

The dormitories, containing four or five beds, looked extremely comfortable; pretty quilts in tone with the green linoleum of the floor covered them. I was particularly struck with the pictures on the walls. They were evidently carefully chosen, not only for decorative, but for educative purposes. Good pictures in good frames.

"Sir Galahad" was one, with his own words inscribed below: "My strength is the strength of ten, because my heart is pure." Another was: "The Gleaners"; another, "The Miraculous Draught of Fishes, &c." The Nursery would have satisfied the heart of the most loving mother. A real cosy, comfortable Nursery, the walls covered with the most enchanting nursery-rhyme paper! Warm red and brown tiles are used for the flooring and walls of the ground floor rooms. There are two nice gardens, one for boys and another for girls. Nothing has been forgotten in this Home for unfortunate children, or rather, *fortunate* children!

The dirty clothes of the children are treated in a Disinfectant with formaline. There is also a laundry attached to the Home.

I was told that the Watch Committee receives a grant from Government as additional support of the Home.

I saw only two inmates; most of them were in the Children's Court on that day, answering for their youthful delinquencies. Dr. Auden had previously taken me to watch the proceedings. The doctor is an authority on the question of juvenile delinquents and how to deal with them; he has studied it in America and Canada, as well as in this country, and he is of the opinion that we should have—as in Canada—Children's Courts built for the purpose.

During the very brief time at my disposal, I watched with interest the trial of the juveniles before a Bench of three elderly Magistrates, who appeared to me—I hope I don't misjudge them—to have so little real understanding of, and sympathy with Child nature. I could not help wishing that women could have been in their places. Female Magistrates for Children's Courts, why not? Or else men like Dr. Auden with an understanding heart. The Remand Home receives all children before the trial, and many of them afterwards, until it is decided how they shall be dealt with, so it must be of the greatest value to the local authorities, as well as to the children themselves.

## 2. THE CENTRAL JUVENILE EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE.

Birmingham enjoys, I believe, the distinction of being the only town in the Kingdom where such a useful Institution exists. The Central Exchange has five Branches; all are actively fulfilling their purpose, and are of great service alike to parents, children and teachers. By this means there need be no period of loitering and loafing between leaving school and finding suitable

employment. The teachers, who have the opportunity of watching the children's capabilities for some years, as well as the trend of their minds, are able to advise them what work to take up. Mr. F. W. Butler, Head Teacher in one of the Council Schools, expresses his appreciation of the Exchange in the following terms:—

"I make a point of advising all the children who leave this school on reaching the exemption age, to obtain their situations through the Juvenile Employment Exchange. In a large majority of cases this advice is followed, and the results have been such as to afford me the liveliest satisfaction. The officers of the Exchange have acquired a very full knowledge of the conditions relating to girl and boy labour in the city, and are able, therefore, to give the children thoroughly sound advice in regard to choice of employment; they spare no pains in finding for the child a job suited to its capacity; and they are able to place at the disposal of the children that variety in the selection of employment which can only be obtained by an organisation of the nature of the Central Exchange."

I have before me the latest Annual Report of the Central Care Committee, in which many interesting details are given of this Juvenile Employment Bureau. That employers find it useful is proved by the fact that 9,804 applications from them for boys and girls have been made! A large number of Organisations of children and young people gladly co-operate with the work of the Exchange, such as "Sunday Schools, Bands of Hope, Boy Scouts, Church Lads' Brigade, Young Women's Christian Association, Church of England Men's Society, White Ribbon Guild, Union of Girls' Clubs and Classes," &c., &c.

I learn with interest that:—

"In all placings, especially of children in their first job, much attention has been given to the 'tone' of the workshop or factory—a most important matter, seeing that when the tone is not good, the boys and girls must either be unfavourably influenced or become unsettled. Indeed, so vital is good tone believed to be in the susceptible period of adolescence, that in many cases it is regarded as more important than wages, future prospects, or any other consideration."

I also learn that during the year, 6,457 boys and girls from 14-17 years of age, have found situations through this admirable agency and its branches.

If this excellent precedent were followed by every large town in the Kingdom, as it ought to be, it is conceivable that the problem of unemployment, and more especially unemployability, would be solved in the course of a generation.

Incidentally, we learned much by holding our Congress in the busy industrial city of Birmingham.

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