

were well acquainted with the operations of its system, both abroad and at home, would be corrected, and he certainly considered that the steps proposed to be adopted in the matter would enable the census to be taken in a shorter period, and bring the statistics more up to a correct standard than they were at present. As to the registration of births, marriages and deaths, they were placed in a very awkward position, as the Local and the Federal Governments had each their own peculiar jurisdiction. If, however, the local legislatures were willing to unite with the Federal Government, a scheme of legislation with all the Provinces might be framed, which might work very well. But they would have to consider what means could be adopted to bring such a harmonious accord between the Provinces and the Federal Government, or to create a general representation for the Dominion. It would be extremely beneficial if full reliable statistics could be obtained, upon which every class, every interest in the community could rely to base their observations. The principle difficulty of registration would be that of the difference in local standing which existed between different Provinces. In the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec it would be easy to obtain the authority by which these statistics could be taken, but it was not the same with British Columbia and Prince Edward Island, where no municipal Government had been established. A general mode of registration might be adopted for the greater part of the Confederation; but they must have a different one for the small Provinces, where there were no municipal institutions to carry out the necessary details. He approved of the motion before the House, and would be very happy if the hon. gentlemen who were appointed on the Committee should be successful in their efforts to secure to this Dominion full information for a basis on which such a system could be erected as would meet the wants of all.

HON. MR. WILMOT thought the Minister of Agriculture had made a mistake with regard to the municipal laws of the Lower Provinces. They

had in New Brunswick some municipal incorporations, although in but very few counties. It would be exceedingly desirable that the mode of taking the statistics throughout the Dominion and the different provinces should be put upon some plan by which we could get some approximate idea as to what the true state of things was. A celebrated statesman once remarked that nothing was more fallacious than figures except facts, it depended upon how facts and figures were placed, as to whether they told the truth or not, and he thought there was a good deal of fallacy about some of the means at present adopted for the collection of statistics, and he hoped some better method would be the result of the labors of the Committee.

HON. MR. BELLEROSE would not oppose the motion. But he reminded the hon. mover that they would seek in vain a better or a surer system than that which they had at present in his Province, and he hoped that instead of endeavoring to erect a surer system on the ruins of the old, they would respect the usages of the Province of Quebec, and would change nothing. He hoped the hon. member who had made the motion would have no objection if the name of Mr. Trudel be added to the Committee.

HON. MR. RYAN rose to give a warm support to the proposition of his hon. friend. The importance of statistics was hardly realized as yet in the Dominion, but whenever that importance was recognized and a correct method was employed, it would contribute largely to the benefit of the country. In no country were statistics so well ascertained as in Great Britain. He held in his hand a very valuable pamphlet, "The Agricultural Returns of Great Britain, with Abstract Returns for the United Kingdom, British Possessions, and Foreign Countries, for 1874." In glancing over it he had been much struck with the following remarks which showed how far behind other countries we were in the science of statistics. Under the head of "Returns for British Possessions," were the following remarks:—"Tables to show the extent of the agricultural resources of various British possessions are given