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ECONOMICAL ASPECTS OF PUBLIC SANITATION* AND THE
PROBABLE ADVANTAGES OF PROVINCIAL BOARDS
OF HEALTH.

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For the present purpose I may define health as that condition which enables an individual to accomplish most readily and effectually the objects and ends of life. The value of a life depends on its capabilities and accomplishments. Public health is but a general term applying to the health of the masses of the people as distinguished from that of the individual. Good health with powers of action and endurance among the masses gives a basis for prosperity that no nation, especially a new one, can afford to do without. Impaired vitality from whatever cause is certain to limit the power and progress of a people. 'The fate of a nation will ultimately depend upon the health and strength of a population.'

Two factors are commonly used in estimating the value or power of a people or nation, namely: first, the number of the people, and second, the value of their property or estates.

In the first, the people are usually simply counted; men, women, and children, the mature and the infant, the strong and the weak, the healthy and the diseased, all share equally in the enumeration. Thus, numbers having no power in themselves, merely represent things nominally alike, but which may be infinitely various in their degrees of value; which variation is not commonly taken into consideration.

As partly illustrating this, I may refer to an article on the 'Unarmed Strength of England,' in the May number of the *Lancet*. It refers to the number of recruits examined and accepted for the army. According to the statistical year-book of Austria, the proportion of 'fit' to 'unfit,' or accepted to rejected, is as nearly as possible as *three to seven* in that country; while the British army medical report shows

* This part of this paper was prepared for reading before the Canadian Medical Association which met in Montreal last month.