

she considered private to a Congress of which she knew nothing. Was this work, which so closely affected the national well-being, a private preserve for those engaged in it?

One Secretary, however, advised the speaker to buy the book of criminal statistics, which gave comparative statistics for fifteen years, 1893—1907. In those fifteen years there were 2,302 cases of defilement of girls under 13, and 2,442 of girls under 16, reported to the police.

Of these, 1,660 were tried for assault on girls under 13, 1,765 for girls under 16. In 1907, the last year of which details were given, there were reported to the police 149 cases concerning girls under 13 and 178 of girls under 16. Two hundred and thirty-two cases were taken into a court of law. Of these, 5 were thrown out, 82 acquitted, 145 convicted. The punishment of those convicted was penal servitude in 23 cases, of from 4 to 20 years, the usual term being from 5 to 7 years. One man was flogged. The remainder were imprisoned for terms varying from 14 days to 2 years.

A curious fact in this grim document was the distinction between girls under and over 13. All the sentences of penal servitude were given in the former cases. Apparently a girl over 13 and under 16 might be outraged and the sentence be anything from 14 days to 2 years.

In addition, during the years 1893—1907, there were 3,407 cases of rape, and 12,280 of indecent assault upon women over 16, reported to the police, making an annual average for the fifteen years of 1,362 lives wrecked. Those were statistics from the Blue Book.

In a pamphlet on "Juvenile Immorality," the Rev. T. G. Cree, Hon. Secretary of the Church Penitentiary Association, stated that 33 penitentiaries and refugees returned the number of cases of children under 16 dealt with by them as 347 and 745 respectively for a period of three years. Of these, 8 cases were between 6 and 8 years old, 18 between 9 and 11, 11 were 12 years old, 14 were 13 years old, and 301 were 15 years old.

In one town the Chief Constable reported that there was hardly a child over 14 who had not fallen; in another, that children under 14 absolutely solicited in considerable numbers.

On inquiry why prosecutions in cases of assault were so few, the reply was received from all quarters that the culprit was so often the father, step-father, or brother of the victim. In a covering letter, Mr. Cree further stated that fully 1,000 more cases were known, but parents would not allow the rescue workers to deal with them. He stated that convictions were very few, as relations were so often the culprits, also when there was danger of an infant being born the child was restrained by threats from saying anything until her condition was manifest. Again, young children were subjected to cross-examination by lawyers, and in one case a child of 10 was subjected to cross-examination for a full hour, but her evidence could not be shaken, and the case was sent to the Assizes.

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children reported 838 cases last year; 146 were prosecuted and 46 dismissed. In 20 col-

lected cases, 18 were under 16, one child being 3 and another 5 years of age. In 2 cases the fathers were the culprits, and in 1 the brother was suspected.

Two of these cases were very bad, one of a girl who went to a gardener's for fruit midday Sunday, not returning till 6.30 p.m., when she went out again, it was supposed to chapel. No more was seen of her till her body was taken from the river on Tuesday morning, when the child was found to have been violated. At the inquest the gardener was severely censured, and an open verdict returned.

The other case was one of a child of 10 outraged while her mother was lying dead. The father was supposed to be the delinquent, but as proof could not be brought forward, he was let off.

Out of 11 cases 3 were discharged because there was, the Judge said, "no corroboration," and one was "not proven"; one was let off with a fine; the rest received sentences of from six months to ten years.

Of the two cases over 16, one was a girl mentally deficient, and the culprits, several youths, one of whom confessed to the wrongdoing, were all discharged by the magistrates.

The other was the case of a girl of 17, who was seized from behind, a drugged handkerchief stuffed into her mouth, and she was then dragged into the bracken on a Surrey heath and violated. When she recognised her assailant he tried to poison her, happily without much success. Chiefly for the attempt to poison, he was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude.

If this number of cases were known, what about those unknown? If 327 cases were reported in a year, how many hundreds were unreported? Governments came and went, and yet this evil went on unchecked. Did our lawmakers think it worse to kill the body than to outrage its honour and sully its soul?

Again, it was useless, as some were inclined to do, to blame foreigners. Only one offender in all the reported cases for 1907 was an alien.

These men who defiled women and violated their own offspring were British. They had the power of helping to make the laws which women must obey, and of making them as easy as possible for the indulgence of their own lusts. Why must proceedings be taken within six months; why must a child, whose whole moral and physical nature had been so recently outraged, be subjected to cross-examination by a lawyer on so delicate a matter; and was it likely in such cases that corroborative evidence could be obtained? Yet we were told that men could well be trusted to look after women's interests and welfare. If such a state of things were the result of their care, the sooner women took matters in hand the better it would be for the nation's moral and physical condition.

DISCUSSION.

SISTER VICTORIA VON HUENE, R.N., said up to the present the general basis of a German woman's education was absolute ignorance of the elementary facts of life, this being held to be innocence. Further, the religious associations forbade their nurses most stringently to be present at certain

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