

something amazing. The birth rate of this country is not very much behind that of other countries of a similar population. There are over 150,000 children born in Canada every year—over 400 every day in the year. Taking the whole of the twenty-eight cities reported upon last year, we find there were 18,355 deaths reported, of which 9,645 were under the age of five years, proving conclusively that such diseases as attack children, and which in almost every instance are zymotic or preventable diseases, were the causes of death, giving the very best argument, indeed, for the establishment of a sanitary or hygienic bureau of some kind. The general impression, of course, is that there are few diseases which it would pay the people to look after very carefully. For years the whole community has been terribly frightened of small-pox, while other diseases, which have every year carried off thousands and tens of thousands, have been considered as of small importance. Taking the public records, it appears that not a single death from small-pox was reported last year, while there were from scarlet-fever, 51; measles, 140; typhus, 381; diphtheria, 1,182; or 1,758 deaths from these four preventable diseases in a population in these twenty-eight cities of 700,000. If the deaths were in proportion throughout the rest of Canada, there were 14,000 deaths during the year from those four preventable diseases. A very interesting document came into my hands some time ago prepared by an English authority, entitled "Loss of Wealth by Loss of Health," and if hon. members were to examine the pamphlet carefully they would come to the same conclusion as that reached by the distinguished author of the pamphlet, and they would be of the opinion that we would not be losing money, but saving money, if we expended a much larger sum on a hygienic laboratory in this country. Taking England, the writer shows that the average of sickness among workmen is two and a-half weeks per year. Taking England and Wales, he places the number of working-class families at 4,259,000, the bread-winners of which earn daily wages amounting to £8,819; the loss from sickness, according to this computation, reaches £13,307,000 per annum, or £1,000,000 per day of sickness for these people. Manchester offers a very striking example of what may be done towards protecting the people against disease and saving vast sums on this account. That city has a working population of 92,500, which earn weekly wages of £115,700; therefore the loss to the working families amounts to £20,000 per day, for each day of sickness *plus* the loss to the employers, and so forth. The cost of the Health Department of Manchester for last year was £87,000 for hospitals, disinfection, drainage, sewerage, and so forth. The saving of life effected is estimated by the best statisticians at 2,301 lives, one thousand of these being between twenty and seventy years of age. The total saving was £300,000, obtained at an expenditure of £87,000. The mover of the resolution refrained from expressing an opinion as to the manner in which we should proceed in order to reach the result at which we wish to arrive. I have not prepared any scheme, and I do not know what scheme may present itself to the minds of the Ministers, if they look favorably on this proposition, but that will be a matter for them to consider and report on at an early date, I hope. Of course, as I have already

intimated, I believe it to be the duty of the Government to establish on a firm basis a Department for the collection of such statistics as sanitarians wish to use; mortuary statistics of themselves are not sufficient, we want vital statistics, we want reports of births and marriages, of epidemics and of the ravages of preventable diseases throughout the country, and then we will have a foundation upon which the Provincial authorities may act. I have no doubt whatever that this Government has full authority to institute measures to educate the people on this subject. There is nothing to prevent the Dominion Government spending a large sum in the distribution of weekly or monthly bulletins and reports relating to epidemic diseases throughout the country, and the distribution of literature teaching the people the various methods by which these diseases may be prevented, and also literature relating to the establishment of a hygienic laboratory and bacteriological laboratory for the investigation of these diseases; and in that way they can do a very large amount of work which is now attempted to be done by the Provincial authorities. So far as coercion and the enforcement of different measures are concerned, I grant that this rests with the municipalities, acting under their Provincial Legislature. That portion of the work can safely be left to them, but that is no reason why this Parliament and this Government, acting in concert with the Local Legislatures, and the municipalities acting, in turn, with the Legislatures, cannot very largely increase the efficiency of the regulations now existing in this country. It has been said that this question is always lightly considered by Parliament. I am sorry to say that, in the past, this has been the case; but I trust the time has gone by when the Parliament of Canada will treat lightly such an important question as that now under discussion. In every Province, and in this Dominion Parliament, we find the House almost unanimously adopting measures to prevent death from contagious disease in animals when an outbreak occurs, and this House should not be more negligent in undertaking similar measures when the human family is concerned; and we are well aware that if an epidemic among cattle occurs in any district, an officer is at once despatched to ascertain the cause and, if necessary, to slaughter the infected animals, and, in fact, to take such steps as are necessary to prevent the spread of the disease. We know that disease increases in geometrical proportion; that one case of small-pox brings two, and so on. Even simple isolation, if properly carried out by Parliament and enforced by the municipalities, would, in almost every instance, cut short the ravages of any of the fatal epidemics which have carried off thousands and tens of thousands in this country. I am heartily in accord with the object aimed at by the mover of this resolution, and I hope that the Government, although they may not see fit to grant the motion as now proposed, will take the subject into consideration, and that in future Sessions we will see an increasing interest taken in this very important subject.

Mr. SPROULE. The only excuse I have to offer to the House for occupying its time in discussing this question, is the importance of it. An able writer once said that health is the *summum bonum*, and that, when lost, no consideration is too great or