

stop," said Mr. Waugh, "I am not selecting the worst by any means. What think you of an own parent laying a baby close to the fire to get rid of it through thirst; immersing a dying boy in a tub of cold water to 'get his dying done'; making another dying boy get out of bed to help wash, and knocking him down because he washed so little; breaking a girl's arm with a broomstick, then setting her to scrub the floor with the broken arm folded to her breast, and whipping her for being so long about it; savagely beating a girl on her breasts, felling her with the fist, kicking her in the groin, on the abdomen, and the face, with strong working boots; lashing a poor little three-year-old on the face and neck with a drayman's whip; thrusting the knob of a poker into the throat of another, and holding it there to stop his screams of pain. A little one of four years had vexed its mother; she held him down on the bed, tied a cloth round his mouth, put a poker into the fire, and, when it was red hot, lifted up his little petticoats, and laid the poker on the bottom of his back. One little baby cried from teething, and was strapped hanging by the heels from the strapper's hand. In one case, the prongs of a wire toasting-fork had been hammered out, the stem untwisted a little up, making a sort of birch of frayed wire. Alas, there is no need to make up sensational stories for you to write about, but I can take any of your readers into a chamber of horrors by merely recounting bare unvarnished facts of which men and women have been convicted by magistrates and judges."

Mr. Waugh has only to talk of these cruelties to arouse his mighty indignant pain. His clear eye flashes ominously, and I could see the very memory was almost more than he could endure quietly. Yet to look at him, he does not appear by any means terrible. He has a singularly kind expression, and is a poet, a philanthropist, an editor, and a statesman. He is a born organiser, a splendid public speaker, genial, hearty, humorous, and full of courage. He has the art of putting things, and few can resist his special pleading; he even surpasses Sir Charles Russell or Sir Richard Webster. His chief work in life has been the making of the Society, which he has built up brick by brick, inspiring and leading others to help him. He began his public work as an independent minister, first at Newbury (Berks), and then at Greenwich, where he founded, with the help of John MacGregor (Rob Roy), a Waste Paper and Blacking Brigade, a Day Institute for boys who loafed about and got into mischief and crime. He made arrangements with Captain Reed and Mr. Huntley, owners of deep-sea fishing smacks, whose head quarters were then on the Thames, to place boys, charged before magistrates with petty crimes, to sea, thus saving them from

the contamination of gaol. It was, in consequence of the esteem he gained amongst the masses by his work, that he was induced by the Trades Unions of the Borough, to stand for the London School Board to which he was elected. He gained here the knowledge, work, habit, and administrative experience which he consecrated later to the needs of England's neglected children. His literary works are also all for children. His first book was a plea for the abolition of juvenile imprisonment, and his "Sunday Evenings with my Children," is a veritable family treasure. He edits the *Sunday Magazine*, since the death of its founder, Dr. Guthrie.

I asked Mr. Waugh to give a few particulars respecting the Society.

"The Society was founded in 1884, and since then we have dealt with 31,541 cases, of which 25,583 were proved to be true. These cases affected the welfare of 72,022 children. We prosecuted 4,078 cases, of which 3,832 were convicted, with a total of 811 years' imprisonment, and £1,444 of fines. Let anyone imagine himself walking through the streets of a town of 140,000 inhabitants, all its sights and sounds, its children's tears and moans, and let him, in fancy, listen till they are all changed into prattle and laughter, and he will have some dim sense of the nature and of the sum of the work these figures represent."

"What were the chief cruelties?"

"General ill-treatment, assaults, neglect, starvation, abandonment, begging, exposure, cruel immorality, and other wrongs. At least 12,000 cases escape us yearly, for lack of agency. In half the country the children have no Children's Man. That is the name given by a child to one of the Society's Inspectors. In the parts of the country where we have Inspectors, and only in those, are cruelties to children discovered.

Perhaps one of the saddest facts is that most of the victims have been young, many were mere babies, made habitually to feel the oppression of hatred, the dizziness of famine, with blows, kicks, and floggings with the oppressor's straps, pokers, ropes, boots, chairs, kettles, and frying pans, etc. What do you think of putting mustard oil into wounds, thrusting a red-hot poker through the closed lips into the mouth, putting bare little thighs on the top of hot ironing stoves, immersing a child for half-an-hour, naked, in a freezing tank out of doors, flinging a baby across a room at a wall; deliberately taking off splints newly put on a broken leg, and making a child go about in this condition; and hundreds of similar cases. These are cases that have been dealt with, but for every one punished three have been neglected for want of greater support from manly and womanly souls. Our aim, however, is not to prosecute these

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