

what it ought to be, or that the workmen in this Province have the protection of an efficient factory inspection as they have in the Old Country or in Germany.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

Then there is the question of public health, vitally related to life and work in the factory, and the conditions under which the toiler lives and labors. We are only now commencing to realize the great importance of the question of public health. We have been spending hundreds of thousands of dollars every year in the establishment and maintenance of hospitals and asylums to care for the sick and the physically and mentally unfit. The time has come when we should devote our money and much more thought to the prevention of disease. The Public Health Act of the last Session of the Legislature marks a distinct advance, but it is only the beginning, and as a Province we must undertake larger measures of a preventative character to promote and guard the health and physical well-being of our citizens. The question of occupational diseases is one that particularly affects the working men and women of the Province. We must not only adopt all suitable measures to prevent occupational diseases, but we must make sure that the Workmen's Compensation Act covers such diseases as well as actual injuries. There are the questions of the hours of labor of our working men and our working women; of the minimum wage; of the slums; the housing problem; the high cost of living, and other kindred questions of vital moment to the masses of our people, particularly in our cities and towns, which are receiving at present little, if any, attention at the hands of our Government.

It was my deep interest in all these social problems—of which the temperance question is one of the most important—that induced me to accept the position of leader of the Liberal party in this Province. It is because of my interest in them that I represent this constituency in the Legislature; and I want to say to you to-night that important as are the material problems affecting the growth and development of our Province, the supreme questions are those relating to the moral and physical well-being of our citizens, the conservation of human life.

We have in the past been greatly concerned in the production of wealth. We must now devote more attention to the question of the distribution of wealth; because on its distribution so largely depends the welfare of our citizens.

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