

use of cigarettes by young people in this country. If this resolution could be put in some shape which would voice that opinion, I am sure that it would have great weight in the country. We are an august body, most of the time. The parliament of Canada has its dignity and its importance; and until people begin to know better, which is very late in life with a great many, there is a general respect for parliament as being the highest representation of the worth and ability of this country. Any voice which would go forth from this parliament, from this House of Commons, with reference to a matter of this kind, would undoubtedly have its effect in the country. I hope that a resolution can be framed in some way which will carry out what is evidently the sympathetic belief by most members of this House that the use of cigarettes is an injurious thing, both for the individual and for the country, and that the cigarette habit, which has become so prevalent amongst us, is much to be deplored. Then, having voiced our opinion in that respect, I hope that, either during this session or another one in the near future, some method may be devised by which that evil would be, to some extent, if not entirely mitigated, at least largely repressed. For, after all, the laws that you make upon any subject whatsoever, it is the home, and the school, and the church influences which make public opinion, and keep it strong, and make it the largest factor in repressing evils and supporting laws.

Mr. J. B. BLACK (Hants). The hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) has opened up a very large and interesting question of political economy in his introductory remarks. I was delighted to hear what he said with regard to the bad economy in paying so much attention to the importation of foreigners while neglecting to save our own people. This is a question which requires more thought than it has hitherto received. I believe almost every word that has been said in regard to the injurious effect upon children of the vile habit of smoking cigarettes. There are, however, some things that I could not subscribe to. I think a good deal has been said in an exaggerated way, a good deal has been written by emotional people and hysterical people, and emotional people and hysterical people always exaggerate. In discussing any subject we ought always to keep within the bounds of truth; and if we keep within the bounds of practical knowledge, we must all admit that the cigarette habit is most injurious to our boys. There is no more disgusting sight than to meet on the street a boy with a cigarette in his mouth. This evil is much more prevalent than we might suppose from what we see of it on the street. If you consult the teachers in our schools they will tell you, as they have

Mr. FOSTER.

told me, that very few boys between the ages of six and fifteen have not the odour of cigarettes in their breath.

I do not know what we may do to prevent it, but something ought to be done, and yet I am afraid that no very practical result can be achieved. While the fathers smoke the pipe or cigars, the children, I am afraid, will smoke the cigarette. It is the most natural thing in the world for the boy to imitate his father. The father is the beau ideal of mankind in his eye, and if the father can smoke a pipe he can begin by smoking a cigarette, and I am afraid we will not accomplish very much in the direction of stopping boys from smoking cigarettes while we smoke the pipe. It looks to me to be as inconsistent as it is on the part of the man who says 'damn' every day in his household and spansks his boy for saying 'darn.' The boy will imitate the father every time. I will do every thing in my power to prevent cigarette smoking by our boys. It is extremely injurious. I believe the use of tobacco by any human being is injurious, although less so to the adult than to the child. I was not so fortunate as the hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) who told us that he was born with an aversion to the weed. I am afraid that I had the nicotine of several generations of Irish duduens floating through my veins, and I naturally took to tobacco and kept at it until I got older and sensible enough to lay it aside twenty odd years ago.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. Did it hurt the hon. gentleman?

Mr. BLACK. I am sure it did. Coming back to the question, how much it is the duty of the government to protect the lives of our people in their childhood, I believe that is a question that should receive our earnest attention. There are many other things besides tobacco and tuberculosis, which are depleting our country of the very best stock that we can raise in it. If you will look at the statistics you will find that there are more deaths up to the fifth year than there are from that until the fiftieth year. What is the cause? Is it preventable and is it our duty, if it is preventable, to prevent it? I think there is no medical man in this House with experience, and there are several who have had extended experience, but will agree with me that the great majority of deaths in children are preventable and that in many cases they are due to maternal and paternal ignorance. The vast number of deaths that occur up to the fifth year are caused by indigestion. The ignorant mother does not know how to properly feed her child, and the child dies of some form of indigestion. The parson consoles her by saying that she must not grieve because God took away her child, when as a matter of fact it was taken by pure, sheer ignorance. I am talk-