

before the end of their first year, and out of every hundred deaths at all ages occurring in this city, 53 are children under five years of age, and of these about 70 per cent. are under the age of twelve months. In 1910 more than 4,500 infants under one year of age, died in this city.

Comparing this terrible mortality with that due to intemperance, to tuberculosis, or to all the infectious diseases put together, the death roll of the latter appears small.

Are these facts not sufficiently startling, or have we grown callous, saying to ourselves, "they are only babies," or do we perhaps go further and with certain pseudo-scientists regard this high mortality as simply a case of the elimination of the unfit? History everywhere belies such a proposition, for many of the brightest names in story are those who have been delicate babies reared only by the arduous care of loving mothers in healthy surroundings. Sir Isaac Newton is said to have weighed only four pounds at birth and to have been kept alive during the early months of life with the greatest difficulty.

The national loss, however, does not end with the long line of white hearses which deposit their tiny contents in our cemeteries. The unsanitary household conditions and the improper feeding which lead to the high death rate, lead also to a marked impairment of vitality in those infants who escape death's sickle; an impairment manifested by an increased liability to disease, by an incapacity in youth to make the best of life's chances, and in after life by a great diminution of earning capacity. Those who aim at attaining a maximum of national vigor must begin their efforts by improving the conditions which surround the cradle.

Only recently has a philanthropic public, aroused by loud clarion notes from many leaders in our profession, become conscious of the duties and responsibilities which those who know, and those who have, owe to their more ignorant and poverty-stricken fellow-citizens. Even politicians, municipal, provincial, and federal, have awakened to the loss sustained by the country in this slaughter of the innocents. In the United States during the past three years a large and influential association has been formed with branches throughout every

State in the Union for the express purpose of studying the underlying causes and of bringing into action all measures which may help to prevent this unnecessary infantile mortality.

At the outset we must admit that the problem is a complicated one and has a close association with many other problems of great civic interest and importance, such as improvement in the sanitation of our towns and cities; the better housing of the laboring classes; the purity of our drinking water; the purity of our milk supply; the prevention of the spread of infectious diseases of all kinds, and the suppression as far as possible of immorality.

If we appeal to our civic statisticians for the causes which give rise to this heavy death toll, we shall be presented with an array of figures such as the following:

Gastro-intestinal diseases, 28 per cent.; marasmus and prematurity, 25.5 per cent.; acute respiratory diseases, 18.5 per cent.; congenital troubles, malformations, 5.8 per cent.; acute infectious diseases, 5.4 per cent.; convulsions, 3.4 per cent.; tuberculosis, 2 per cent.; syphilis, 1.2 per cent.; all others, 10.2 per cent.

Such a classification may be of value to the physician as indicating tendencies to disease, but to the general public who desire to help, it is of no service. We must search for the causes which lie deeper and of which disease in general is but the manifestation.

Holt, the eminent New York pediatricist, writes: "All who practise medicine among children and all who study the question of infantile mortality are struck with the marked difference in the death rate of the children of the poor and those of the rich. Clay estimates that in England among the higher classes the mortality is only 10%, in the middle classes 20%, among the laboring classes 30%. This difference is most striking in the case of acute intestinal disease. Halle states that of 170 cases investigated in Gratz during 1903-04, 161 developed among the poor, 9 among the well-to-do, and none among the rich. It is evident that in infancy money puts at the service of the infant the utmost resources of science, the best advice, the best food, and the best surroundings, and these are in many cases sufficient to ward off the Destroyer."