

February, 1919, at the call of the Acting Premier, the Honourable Sir Thomas White, for consideration of the Venereal Disease question, do memorialize the Government of Canada that it is in the interests of the future health and life of the citizenship of Canada that there should be immediately established a Federal Department of Health.

I may say to my honourable friend from Mille Iles (Hon. Mr. Dávid) that the province of Quebec was represented at that conference by the president and the secretary of the Superior Board of Health, Quebec, the General Medical Superintendent of the Insane of Quebec, and other representative gentlemen from that province. It will therefore be observed that there is a well-understood feeling between the different provinces and the Federal Government that there should be established a Department of Health for the Dominion.

This brings us to the other side of the question, as to the necessity for the establishment of such a department in the interests of the public. It is unnecessary for me to point out that a great change has taken place in the minds of the public since the war respecting the many important questions which come before us for consideration from time to time, and particularly as to the necessity of our not recognizing too closely the boundaries which separate the provinces from the Dominion. The necessity for the Federal Government giving consideration to the question of public health may be illustrated in this way: Under the Military Service Act there were medically examined, in round figures, 360,000 recruits or persons liable to military service between the ages of 20 and 24. Of that 360,000 over 50 per cent were rejected on account of physical defects. I understand that the number rejected was 181,000 and some hundreds. That is a lamentable state of affairs to exist in a country whose people, owing to its climatic and other conditions, should be superior in physique to those of almost any other country. It at once presents to the Dominion Government a problem which it cannot evade, and for the solution of which it is responsible.

Hon. Mr. McSWEENEY: Were those men examined overseas or on this side?

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: On this side; they were examined by our own medical officers. Now, the medical officers who rejected that number expressed the opinion that at least 50 per cent of that 180,000 were suffering from disease that was preventable; that, had proper measures been taken to guard the health of the com-

munity, 50 per cent of that 180,000 would not have been rejected, as they were, by reason of the examination made by the military medical officers in connection with the service to the state which they were called upon to perform.

There is another lamentable fact, honourable gentlemen, in connection with the infant mortality within the Dominion of Canada. We find that in some of the other Dominions of the Empire, where steps have been taken by the central Government to properly guard the health of the community, the mortality is sensibly less than that which obtains in Canada. Let me give you some data on that point which is really startling. In New Zealand, where the central Government has taken the necessary steps to protect the health of the community, the infant mortality averages about 50 in 1,000, that is, of children under one year of age. Australia comes next, with 68 deaths to 1,000 births; then come Sweden, with 70 deaths to 1,000 births; France, 78 to 1,000; the Netherlands, 87 to 1,000; Switzerland, 91 to 1,000; Ireland, 92 to 1,000; England and Wales, 110 to 1,000. Then when we pass to countries like Russia we get 248 per 1,000, and Chili, which has the highest rate, 286 per 1,000 births. In Canada the infant death-rate works out as follows: Saskatchewan, which is the lowest, 91.2 per 1,000 for the year 1916; Prince Edward Island, 93.6; Ontario, 107.2; British Columbia, 107.3; Manitoba, 113.5; Nova Scotia, 120.9; Quebec, 153.4.

Hon. Mr. McSWEENEY: What about New Brunswick?

Hon. Mr. THOMPSON: There is none at all there.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: Did I not give give New Brunswick? I fancy there must be none.

Hon. Mr. McSWEENEY: They never die there.

Hon. Mr. TESSIER: They are all dead.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: Another interesting statement is that of the mortality in the larger cities. We in Canada sometimes congratulate ourselves, when dealing with the subject of immigration, that we are attempting to keep out the denizens of the slums of Europe, and we assume that the sanitary conditions of Europe, particularly of the larger cities, from which our immigrants come, are of a very much lower order than those which obtain in the Dominion of Canada. In London the rate of