

hand. I am only directing myself to the question as to whether or not the course suggested has been considered by my hon. friend and those for whom he speaks.

Mr. BLAIN. I will not attempt to answer that question; my hon. friend will be quite able, I am sure, to deal with that matter. All I have to say is that I understand the parliament of Canada have power to place upon the statute-books a law to prohibit the importation, manufacture and sale of cigarettes, and I may remind my hon. friend that a gentleman from his own province stated that the legislation that they had on the statute books of Nova Scotia was a dead letter, and therefore he suggested that it would be useless for the legislature to put further legislation on the statute-book of that province.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. I shall be very glad to give my hon. friend the correspondence I have.

Mr. BLAIN. Might I ask my hon. friend what his opinion would be on the constitutional aspect of that question?

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. I am afraid my hon. friend from Peel (Mr. Blain) labours under the idea that in asking the question I did, I was actuated by some unfriendliness towards his project. Quite the contrary, I would be disposed to endorse the spirit of the resolution; but when he spoke on behalf of a large number of people, not only in his own but in other constituencies as well, interested in the suppression of the cigarette, I was in receipt of correspondence from people in my own county who were suggesting the method I indicated as the best means of dealing with the question. And it was in all sincerity, and not out of any hostility to the proposed legislation, that I asked the question I did. As to the constitutionality of provincial legislation of that character, one could only give an opinion from a legal standpoint after the Bill had been drafted providing for the dealing with this evil in a certain way by this parliament. As regards the abstract question, I think that this parliament has jurisdiction to deal with the matter.

Mr. BLAIN. I would ask my hon. friend (Mr. Macdonald) if any of the correspondence he has is against this parliament legislating on this question this session?

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. Not at all. I shall send my hon. friend what letters I have.

Mr. THOMAS MARTIN (North Wellington). I have here a number of statistics which I had intended giving the House, but as my hon. friend from Peel (Mr. Blain) has gone so fully into the matter, I shall not weary the House with them. I wish to say however, that I am heartily in sympathy with

what my hon. friend has said. I believe that the cigarette habit is growing very fast and is a great injury to our young people—both boys and girls, and I am prepared to support any legislation which will rid us of such an evil, but there is one argument against this proposition of my hon. friend which he did not take the opportunity of answering. I would ask him, if we prevent the manufacture and importation of cigarettes, can we hope to accomplish the object aimed at so long as we import tobacco which can be made into cigarettes?

Mr. BLAIN. My reply to this is that I think our youth acquire the smoking habit by beginning with cigarettes. My object is to deal with this from the boys' standpoint. I believe that if we prohibit the importation, manufacture and sale of cigarettes, we will get at the root of the evil from the boys' standpoint and will thus accomplish a great deal.

Mr. F. D. MONK (Jacques Cartier). While I am heartily in favour of the two first paragraphs in my hon. friends resolution, namely:

1. That the object of good government is to promote the general welfare of the people by a careful encouragement and protection of whatever makes good; and by an equally careful discouragement and suppression of whatever tends to the public disadvantage.

2. That the smoking of cigarettes has been proved by overwhelming testimony to be productive of serious physical and moral injury to young people; impairing health, arresting development, weakening intellectual power, and thus constituting a social and national evil.

The motion of my hon. friend is too extensive. Three years ago, this question was brought up by the hon. member for St. Lawrence Division (Mr. Bickerdike) and pretty thoroughly discussed. The discussion we had then and the information I have gained since lead me to doubt the feasibility of enforcing the prohibition in such a general way. At that time we had the advantage of the experience of Dr. Roddick, of Montreal, who then had a seat in this House; and if I remember rightly he declared that in the case of grown up people the smoking of cigarettes was the most harmless form of the evil. While cigarette smoking is highly detrimental to immature youth, and while I would approve of any legislation prohibiting the use of cigarettes by our school children. In its present shape, I doubt whether the resolution—if enacted into law—could be put into practice.

Rt. Hon. Sir WILFRID LAURIER (Prime Minister). My hon. friend from Peel (Mr. Blain) has told us that this is not a Sunday school question but a very practical question, in which I agree with him. The use of cigarettes is universally admitted to have very injurious effects, both physical and mental, on immature youth. I would be disposed to go further than my hon. friend