

take would be in part of that nature. So far as it has been possible to do it by means of correspondence we have endeavoured in the Department of Labour to gather in the library reports on what is being done for technical education in the different countries of the world. We shall be only too glad in the department to have any persons who are interested in this subject take advantage of the information which is gathered there. Mr. Acland, the deputy minister, who has made a very full and careful study of this whole question would be pleased, I am sure, to lend his assistance towards facilitating the work of representatives of the provincial governments or others who may desire to consult any of the documents in the department.

There does not seem to be any difference of opinion as to the desire in many quarters for a commission of this kind. That has been made plain to us by the manufacturers as well as the workmen through their representatives in the Dominion Trades and Labour Congress and the Canadian Federation of Labour, each of which bodies have made requests that something should be done in this direction. It goes without saying that the recommendations on this subject from boards of trade, universities and other public bodies, are also entitled to the greatest respect and consideration. But that leads to a further point which has been mentioned this evening. All that I have said thus far has had relation to the importance of technical education; and I think every member of the House will agree that there is little room for difference of opinion as to the importance of this matter to Canada as a young nation seeking industrial supremacy be it ever so far removed. We cannot, I think, overestimate the importance of this work, no matter by whom it may be carried on. Much has been said of Germany. I think the commercial and industrial history of Germany is most enlightening to this country. It was after the downfall of Napoleon that Prussia saw her opportunity to become a great nation. She started in the work of nation-building by laying the foundations sure and strong, by endeavouring to establish without delay systems of technical training which would make her workmen and artisans second to no others on earth. Then, after the Franco-German war, the large indemnity paid by France left the provinces free to expend on technical education what they would otherwise not have been able to devote to that object. From the fact that the provinces themselves made the beginning at the time they did, and from this other exceptional advantage, Germany has been able, since the time of the birth of the empire, to take the strides that have brought her to the position of industrial importance she holds in the world at the present

time; and I think Canada is a young country, looking forward to the part she shall play, as the largest and most important part of the British empire, can afford to take lessons out of the books of any other nation in the world and profit by them.

But there is left the doubt on the question of jurisdiction, and that is a matter which cannot be too carefully considered. I do not believe that too much importance can be attached to the work of technical education to be done by the authorities whose duty it is to perform that work. But it is another question whether or not this parliament has the power to go into this question to the extent to which some speakers this evening have indicated they would like to see it do. The resolution asks only for a commission to inquire into the needs of this country. It suggests, however, that the commission should also report on ways and means. Other speakers have suggested that the government should do more than that—that it should assist in a financial way; and other speakers, the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Crosby) in particular, went so far as to express the wish that the word 'commission' had been left out of the resolution altogether—though if it had been, I fail to see how there would have been any resolution left—and would prefer that the government should do something in a practical way, in the direction of instruction along technical lines. All of this raises a question which has been debated many times in this House, and one which we cannot consider too carefully—whether or not the good which might be done by the appointment of a body by this government to further the work of technical education might not be in part undone by the mischief which the appointment of such a body might create were the motives and purposes of this government in establishing such a commission not fully comprehended and understood. The hon. member for South Wellington (Mr. Guthrie) has said that communications have already been received to the effect that there would be no objection on the part of the provinces to such a course. Well, Sir, it seems to me that before the Dominion government should take the step suggested in the resolution, there should be something more than this negative attitude on the part of the provinces. It should not be a case of no objection, but a case of an earnestly expressed desire which the government should be asked to listen to. I think, the risk should not be run of raising a great constitutional question in a matter of such great national importance until at least the exact position of this government with regard to this question is fully and rightly understood by the different provinces and by the people in the country. To my mind the section of the British North America Act which says that 'the legis-

latures may exclusively make laws in relation to education, undoubtedly gives to the provinces the right of legislation in all matters respecting education; and if this parliament were to attempt to legislate on matters affecting education, as set forth in this section. I think this parliament would be going beyond the powers which are given to it in the British North America Act. But I am not so sure that the exclusive right to make laws with regard to education means the right to exclude the Dominion from gathering information on any subject which may be deemed a subject of national importance. However, that may be a debatable constitutional question, and in view of the importance of the subject of this discussion, I think it would be well if the mover of this resolution would allow the government a further opportunity to consider the question from this point of view, and not press it to a division to-night.

Assuming that we got over the question of jurisdiction all right, there is still the question of the advisability and the expediency of taking this step so long as there is any likelihood of that step being misunderstood; and I hope that one of the results of this debate will be that the true relationship of the provinces to the Dominion on this question of great national concern will be brought out in bolder and clearer relief than ever before, and if the subject be brought up again, as I hope it will be, there will be no doubt in the mind of any member of this House, or in any group of responsible persons outside, as to whether or not the Dominion would be trespassing in endeavouring to co-operate with the provinces—for it is co-operation alone that would be expected—to the extent the mover of this resolution would desire. I would beg to move therefore the adjournment of the debate.