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EDITORIAL.

DEATHS FROM TUBERCULOSIS.

A short time ago Dr. C. J. O. Hastings, Medical Health Officer for Toronto, addressed the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, on the importance of paying more attention to the deaths from consumption.

This is a subject that we have been insisting upon for many years. We have called attention to the number of lives lost, to the value of these lives, to the number ill, to the monetary loss from sickness, to the spread of the disease by infection, and to the means of preventing this spread.

People are slow to learn such lessons, and, therefore, they must be repeated again and again. If there were 50,000 cases of bubonic plague, with 12,000 deaths in Canada in one year, there would be the most unceasing efforts to control the disease. In the case of tuberculosis, the people stand idly by and complacently accept the situation as a dispensation of Providence, whereas it is really the result of ignorance, carelessness, and weakness.

Of the means of spreading the disease, sputum takes the first place. This may be dropped around and disseminated on particles of dust, or be conveyed to foods or drinks. Sputum may also be expelled into the air in the act of coughing. These droplets may be inhaled by persons close by.

Flies have been shown to spread the bacilli. This is now a settled fact in bacteriology. The organisms of disease, especially the bacilli of tuberculosis, have been found on the bodies of flies, and also in their fecal deposits. Flies have been observed to carry the bacilli from sputum to exposed milk.

Coming to the question of the influence of cow's milk in causing tuberculosis, it must be admitted that there is much diversity of opinion. The weight of opinion is on the side that bovine tuberculosis may be conveyed to the human subject through the milk. This is mainly true of children. It is not by any means a very frequent occurrence, however, and we must turn our thoughts again to the real cause of the spread of the disease as being from person to person. The act of coughing, the