

selves, some in one way, some in another, and all for the sake of maintaining imperial peace and unity. But with all this bluster and fuss, with all this very unnecessary display of patriotism and imperialism, what are any of the governments which are fussing and fuming in an endeavor to weld this chain of Empire together doing in a systematic manner for that prime essential of Empire—the people themselves and their physical environment.

Important and essential as are all the subjects under consideration, and difficult as many of them are of solution, the one which is the *raison d'être* of them all—the one for early and constant study—the one most difficult of all to handle has never as yet been considered.

That it has not been lost sight of by some of the leading minds in imperialistic matters is quite evidenced by the public utterances of Lord Rosebery and Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain. Lord Rosebery has cautioned Britain that an empire in itself is of “but very little use without an Imperial race,” and Chamberlain, referring to the fact that the work of this century is the consolidation of our Empire, has asserted, very positively, that public health is the greatest of all the subjects to be considered and worked out. Being seized with the enormity of the issue at stake, he asks: “How are we to fulfill the task which Providence has laid upon our shoulders, a greater task than has ever been imposed upon any nation, a task which we are now fulfilling not with success, but the greatness of which may fill even the boldest of us with some anxiety?”

It is to a consideration of how Canada can do its share in this the greatest task of Empire, the perpetuating of an Imperial race, that the subject of public health is presented to this association which represents the health interest of the Dominion of Canada. I do not imply that the problems I have mentioned are capable of immediate or even early solution, but simply that in the excitement and enthusiasm over the grosser and materialistic and, I might add, the political aspects of life, we should not forget the essential.

From what has been said it will be seen that the history of public health in Canada is, in the main, but a repetition of the

progress of the work in Great Britain. We have followed them like sheep—though a long way off—instead of profiting by their errors, we have not enacted legislation for preventing what we know by their experience can be prevented. The reason for this is not difficult to find; our people are ignorant of health laws; our municipal councillors, as a rule, live for no higher object than to maintain their civic office by voting along those lines which will secure the greatest return of votes; in short, our politicians are not statesmen. Indeed, a statesman is now a *rara avis*, for our legislators have no more brains or judgment beyond the referendum, which is simply the *cloaca maxima* into which too often the recommendations of a statesman are precipitated by the politician who plays on the ignorance of the average citizen to accomplish his nefarious ends.

We have before us the evidence that bad town planning and housing lead inevitably to increased municipal expenditure, and, therefore, higher taxes. We know that under inefficient legislation, bad housing conditions grow up and continue and that owing to these evil environments, disease, crime, immorality and poverty resulting in physical degeneration inevitably result. Yet here we are planning towns by the hundred each year, building, rather I should say, throwing together houses, and, worse than all, permitting a foreign element to live in worse conditions than would be permitted in their own country; and there is no legislature in Canada which has a statesman within its walls of the calibre to propose a bill which will (in my judgment) adequately meet this alarming and awful situation.

Sufficient has been indicated to show that, as a nation, Canada has a long way to travel yet before the claim can be advanced that it is doing its share to produce a virile race leave alone the still more important questions of maintaining its virility.

Some of our provinces have good health laws. In a few instances the central provincial authority maintains a strong grip on municipal authorities and rightly so, for of all the opponents of even the most simple health laws I can state that municipal councils are the most prominent. They require, in many instances, the dis-