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Professional Cards

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R. M. Hamilton, Mgr. Fenelon Falls Branch

Infantile Mortality.

Some time ago Dr. Helen McMurchy was instructed to investigate and report upon Infantile Mortality. The report is now printed by the order of the C. A. of Ontario. It contains matter sufficient condemnatory of the capitalistic system and its results. It is curious, too, that the investigation has a number of recommendations which, when examined, clear the air. It denotes what was the intention of the initiation. It was for the purpose of ascertaining how far it was possible to apply Government control. It was for the purpose of giving the master class a greater opportunity for obtaining stronger and healthier slave labor; for does not the learned lady doctor say on page 3, paragraph 4:

"And one of the signs of that revolution is our altered estimate of human values, and especially of the value of childhood. Obvious as the discovery is, we are only now discovering that empires and states are built up of babies. Cities are dependent for their continuance on babies. Armies can be recruited only if and when we have cared for our babies."

So the real trouble is that the ill-nourishment of the working class children has a tendency to decrease the physical efficiency of our class. It lowers their standard; it causes a decrease in stature; it causes a decrease in stamina. Strong children become sturdy soldiers; and what are the military kept for but the preservation and protection of property. The capitalists who own the products of the working class, control the actions of the army. They, as a property-owning class, care much more for their property than for the protection of life. But if at any time the commodity, labor power, goes down below a certain necessary standard, that moment always brings anxiety to the owners of the working class. They are bent and determined to better what has been an inevitable growth from basic causes.

Infantile mortality results from no other reason than the fact that bad conditions, bad food, unhealthy quarters and surroundings exist. They exist because the working class are exploited and robbed by the possessors of the means of life. Were a condition existent where the producers owned their products, the bountifulness of nature would secure to all members of society a sufficient quantity of the necessities of life. It is the absolute lack of such a condition that produces the infant mortality so rampant to-day. It is not by tinkering with legislative enactments in the way of "Feeding of Children" or "State Maintenance," but by the control by Government of the whole means of production and distribution that anything can be done. The capitalist class

first make investigations, and then proceed to institute enactments to enable them to "force up" the standard of physique, and are trying to have the standard of height of recruits lowered, in order to fill up the ranks of the army. The factory system has been the cause of more misery and more deaths than all the diseases that can be enumerated. The industrial towns in all countries show the massacre of the children. In Ontario there was an increase in infant mortality from 128.22 per 1,000 in 1898, to 162.54 per 1,000 in 1906. These are from deaths of children under one year of age. In Toronto the death rate was 196 per thousand, or nearly 20 per cent. In Berlin Dr. Newman investigated 2,700 deaths, of which 1,792 occurred in one-room dwellings. In the U. S. A. the death rate of children was 161 per 1,000 in the cities, and 109 per 1,000 in the country districts. In England, among the aristocrats, the death rate under the first year was 10 per cent. In the middle 21 per cent. In the working class 32 per cent.

It is evident that where the mother can give any attention to her child, there is greater healthiness resulting. But the mothers cannot give that attention in large industrial centres, because THEY HAVE TO WORK. That, because they have to increase the family wage. It causes, too, a decrease in the men's wages. Women's competition with men, boys and girls competing with women, causes a fall in the real wage of the working class members. That, then, necessitates the lessening of the amount of the good things essential to a healthy life. It produces poverty. Poverty means starvation. Starvation means death. And it is starvation itself, clothed many times in medical phrases, that causes infantile mortality.

The capitalist class will see to it that if these deaths among the children have a tendency to lower their profits they'll attend to it. They'll feed the kids; they'll feed the women; they'll feed everything and anything so long as it is consistent with their interests. So be not deluded with the specious effort of the capitalist agents. It is not the reform of conditions that concerns the Socialist. That is the work of the capitalists who see the necessity of acting to side track any possible depletion of their profits. So they cause an investigation to be held. We peruse it, and wonder how long the workers are going to be fooled by the capitalists.—M. Baritz, in Western Clarion

The brains that the capitalists employ in order to earn their big incomes are, mostly in the heads of their employees.

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Fenelon Falls Branch W. A. Bishop, Manager