

of this Parliament, or by an appeal to the Imperial Parliament to amend the British North America Act. What is the objection to dealing with it in this House? To my mind there are two, and these are the only things that can be brought forward as of any very great weight in prohibiting us from dealing with the question. First, a plebiscite was taken a considerable number of years ago, and when that plebiscite was taken the province of Quebec rose up in an enormous majority against prohibition. While the hon. gentleman who seconded the motion tells us there has been a reversal of public opinion in the province of Quebec, I do not know that that may be entirely correct. I do not think that at the time that vote was taken there was any more drinking being done in the province of Quebec than there was in any other province in this Dominion. I think the people of Quebec are just as sober as those in any other part of Canada, and I think that the objection that they raised to prohibition on that occasion did not arise from their love of strong drink. I think it arose from another source, and I am not too sure that the objection would not hold good to-day. I believe that the people of the province of Quebec object to the people of other parts of the Dominion interfering with what they consider their own affairs. They feel that they are quite capable of looking after their own domestic matters. I would like to see more proof from the province of Quebec that it would fall in heartily with any measure proposed in this House. We know that to-day there is a burning question as between portions of the province of Ontario and portions of the province of Quebec in regard to the schools, and I would be very sorry indeed to see this Parliament do anything that might lead the people of Quebec to think that the people of other portions of the Dominion were trying to force upon them views to which they might object. If I were satisfied about that matter, I would the more heartily support the motion before the House.

There is one other objection to the Dominion dealing with the matter—I wish to discuss this issue fairly—and that is the disinclination manifested in times past by some of the legislatures to enforce temperance laws passed by the Dominion Government. We know that they refused to enforce those statutes. We know that while the Dominion Government can pass legislation, the local governments provide the machinery for its enforcement. The Dominion Gov-

[Mr. Wright.]

ernment is without the machinery required for its enforcement. This arrangement works out all right in regard to questions upon which there is no difference of opinion. Take the law in regard to murder, arson, stealing, and so on, upon which the people are unanimous; there is no hesitation in enforcing these laws in any corner of the Dominion. But when you come to such questions as the one before the House, in regard to which there is a difference of opinion, some people feeling that in quenching their thirst they are not guilty of any moral crime, it is a different matter altogether. We must admit that there is not the same moral sentiment behind liquor legislation that there is behind the laws relating to murder, and crimes of that sort. We have only to take the case of a man who stands behind the counter grasping for money at some hour during which the sale of intoxicating liquor is forbidden. He wants to enrich himself, and on the other side of the counter there is a man afflicted with a very great thirst, and having a coin in his pocket. There you have all the inducement to commit a crime.

So I say, it is much more difficult to enforce laws of this nature, than to enforce laws affecting other matters. We need a strong temperance sentiment to enable us to enforce laws of the kind that we are discussing. If we had an assurance from the various provinces that they would take hold of this question heartily and enforce a prohibitory law, I think we would have a complete case, and we might put the law upon the statute-book with a clear conscience, feeling that we had secured all the necessary machinery for its enforcement.

I have not attempted to make a speech to-night upon this question, but two or three things were said which prompted me to make a few remarks. The hon. member who has just resumed his seat (Mr. L. J. Gauthier) has spoken very strongly against prohibition. He told us that Turkey was a prohibition country, and apparently, he attributes the cruelty of the Turk, and the bad character which he possesses, to his sobriety. I wondered that somebody did not suggest trying to improve the Turk by supplying him with strong drink. It would make a very interesting experiment—strong whisky working a cure on the Turkish mind and character. In my limited experience of life, I have never seen strong drink improve the morals of anybody, and I do not think it would have that effect upon the Turk. If he is unspeakable now, I do not know what he would be if he were addicted to strong