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EDITORIAL.

"IT."

All over London, and perhaps in the Provinces, the walls of public buildings—for some weeks past—have borne an arresting placard to herald the arrival of "Baby Week" on July 1st, or, as we prefer to call it, the Festival of the Baby. The clever cartoon possesses a significance of great practical value, which it would abundantly repay the passer-by to stop and interpret. A baby wearing a top hat as his only article of clothing, looms large, seated on the top of the globe. He is looking *down* at a circle of diminutive men with an air of great condescension. Men who have never thought of "It" before, are now concentrating their thoughts and energies upon him. The author, the poet, the lecturer, the statesman, the philosopher, the reporter, the photographer are all looking *up*, and gazing admiringly at him. They are *mere* adults in the decline; he is the baby in the ascendant; the future citizen, full of potential power and importance.

If we have any criticism to make on this significant advertisement, it is that it depicts the child without the mother. The Baby Week Council, under whose auspices an annual "Baby Week" is to be held, is one of the most statesmanlike and finest organizations for good in the country. The honour of its inception belongs to our Allies the Americans, whose excellent example we have followed. Modern efforts, however, only mean history repeating itself after an interval of nearly three thousand years! It was the great Spartan lawgiver, Lycurgus, who lived in about the 9th century B.C. who first taught the community its duty and responsibility towards the mother and child; he

made laws for their protection, and also for the pre-natal care of the mother. It is claimed that this is the century of the child, certainly all that has been done in the past few years, and all that we feel sure is going to be done in the future, seems to warrant that declaration. But, lest we should become too "puffed up," let us chasten ourselves with the thought, that when Queen Victoria came to the throne, there was not a single Act on the statute book in the interests of the child! Children had no rights whatever; before she died she had set her signature to over one hundred. Further back still, early in the thirties, when human life was so cheap that many offences were punishable by death, even trivial offences, children were not exempt. There is a case on record in which a little girl of nine years of age was sentenced to death for "burglary." Her offence was that she had broken a window and abstracted a small box of paints. The inhuman sentence was, however, not carried out. That was the state of our civilization less than a hundred years ago! "The Cry of the Children" has at last been heard, and the mother and babe are now recognized as the basis of the nation. The main purpose of Baby Week is to arouse every citizen—man and woman—to a sense of their individual responsibility in this matter. The ideal aimed at is that there should be one unbroken chain in the care and development of the child, commencing with the pre-natal care of the mother, up to the time of leaving school. Much yet remains to be done. *100,000 babies die every year before they reach their first birthday.* More than that amount are still-born! It is a hideous blot on our escutcheon. The figures should be *Nil*. At present "It is more dangerous to be a baby in England than a soldier in France!!"

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