

# EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE THE

## ROYAL COMMISSION

ON THE SUBJECT OF

### LABOR IN ITS RELATION TO CAPITAL IN CANADA.

(Translation.)

MONTREAL, 4th February, 1888.

LOUIS LABERGE, Medical Health Officer of the City of Montreal.

By Mr. HELBRONNER :—

Q.—You are a health officer, Mr. Laberge? A.—I am Medical Health Officer of the city of Montreal.

Q.—You have, I believe, within the scope of your duties the superintendence, from a sanitary point of view, of all the buildings, factories and even private houses of the city of Montreal? A.—Yes.

Q.—Generally speaking, in what condition are the dwellings of working people? A.—The dwellings of working people are generally lacking in space. This is the worst feature about them.

Q.—Is there any municipal by-law regulating the number of people that should dwell in each house? A.—We have no specification on cubic measurements.

Q.—Do you know whether there are any such enactments in other countries? A.—I believe there are some in Europe. Some highly advanced cities have these regulations.

Q.—Outside of these drawbacks, what is the condition of the dwelling houses of working people in regard to drains and the outflow of water used for household purposes? A.—So far, we have no by-law relative to plumbing, and, according to the report of my inspectors, a great number of these houses are badly off on the score of plumbing and drainage. There exists such a theory as a house to house inspection but there is no by-law that lays down the quality of drainage or the manner in which it ought to be disposed of. This is precisely what we are making ready for just now.

Q.—When a city inspector comes across a house that is not fit to live in, what measures do you take? A.—If I understand the municipal law aright, we have the right of posting a dwelling and declaring it unfit to live in, but it is a very slow and lengthy proceeding.

Q.—Is this house posting or placarding confined to diseases which may exist in the dwelling, or does it extend to the houses that are really unwholesome from bad drainage or other sanitary causes? A.—No matter what condition, so soon as the building is unfit to live in.