

thought desirable to add this money to the amount given by the Ontario Government and devise a scheme whereby one set of officers could collect the information. I believe, however, that so far that scheme has failed. I think the importance of the subject demands that we should vote some money in this House, and I have no doubt that, now it is under consideration, in a short time a scheme will be devised which will accomplish the object, for not a very large amount of money; and from year to year if necessity require; and if this amount is added to, at no distant day we will obtain very valuable information for the country for a small sum of money.

Mr. CASEY. I am afraid it is the hon. member for Cornwall (Mr. Bergin) who has found the mare's nest. He says the Government took a vote of \$20,000 and did not spend any of it. That is a serious reflection upon the Government, because the money was given them for the purpose of spending it.

Mr. BERGIN. No; because the Government asked the medical men to present to them a well-digested scheme, and took a vote in advance, but the scheme was not presented because it was desired to take the opinion of the different medical societies throughout the country. That has been going on since, but it was decided to wait until the meeting of the Medical Association, in August next, when the scheme would be either approved or rejected by the representative body of the profession.

Mr. CASEY. Then they are voting for a scheme which is not digested, and I hope when they get it it will agree with them. If they have no scheme then they should not spend the money. I find, however, by the Public Accounts, that they did spend \$1,713, though they had no scheme to begin with. So the hon. gentleman will find that his first idea was a mistaken one, and that a pretty fair amount has been spent, considering that no scheme had been elaborated. I think the Government should have had a scheme prepared before this time. If they are waiting for the doctors, and the doctors have not come to time, surely a scheme might be devised by themselves. This is not a question particularly for the doctors to consider; they are to cure the sick, but surely laymen could prepare and apply a scheme for obtaining statistics of deaths, &c.

Mr. LANDERKIN. As the Minister has intimated there was a meeting of delegates of the Medical Association a year ago, they came as a deputation to the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Railways. At that meeting they passed several resolutions. Those resolutions respecting the public health were submitted to the Minister of Railways for consideration, and I will read you what the Minister of Railways said:

"Sir Charles Tupper thought them very good, but suggested they should have gone a step further, and have advised an amendment to the British North America Act, whereby the Dominion Government should deal with matters connected with the public health."

Have the Government, in the meantime, followed the suggestion made by the Minister of Railways? Have they proposed any amendment to the British North America Act, whereby this Parliament would be enabled to deal with questions affecting the public health? Afterwards, acting on the suggestion of the Minister of Railways, they passed resolutions stating that it was desirable that some steps should be taken whereby the British North America Act should be amended, so as to enable the Dominion Government to take charge of the public health. According to the Act, as it now stands, the charge of the public health comes purely within the control of the Local Legislatures. It was no doubt thought by the framers of the Act that those subjects belonging to the municipalities, such as drainage, the reclaiming of waste places, ventilation, plumbing, &c., coming within the Local Legislatures, this question of public health should be rel-

gated to them. I presume those were the views of the fathers of the Confederation, of whom we have one or two here. I am surprised that the Minister of Railways says that this Parliament is not competent to deal with this subject, as there is an item in the Estimates, placed there by the Minister of Agriculture, stating that they are prepared to spend a certain amount of money therefor. This seems rather a peculiar position; there must be a division in the Cabinet. We sometimes hear of such divisions, and they are apparently divided on this important question. For it is an important question—one as important as any which has come before this Parliament. If we have not authority to deal with this question they should seek that authority, if it is not competent for the Local Legislatures to deal with it. Any measure tending to lengthen human life and prevent human suffering is one which will commend itself to right-thinking men in the House, and will receive the support of this House if it comes within its purview, though it appeared at the time of Confederation that these questions were relegated to the Local Legislatures. We have in Ontario a Board of Health, and I am prepared to state that they have done a great deal of good. They have given a great deal of information to the people, and wherever epidemics have broken out, they have advised with the local Boards of Health with a view of staying the epidemics, which have abounded in those localities. They have been active and energetic, and I am satisfied, and I believe the community is satisfied, that the Board of Health has been of singular benefit in many instances. Now, if this grant was given to supplement the action of the different Provinces, then it is a proper and legitimate one; but if the Minister of Railways' contention was right, that this House has no power to deal with the subject, and that an amendment should be made to the Act, so as to enable Parliament to deal with the question, then this grant should be given exclusively on the understanding that it should be divided amongst the Local Legislatures, with a view of aiding them in their local appliances for this purpose. The grant is a very little one, if it is for that purpose; it is insignificant compared with the good which will arise by a well devised, well digested, and well-matured scheme. It is well known, that by calling public attention to these questions, a great amount of good can be done. Statistics show—they have even shown in this House, on many occasions—that the greatest benefit has been derived by sound sanitary regulations being enforced. It is an alarming state of things, that so little attention is given to sanitary matters, and so little information is possessed by the people on this question—a question so vital to the welfare and the happiness of the people that it is very important that it should be settled. It is very important that this question should be dealt with in a proper spirit. It would look better if the Minister in charge of this matter were able to give us some information upon it. A good deal of attention has been paid to the subject of cattle disease, but the Government have not thought it worth while to pay any attention at all to the subject of diseases affecting the human family. I claim that no question of greater consequence to the people of this country has been brought before this House this Session. It is known, not only to medical men, but to every man of common sense, that by wise and judicious regulations, the public health can be very greatly benefited. But it appears that the Government are trifling with this question, for they do not propose to bring down any scheme or to say what they intend to do in reference to so important a subject. Now, I would like to know if the Minister of Railways was right when he tendered his advice to the medical gentlemen who attended this convention, I believe at the solicitation of the Government; and if he was right and sincere, have any steps been taken by the Government, or do they still intend to carry out the views of the Fathers of Confederation, and leave such concerns to the Legislatures