

Supply—National Health

greater expenditure. I believe more survey work should be done, because from the Atlantic to the Pacific hundreds of our men, women and children need medical attention. Prevention is better than cure, and I hope that next year when the vote is placed before the committee—if not this year—a great deal more money will be provided. The Health League of Canada deserves support. Certainly it is receiving very fine leadership from Doctor Bates who is giving his time to the work.

Mr. SPENCE: I endorse all that has been said by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth), and the hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Howden), who for many years has taken a deep interest in the matter. He has made a splendid presentation of this particular case. I do not imagine that anything we can do in this committee will increase the vote and I do not believe any one here will vote against this item. The amount to be granted is \$5,000, but I regret that it is not \$50,000. This Health League of Canada are doing a splendid work. I know what they are doing, because I have been associated with them for some time. I know the sacrifice that Doctor Bates has made in continuing to act as the head of the league. If you want to empty the asylums of this country you must do more preventive work in connection with disease. Our asylums are filled with people who are there because of a disease which is mentioned quite often in this house. I was a member of the city council of Toronto between 1910 and 1916 and for a time served as chairman of the property committee. I can remember going with the medical health officer to visit the isolation hospital. At that time there were between three and four hundred patients in that hospital with scarlet fever, diphtheria and other diseases. As a result of the work carried on by the Health League of Canada and of other measures adopted, there is not one patient in the isolation hospital of Toronto. This has saved the city of Toronto considerable money.

I think the country at large should make greater contributions for this purpose and I hope that next year this vote will be ten times what it is this year. We should vote more money for the saving of the lives of people as well as the saving of the lives of animals. I do not oppose any grant made in connection with the health of animals work, because it is just as necessary as this. The other night I happened to listen to a conversation between a number of doctors and veterinary surgeons and Doctor Bates, the head of this health

[Mr. McIvor.]

league, and I got an ear-full of what is happening in connection with the health of animals. I do not care how much is spent for that work or for this purpose, because it will save the country money in the end.

Mr. McCANN: Mr. Chairman, I should like to concur in the observations which have been made by the hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Howden) and my professional colleague. It is my belief that those who are interested in public health will have to impress upon the governments that old adage as to being penny wise and pound foolish. I do not think I could find a better illustration in support of that contention than this present vote. Looking down this page I see a grant of \$5,000 to the Health League of Canada, a grant of \$18,000 to the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, a grant of \$4,050 to the Montreal Association for the Blind, and so on. Several appropriations are being made for institutions and organizations interested in the curative side of medicine. When one considers that a great deal of the disease that human flesh is heir to is preventable, it should be our object to try to impress upon those who have to do with government that if more money is spent in preventive medicine, less will be required in after years for curative medicine.

I hold no brief for the Health League of Canada any more than I do for any other voluntary agency that is attempting to carry on the work of preventive medicine by education. Disease in itself is a national question. The methods of control vary very little from coast to coast. Over the years it is seldom that a vote is altered because of any argument for or against, so perhaps we cannot hope to accomplish very much for the Health League of Canada in the way of increasing the grant being made this year. However, we may be able to lay the foundation for increased grants in the future.

The Health League of Canada, like other organizations, is a national voluntary association, the function of which is the education of the public on the need for promoting health conservation measures to the end that sickness and death rates may be reduced and the health standard raised as high as possible. In the brief submitted by the Health League of Canada to the Rowell commission they state that their formal aims and objects, among others, are to undertake such measures as may be considered desirable to promote personal and community health and the control and elimination of communicable diseases. Let me just digress here to say that the record of