointment of a Solicitor General, said: The effect of this Bill will be not only to establish this office, but to define the duties of the officer. They will be in connection with the Department of Justice, and such other duties as may be assigned to him from time to time by the Governor in Council. He will be eligible to a seat in either House of Parliament.

Mr. LANDERKIN. Is it the intention of the Government to create two new Departments?

Mr. THOMPSON. It is not the intention. It is simply intended to have this officer, whose duties will be principally connected with the counsel work of the Department; that is to say, he will attend as counsel for the Crown in the litigation in the principal courts. It is not intended to establish a new Department.

Mr. LANDERKIN. Is it intended by this appointment to obviate the necessity of employing counsel throughout the country, as hitherto?

Mr. THOMPSON. In so far as it will be possible for one person to attend to those duties. He will attend to them and to such duties as we employ counsel for now.

Mr. MITCHELL. I presume the office will be political, and he will go in and out with the Administration.

Mr. THOMPSON. The Bill provides that he will have a seat in either House, and, therefore, the office will be political.

Mr. MITCHELL. But he will not have a seat in the Cabinet?

Mr. THOMPSON. Not necessarily.

Motion agreed to, and Bill read the first time.

#### MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD moved, That this House do resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, on Tuesday next, to consider the following Resolution:—

That the salary of the Minister of Trade and Commerce be seven thousand dollars per annum.

Motion agreed to.

#### SOLICITOR GENERAL.

Mr. THOMPSON moved, That this House do resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, on Tuesday next, to consider the following Resolution:—

That the salary of the Solicitor General be six thousand dollars per annum.

Motion agreed to.