

well by the hon. member for Lanark and the hon. member for Parkdale. I now desire to draw to the attention of the house that Canada suffers dreadful and unnecessary losses yearly because we fail to take care of the mothers and the babies of this country.

During the years of the war our total casualties for the army, navy and air force amounted to 41,000. During the same period in Canada we lost 130,000 babies, or more than three times the number of our war casualties, due to stillbirth or diseases peculiar to the first year of life.

More staggering still is this figure. Since 1926 we have lost well over 350,000 babies during their first year of life, and nearly 21,000 mothers have died in childbirth alone. That would be the equivalent of a city with the combined population of Halifax, Windsor and Ottawa. Were we to see all these people whose lives were thus lost in one place, the number would be equal to the population of Halifax, plus Windsor, plus Ottawa. That is the extent of this loss of human life.

The Department of Health and Welfare has this to say, that our infant deaths, plus our stillbirth losses, will equal the loss of life from all other causes during the next forty-eight years in the entire population. That is, if all the deaths from all causes in the first forty-eight years for the entire population were put together they would not equal this dreadful and unnecessary loss of life in this one category up to one year of life. That indicates where we can make our greatest gain in population. It also indicates that we have not met the needs of our mothers and children.

I want to draw the attention of the house for a few moments to some figures compiled by the Health Study Bureau of Toronto, in which it points out the facts brought out in the Ebbs survey. Many members will be familiar with the survey conducted in Toronto by Doctor Ebbs and with its results. This simple experiment which cost only \$25 for a period of from four to five months gave to expectant mothers supplementary items of diet, simple things like milk, eggs, oranges, tomato juice, wheat germ and vitamin D. In this test group the results were striking indeed. The mothers on poor diets who did not receive this supplementary diet had a much higher percentage of loss of life to mother and child. For the same group the loss of life during the six months in the post-natal period is very much higher too. This and other experiments carried on in other parts of the world indicate that our health's greatest need is to pay more attention to nutrition, and in that field we must consider two aspects. We must see that families throughout the country have sufficient income to buy such simple commodities as milk,

[Mrs. Strum.]

cheese, eggs, butter, which should be plentiful on every table. The family income is the basis of purchasing. Then we must educate mothers as to the appropriate diet and the need for her own nutrition.

Another thing that came out in these surveys was that in every family where a check was made, in that household the practice was for the mother to feed the father of the family first, perhaps because he is the breadwinner and the family income depends upon him, and after the father's well-being is considered the children came next, the mother being the last consideration when the family meal was put on the table. This can be serious where there is a large family, and it points to the need of taking care of the mother, not only through family allowances, but through milk subsidies and by means of assistance in the way of income tax exemptions.

I wish to speak for a moment about something that is getting a great deal of attention these days. The minister mentioned it last night. I refer to the booklet put out by Lord Horder, "Rheumatism. A Plan for National Action". I was delighted to get hold of this book because it sheds the first ray of hope on an otherwise hopeless picture, and it gives an encouraging report on what can be done. For the benefit of hon. members who may not have had a chance to see it, I would indicate what a mass survey has revealed about the extent of this disease.

In the state of Massachusetts a house-to-house canvass was carried out, and they found that there were more cases of chronic rheumatism today than of heart disease, tuberculosis and cancer combined. That gives us an idea of how widespread this dreadful malady is. In Great Britain, where the London county council has done some valuable work, we find the extent to which young people suffer and to which students are afflicted with rheumatic diseases. In 1936, of the total of prolonged school absences, 26.7 per cent or more than one-quarter were due to rheumatic disease. This is by far the greatest cause of damage in young lives. The percentage due to tubercular disease was 6.8, and they point out that there are at least 200,000 child sufferers from rheumatism in the United Kingdom.

We should know that even in the present state of incomplete knowledge of this disease, this report tells us that many persons can be cured and helped. I quote from page 11:

Yet it must be insisted that, even in the present state of incomplete knowledge, there is available a range of efficacious treatments, sometimes, happily, obtaining a complete cure, and,