

Every father of a family should, with honest thrift, be able to maintain both wife and children in a decent home. Every good citizen is entitled to decent housing at a price bearing a reasonable proportion to his earnings. But it is a well-known fact that the rents in the cities and towns in this province have been increasing steadily during recent years. The Cost of Living Inquiry Report which was issued in 1913, shows that rents had increased throughout Canada between 1900 and 1913 by 60 or 70 per cent. It used to be said that one-seventh was the true proportion of rent to income. The proportion of rental in Canada is about one-fourth, as against one-fifth in England. In the City of Halifax since the disaster, there has been a further increase in rents in many instances. In fact, rental conditions are becoming intolerable in this city, and in other portions of the province. This housing problem can never be settled right until every honest, industrious man in this province has a fair opportunity to occupy a dwelling where he can live with the decency and comfort that befit a man. No self-respecting family should be subject to the coarsening effect of life in the tenements where there is only one sanitary convenience for the half-dozen families in the tenement.

In this city, by the end of next summer, the Board of Health can insist upon a rigid enforcement of existing laws relating to sanitary dwellings. Before the disaster of December, 1917, there were houses in the city that were not reasonably fit for human habitation, but there was such a shortage of house room that the Board of Health afterwards were not blameable if, altho convinced of the unfitness of the houses, they hesitated to order their demolition so long as the tenants had no alternative accommodation. But in a few months there will be ample justification for requiring that unless such a house is made reasonably fit for habitation it shall be demolished.