

is also a demand for a certain number of mechanics, and I have never hesitated in encouraging them to this country, because two-thirds of them turn their attention to agriculture.

Mr. BLAKE. Then I understand that what the hon. gentleman said was an urgent demand for mechanics, and that, not being able to get employment as mechanics, they would have to turn their attention to agriculture.

Mr. POPE. The hon. gentleman cannot get me away from the point by any side issue. There is employment for mechanics, both in the old and new Provinces; but I do not feel that we should give them assisted passages. I have said to that class, in whom the hon. gentleman shows such an interest, that to a certain extent I encourage mechanics to come to this country; and I have told them that, if they were industrious and attended to their business, they will soon become employers.

#### On Resolution 52,

To meet expenses in connection with Health Statistics.....\$20,000.00

Mr. BLAKE. The hon. gentleman was to give us some information on this item, as to the plan he was going to adopt.

Mr. POPE. I did not make any memorandum of it. I know that we discussed it, but I told the hon. gentleman that I was sorry my hon. friend the Minister of Railways, who took a great interest in the matter, was not present, as he knew more about it than I did; and now, as he is here, I will ask him to explain the matter.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I did take a very great interest in the subject, and I met a very large deputation of professional and other gentlemen, including the mayors of cities, and the determination arrived at was to use the health officers appointed in the various cities by the municipal authorities, and to pay them a certain amount according to population, in order to obtain for the Department statistics connected with the public health, and in order that the Department might be enabled to consult with the local authorities as to the best means to be adopted for promoting the public health. I think that the House will agree with me that it is a question of very great moment. It is one of prime importance, whether considered in relation to the question of life, or the progress of the country. The statistics connected with public health have a very great influence in determining the opinion of persons who are going to any country, because in proportion as these statistics show that the death rate is low, these localities are regarded as more attractive for settlement. Whether taken in regard to the question of the protection of life and health, or the promoting of the general prosperity of the country by giving confidence in it in regard to so important a consideration as the good health of the community, I do not think too much importance can be attached to this subject, and I believe this small vote may be used in such a way as to be productive of a vast amount of good.

Mr. BLAKE. The general observations of the hon. gentleman are such as we can all confidently subscribe to; but the information which we desire, and which the hon. Minister of Agriculture was not able to give us, and asks the hon. Minister of Railways to supply, is on what system the vote is to be expended. The hon. Minister of Railways has told us it is proposed to deal with the persons in charge of the sanitary affairs of the localities and to obtain from them certain information, but to what extent and in what manner he does not explain. I suppose by the comparatively limited vote, it was only intended to ascertain some of the conditions of existence as they affect public health rather than to attempt obtaining a complete register of vital statistics.

Such a register, unless complete, is utterly useless, and unless carried out with a high degree of accuracy is also utterly useless. Therefore, one does not want to see—with all the appreciation of the importance of the subject which the hon. gentleman suggests we entertain, and which I believe we do entertain—the country committed to that which may involve a very large expenditure beyond what we supposed by the vote will be guaranteed, or which may involve the expenditure of the particular vote for abortive ends. In the lucid explanation of the hon. Minister of Railways we have no information of the details of the system he proposes, or as to the manner in which he expects to attain the results he contemplates.

Mr. FOSTER. I wish to call the attention of the hon. Minister of Agriculture to the criminal statistics contained in his report. A few years ago I had occasion to make some enquiries with reference to criminal statistics, and I found that his report was not very useful in that respect. Take for instance a charge in this report, that of drunkenness with which I am most familiar, and which is, of course, quite out of the comprehension of the other hon. members of this House. I find that in Ontario, there were, according to this report, 7,836 charged with that offence, and in Quebec only 1,690. Now, that either shows a great preponderance of temperance sentiment in Quebec—and I would be glad to believe it did—or it shows that the statistics are not complete.

Mr. BLAKE. It may show another thing.

Mr. FOSTER. In Nova Scotia the statistics are only collected from six counties, and in New Brunswick they are only gathered from a few; so that there must be some defect which makes these statistics entirely useless for the purpose of comparing the criminality of the different Provinces with each other; and I cannot see what great benefit they are, unless they give some data on which a comparison may be founded.

Mr. BLAKE. I have not had the opportunity of looking at this year's criminal statistics, but I hope they do contain comparative statements, both as to former years and as to the Provinces to which they refer. The hon. gentleman says these statistics of Quebec and Ontario, on the subject of committals for drunkenness, show either that Quebec is much more temperate than Ontario, or the statistics are inaccurate. There is yet a third proposition, namely, that the administration of the law may be more lax in Quebec and fewer drunken people taken up there.

Mr. FOSTER. In making up that 1,690 in Quebec, I find that only Quebec, Montreal and St. Francis are included, and one can scarcely come to the conclusion that these are the only places in that Province in which drunkenness exists, or in which people are taken up for it. Again, in Nova Scotia the only places taken into account are one city and five counties. I pretend that these statistics are almost entirely useless unless they furnish a basis for a comparison of the criminality of the different Provinces. I would rather see \$4,000 given to some committee of Commissioners to gather statistics carefully from the different institutions, and with regard to the different subjects each year, that we might have something really useful.

Mr. DESJARDINS. I think the hon. leader of the Opposition went out of his way to save Ontario from the responsibility of the number of crimes committed there. If he knew the Province of Quebec better he would see that the statistics are quite correct.

Mr. BLAKE. I am not saying they are not; I am suggesting that they are.

Mr. DESJARDINS. I maintain that we can accept the figures as representing the actual state of temperance in our Province. It is well known that in Ontario there are