

matters in dispute to the people, like the arrangement existing in the United States and Switzerland." I commend these three or four lines to the thoughtful attention of the members of the House and the people of the country. We are apt to be, to use a vulgar expression, stampeded in legislation, and to be stampeded in opinion by the intensity of the advocates of any particular opinion. We are apt to lose that judicial poise which a Legislature should always maintain if it is to deal rightly by both parties who are to be affected by our legislation. On the one hand, we have the militant temperance men, thoughtful, moral, pure-minded, earnest, anxious to see this world blossom out in beauty and freshness, and we have their case presented with such intensity—I shall not say emotion—as to be almost overcome by the arguments as well as the illustrations used. On the other hand, we have those in the trade who say, "The trade is our life, we depend on it for our existence." They see no harm in it. To destroy it would be to turn them on the streets, to make beggars of wealthy men, and they bring before us the result of absolute prohibition. We have to stand midway between these two parties. They are both citizens; the motives of one may be purer than of the other, some of you may say, but that is not the question we have to consider.

The question we have to consider is how so to legislate that, while we promote the moral influences the temperance man advocates, we do not inflict a moral wrong on the other man whose business we are disposing of, and in this case this view has had a great deal of weight with me in thinking over the responsibility of a referendum.

A Single-chamber House.

This is a single chamber; there is nobody to be appealed to from this body. In the Dominion there is a Senate; the object of a second chamber in all legislation is to steady the more volatile public opinion which will find an expression in the lower House. If you will read the debates on confederation or the history of the House of Lords, you will find that this is the view presented by the advocates of a second chamber. In the United States the complications arising out of the existence of a second chamber are greater perhaps than in Great Britain, and yet you will see that in the United States hasty legislation is more strongly guarded against than it is under the British system, and consequently the American constitution is less elastic than the British. We are the only Province in the Dominion that started out with a single chamber. We have guided legislation on the whole wisely, prudently and with some little regard to conservative public opinion. We have in this instance to see if the pressure—I use the word in a proper sense—that is brought to bear

on us by those who are anxious for this legislation is a pressure endorsed by the electors in their minds and judgment. There is no other body to stand between us and the elector to give this question a second thought, and for that reason there is a good deal of force in the view I now entertain, that in a question like this, partaking somewhat of a material character, and in which there is such intense religious zeal involved—and sometimes zeal perhaps outruns the good sense of the individual with regard to both views of the question—it does seem to me there ought to be some way of getting at the calm, judicial thought of the whole people, or shall I say some neutral body, or some other body that will give the subject sober second thought, and will give that sober second thought without any regard to the consequences involved. We are to a certain extent influenced, and in the main primarily so, by the effect—it should have on our various circumstances. We ought not to try to get away too far from that principle on which, I think, the security of British institutions depends, of occasional and frequent appeals to the electors; one of the great planks of the Chartists was triennial Parliaments,

bringing the House of Commons to account every three years, if possible. We have to give an account every four years, but I want to point out, while this is our constitutional method, it may be well in a question of this kind, and this question seems to be unique, to have some resting place, for that second thought will be given, and where those who in the last analysis will have to take the consequences for good or evil shall have an opportunity of expressing their opinions upon it.

English Opinions.

I have mentioned what Lord Salisbury said on the question of the referendum. The view of the great Conservative party of England is in harmony with Lord Salisbury's views. The official leaflet issued from the Central Conservative offices previous to the last campaign enumerated the following items of the party platform:—(1) A firm Imperial policy; (2) a strong navy; (3) the referendum. Now, I am sure that the Conservative party in England has in the past moved as slowly as any party could move and exist. I do not know but it is going somewhat slowly still on some political questions, but, notwithstanding its immobility and its conservatism on general principles, it has accepted as one of its party planks the referendum on some questions. I have also a quotation from Mr. Lecky, member of Parliament, and author of "Democracy and Liberty," in which he points out the advantages of the referendum:—"The referendum would have

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