

*The Address—Mr. P. Gauthier*

People, especially in my province, often talk about respect for authority, which they demand at all cost. I wonder if those who so strongly advocate that respect are fully aware that they lay themselves open to ridicule. When we ask our people to respect authority, it is inconceivable that they should be taught to do so by giving them every possible means of destroying their intelligence and their health, as well as their moral, intellectual and spiritual values through inconsiderate use of alcohol.

Constitution is often discussed in my province. We should give more thought to the physical constitution of our people and to the immoderate use of alcoholic beverages not only in Quebec but in the other provinces as well. Statistics show that fabulous sums of money are spent on liquor.

Quebec and Ontario are, at the present time, launching an offensive against excessive drinking. A similar offensive may have been launched elsewhere, but I have not heard about it. We have organizations dedicated to the eradication of this evil. If these organizations are to attain results which will be of value to our nation, in a moral, physical, intellectual and spiritual sense, the governments must help them.

I do not dare ask the federal government to help those organizations, since there will most certainly be shouts from those who are afraid for their autonomy. I will nevertheless ask the Minister of National Health and Welfare, who seems to be listening attentively, to insist upon preventive measures, to launch, with the help of his department, a campaign for preventive medicine especially directed against alcoholism. I would ask him to give his patronage to an educational campaign with all the courage, initiative and frankness which I know him to possess, so that these associations may succeed and therefore be in a position to ensure better protection for our people.

I know that among physicians, many colleagues have no great faith in prevention. I will refer only to a case where often the members of the medical profession hesitate to speak with the necessary unanimity. Let us take for instance the use of B.C.G. vaccine against tuberculosis. I know that many doctors do not believe in constant or widespread use of B.C.G. but the minister should not be discouraged. Results obtained in the United States and Canada will soon be conclusive enough to induce the people to believe that constant use of B.C.G. can really protect the future of our population. These

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results will enable the minister to keep on advocating the use of the vaccine and to insist on preventive medical protection in order that unanimity may be achieved and that this preventive measure against the dread disease of tuberculosis may come into constant use and that it may emerge victorious in the battle it must wage at the present time against this disease.

While campaigning against excessive drinking the minister could, with the help of his experts, point out all the imminent perils with which our people are faced. We are even now able to see what dire results this excessive drinking has had among our youth. I ask the minister to conduct this campaign vigorously, and to help the various associations in their fight against alcoholism. Moreover all the responsible authorities in this country could rise together and build a wall in order to defend us against this danger which grows greater day by day.

(Text):

Now I shall continue in English. An inquiry was made in the state of Massachusetts on the cost of drunkenness. This is an extract from the report of the legislative commission to investigate the problem of drunkenness in Massachusetts. It reads as follows:

One of the specific requests made of this commission was that we interest ourselves in the cost of drunkenness in Massachusetts. This we have done. From the information we have been able to obtain it seems that this cost may be represented as follows:

A. Tangible Costs

1. The annual cost of caring for those mental patients whose illnesses have been caused or precipitated by alcoholism approximates .....	\$ 4,000,000
2. The annual cost of crime due to inebriety approximates .....	6,000,000
3. The annual cost of financial dependence on others (or charity or whatever name one chooses to call it) due to inebriety approximates .....	51,000,000
Total annual probable cost .....	\$61,000,000

Parenthetically, it might be pointed out that against this cost figure, the commonwealth and its cities and towns received \$13,139,266.79 from alcoholic beverage taxation in 1943.

On the other hand, I know that if the government is receiving taxes on the consumption of alcohol, electoral funds receive money as well from liquor vendors, from tolerances, especially in my province. The electoral fund in my province is enormous from tolerances, especially where there are no licences. In my county, in my parish and in the parishes around mine, there are no licences, there is only what we call tolerances. These people are obliged—and I know it, and we can prove it any time—to give funds to the organization to help the party in the next election. Without fear of being