

# Childhood

*By*

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# CHILDHOOD

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What sweet emotions the recollections of childhood inspire, and how priceless its treasured memories in our advancing and declining years!

Laughing eyes and curly hair, little brown hands and bare feet, innocent and care-free, trusting and loving, tender and pure, what an elevating and satisfying influence these little gods have upon our maturer years!

Childhood! What a holy theme! Flowers they are, with souls in them, and if on this earth man has a sacred charge, a holy obligation, it is to these tender buds and blossoms of humanity.

Yet how many of them are prematurely plucked, fade and die and are trampled in the mire. Many millions of them have been snatched from the cradle and stolen from their play to be fed to the forces that turn a working-man's blood into a capitalist's gold, and many millions of others have been crushed and perverted into filth for the slums and food for the pottersfield.

Childhood is at the parting of the ways which lead to success or failure, honor or disgrace, life or death. Society is, or ought to be, profoundly concerned in the nature of the environment that is to mold the character and determine the destiny of its children, and any remissness in such duty is rebuked by the most painful penalties, and these are inflicted with increasing severity upon the people of the United States.

Childhood is the most precious charge of the family and the community, but our capitalist civilization sacrifices it ruthlessly to gratify its brutal lust for pelf and power, and the march of its conquest is stained with the blood of infants and paved with the puny bones of little children.

What shall the harvest be?

The millions of children crushed and slain in the conquest of capitalism have not died in vain. From their little martyr graves all over this fair land their avenging images are springing up, as it were, against the system that murdered them and pronouncing upon it, in the name of God and humanity, the condemnation of death.



