

of a century or more, Sir John A. Macdonald, after the addresses were delivered, said: "I again say that I think we owe a debt of gratitude to my hon. friend (Dr. Roome) for bringing up this subject, and I think *every member, no matter on which side of the House he may be*, will agree with me that it has been well and impressively placed before the House, and in *SUCH A MANNER THAT WE CANNOT IGNORE IT*."

Dr. Roome went at great length into statistics, showing in a very clear and able manner, the actual money value by which the wealth of the Dominion would be increased if the average death-rate of the Dominion, as it is clearly shown by statistics collected during the last few years to be, could be reduced about 20 p.c., or to about that of great London. He proved that by such a reduction, by the reduced costs of sickness, as from medical attendance, &c., by the saving of time now lost in sickness, together with the money value of about 20,000 lives saved, as per costs of immigration, this country would *save about thirty millions of dollars every year*. And this we contend with a very moderate and fair estimate, and without the least exaggeration. Dr. Platt said he was prepared to verify the figures Dr. Roome had given. He (Dr. Platt,) having gone over the same "statistics without Dr. Roome's knowledge or consent." Dr. Sproule said: "Our sanitary legislation is yet in its infancy. . . We believe that at least a quarter of the deaths which take place in the country might be prevented if we attended to this matter on a larger scale. . . If we could prevent one death out of every four which takes place now, it means, as my hon. friend said, a saving of 20,000 lives to the state every year. If we could, how much better would it be for the state than the importation of 20,000 immigrants? . . . I think we could save more money than any one has any idea of, more suffering than perhaps one-fourth of the medical men in this country could save, more lives every year than we are bringing in by immigration, and more wealth than would pay a very large share of our national

debt." Surely enough, "we cannot ignore" this question.

Now in reference to the means of preventing this great annual loss to the Dominion. The chief obstacle in the way of a Federal Department of Health has been that, some eighteen years ago, statutory powers in regard to health were given to the provinces. No one has had any desire to take from the provinces these powers—the powers to enact laws for the municipalities to work upon and to see that these laws are properly carried out—to enforce drainage and sewerage, provision for suitable water supplies, scavenging, isolation, vaccination, &c. But without a proper education, the masses of the people cannot be forced by statutes to attend to these health laws any more than they can be so forced to abstain from alcoholic beverages. And the best educator, or the stimulus which will best induce a seeking for proper knowledge, is to publish freely, at least every month, throughout the Dominion, and even the world, somewhat as is done weekly in England, the localities in which the death-rate is high and also in which there are prevailing epidemics or endemic infectious diseases,—in short, the general condition of the public health—where it is good, where bad. Heretofore it has seemed impossible to get legislators or ministers to understand what sanitarians mean, chiefly, by the education of the public.

Dr. Platt placed the subject very concisely, in the following words, in his speech: "The objection. . . which has heretofore proved fatal to similar motions, has been the difficulty of dividing the responsibility and work between the Provincial and the Federal Legislatures. . . But so far as mortuary and vital statistics, the foundation of all sanitary work, are concerned, there can be no doubt that the Dominion Government have it in their power, as it is, in fact, their duty, to provide the means for the collection of such statistics. Indeed that has been recognized by this Parliament, and a Department of Statistics has been organized, and for several years a considerable sum of money