

The cost of burying a baby is about 50 dollars. It cost the people of the Province of Ontario about 350,000 dollars to bury these dead babies. It would have cost much less than that to keep them alive, and half of them could easily have been kept alive. Dr. Wodehouse, the Medical Health Officer of Fort William, saved 42 babies for 194.98 dollars, including medicines for the poor, nurses' salary, and car tickets. This is less than 5 dollars each. But babies' funerals cost 50 dollars each. And then Fort William has the 42 babies. Ontario has them too.

A dead baby is a liability till its funeral is paid; but a living baby is an asset and liable to grow into a good Canadian.

WHAT IS A CANADIAN WORTH?

And what sum is a good Canadian worth to the country? What was Sir John MacDonald worth, or Alexander Mackenzie, or Laura Secord, or Lord Strathcona? And it is not only the dead babies. Such a death is merciful compared with the life of the poor victims of various ills that our ignorance and carelessness condemn our children to!

What sort of Canadians will live in Canada from 1932 to 1982? Those that are now cradled in their mothers' arms—if they are not clutched from that kind embrace by disease or by death?

SOCIAL INCOMPETENCE.

Our industries are improving, our commerce is enlarging, our wealth accumulates; but what of the art of living itself? Modern industrial methods have changed all the habits and the surroundings of by far the majority of our people. But, though this happened two generations ago, at least in Canada, we have never yet emancipated ourselves from the social ignorance and social incompetence which either cannot see these changes or will not do anything about them. Yet social action is the only possible action. Individual action cannot deal with such a situation. National action, Government action, collective action, municipal action, not individual action can save the baby.

PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL ACTION.

The province and the city must secure a clean water supply and a clean milk supply. One father and mother cannot establish a modern system of quick sanitary and satisfactory garbage disposal. The city must do that. One citizen cannot pay for paving the street with asphalt. The city can do that, and he can pay his share. One citizen cannot compel the careless or covetous landlord to abolish the abominable outside privy and avail himself of the cheap water-carriage lavatory that the excellent system of sewers, and water supply in Toronto, and most of the other cities renders available.

We have quoted Dr. MacMurchy's admirable report at some length because these questions intimately concern midwives and nurses in all countries. Of what avail the skill of doctors, midwives and nurses at the time of an infant's

birth if the air he breathes is foul, tainted, poisonous; if the conditions under which he lives (if he survives, probably stunted and debilitated) conduce to vice and alcoholism? It is not enough that we fulfil our professional obligations; we have also civic and communal duties, and to discharge them we need the lever of Parliamentary franchise in order to press for reforms never easy to attain, not because they are not necessary, but because the "careless and covetous" cling to their vested interests.

THE PROTECTION OF INFANT CHILDREN.

It is interesting to learn that during the past year the Ontario Government took steps to forbid expressly the separation of any infant from its mother before such infant is of the age of nine months at least.

It is hoped that the revision of the Act to regulate Maternity Boarding Houses and for the Protection of Infant Children, now proceeding in Ontario, may do something to lessen infant mortality. Certain advertisements now appearing in the newspapers should, says Dr. MacMurchy, be disallowed. To attract those in a desperate position by advertising that infants are received for adoption often means, it is greatly to be feared, that these same helpless infants are condemned to a slow, cruel death by starvation. Starved, because the wretched places often do not know how to keep a child alive, even if they want to, not to mention their ignorance of the well-known rules of hygiene now being observed all over the world.

THE ILLEGITIMATE CHILD.

One class of infants, we read, adds an awful burden to the infantile mortality. The child that has no father. Repudiated and disowned by the man who is responsible for its existence, it begins that existence under a handicap so overwhelming that it is next to unknown for such a child to obtain a footing in the community. Surely the fact that such a child is disowned should justify the community in going one step further and ordering that since that dishonourable fact is the only one known about the innocent child, the iniquity and desertion of the father should entitle the child to the protection of the State. To "rescue" the woman at the expense of the child, or with little thought or concern for the poor child, is a matter of doubtful morality.

Many of these children are strong and healthy, but their death-rate is almost twice as great as the death-rate of legitimate children. That death is often simply murder, and a slow and cruel murder, of a helpless victim. It is time we faced and thought out this matter of what to do about the illegitimate child.

How many illegitimate children are there in that ghastly death-roll of 1,727 in Toronto? We do not know. We have no information on that point in the Report of the Registrar General for 1909, nor any about the 8,768 infants who died in Ontario in 1909 under one year old.

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