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Original Articles

THE ECONOMIC ASPECT OF THE TUBERCULOSIS PROBLEM IN CANADA.*

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When we realize that in Canada 8,000 lives are yearly sacrificed to tuberculosis, and that besides at least 40,000 individuals yearly become infected by its bacillus, we are compelled to consider what effect this wholesale invalidation has upon the finances of the country. This means that 48,000 individuals are permanently invalidated by a preventable disease. A human life at the period of industrial usefulness is worth \$6,000, distributed as follows: To the Federal Government, \$1,000 (which is the universally accepted figure): to the Provincial Government, \$500; to the Municipal Government, \$500; to the community and family, \$4,000. The above calculations have been made from the *rationale* of productiveness, based upon the expectancy of life at the period of industrial usefulness, as follows: At twenty-five years, the average age at which tuberculosis is fatal, the expectancy of industrial usefulness is twenty years, the average earning capacity \$500 per year, five per cent. of which goes to the provincial and five per cent. to the municipal government, making the total of \$500 to each in the course of the

* Read at the Third Annual Meeting of Canadian Association for Prevention of Tuberculosis, Ottawa, April 16th, 1903.