

destroy bird life of this character you give insect life a tremendous advantage and an opportunity to propagate. As has been already said, unless some check on the growth of insects is maintained, very soon all animal life would be destroyed. It is a very strong statement to make but it is true. And it is only by these checks of which I have spoken that insect life is kept within bounds. Bird life is one of the best checks on dangerous insects that we have and that is why I want to see it maintained. I do not desire to take up time unduly and will simply close with this statement: Anyone who lives in the country and takes an interest in bird life, in their habits and methods of living, will derive a knowledge that will make his life richer and happier.

Mr. TOLMIE: Can the minister give any information as to what measures have been taken to combat fire blight on the Pacific coast, or rather, west of the Rocky mountains?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: That is a matter that will be dealt with in the next vote.

Mr. LEADER: I do not know whether this is the proper place to bring up the subject of bee keeping or not. If not, I should like to know under what item the matter can be brought up. I have received a communication from my city to-day asking me to use my influence with the Department of Agriculture to prevent the importation of foul brood in bees. I want to bring that matter to the attention of the minister. The communication referred to is from the Portage la Prairie Bee Keepers' Association and it reads as follows:

I have been instructed by the Portage Bee Keepers' Association to ask you to use your influence in having laws passed that will prevent the importation and spread of foul brood and other diseases among bees.

Has that matter been settled?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: That has been settled.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Does the minister mean that the importation of bees is prohibited now?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Yes, We found that the very infectious and dangerous disease called foul brood was spreading very rapidly, especially in Ontario. I think the committee will recall that we voted \$5,000 last year on condition that the Ontario government would also give a similar grant for the extermination of this bacterial disease. In order to bring about that desirable result we find it

necessary, as a result of such requests as my hon. friend has just read, to prohibit importations of bees for the present until we can get this disease rounded up in our own country. I do not know how long the embargo will be maintained, but it will be kept in force so long as there is danger of infection from the American side, or from any quarter, because this is not confined to the United States, it is an European disease. I understand this embargo was put into effect a few years ago against Great Britain.

Mr. MILNE: I wonder could the minister give us any idea how much was spent in cases of this kind last year?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: While that information is being looked up we can discuss some other subject. Does my hon. friend mean the steel cases the insects are put in?

Mr. MILNE: Some of them are mahogany and some are steel.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: They have to be very carefully made and very close fitting, else these dead insects will be attacked by different species of life that succeed in getting through the crevices. For these reasons the making of these cases is very costly. However I will give my hon. friend all the information I possibly can.

Mr. TOLMIE: What work is being carried on in British Columbia in connection with the eradication of mosquitoes, particularly in the valley of the Fraser river.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I understand we have one officer in the Fraser valley who is studying this problem, which is a very old problem as the hon. gentleman knows, and a good deal of the contagion is supposed to be attributable to that source.

Mr. EULER: Why this discrimination in favour of British Columbia?

Mr. CARROLL: Is the minister serious in stating that he is trying to exterminate the mosquitoes of British Columbia?

Mr. POWER: I protest that this ought to be combined with the Flying staff.

Mr. GARDINER: I have the Auditor General's Report ending March, 1923, and I would like to ask in regard to this expenditure. What is the reason for buying three sleeping robes? Is it to keep the bugs warm? There is an item for eiderdowns, three silk tents and two silk tents, and so forth. Why is it necessary to make expenditures of that description?