

## The Prevalence of Venereal Diseases in Canada

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*A Presentation of Facts and Figures by Members of the Faculty of  
Toronto University and of the Staff of Toronto General Hospital*

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### GENERAL INTRODUCTION

BY

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A FEW years ago when Superintendent of the Toronto Hospital for the Insane, it became apparent to me that gradually the admissions contained more and more cases of general paresis. All of these patients were, of course, suffering from syphilis. A careful survey of the figures revealed the fact that twenty-five per cent of the male admissions were syphilitic, a startling proportion.

When I transferred to the General Hospital service it was soon apparent that venereal diseases were steadily on the increase in the community, and, in a small clinic conducted for the feeble minded, no less than seventy-nine paretics came under observation in about a year. Many of these cases had congenital syphilis—in other words were the victims of an inherited form of this malady.

The prevalence of this disease among children—very largely the offspring of recent arrivals in Canada, was significant.

So commonly was the general out-door department attended by people asking for treatment for syphilis that we were forced to develop a special clinic for venereal diseases, open for three days and one evening in the week.

What happened when this was established, made us look further, and it was thought advisable to make a careful examination of the blood of every public ward patient entering the hospital.

What has been discovered in the clinic for feeble minded, in the special clinic and in the general wards, is the basis for an argument before this Commission.

The facts and figures to be presented to you by the speakers who follow me, will prove conclusively that the time has come for the establishment of drastic legislation to control the evil.