

CHAPTER IV

MORAL EDUCATION AND LEGAL

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

No great wrong has ever arisen more clearly to the social consciousness of a generation than has that of commercialized vice in the consciousness of ours, and that we are so slow to act is simply another evidence that human nature has a curious power of callous indifference towards evils which have been so entrenched that they seem part of that which have always been. Educators of course share this attitude; at moments they seem to intensify it, although at last an educational movement in the direction of sex hygiene is beginning in the schools and colleges. Primary schools strive to satisfy the child's first questionings regarding the beginnings of human life and approach the subject through simple biological instruction which at least places this knowledge on a par with other natural facts. Such teaching is an enormous advance [end page 97] for the children whose curiosity would otherwise have been satisfied from poisonous sources and who would have learned of simple physiological matters from such secret undercurrents of corrupt knowledge as to have forever perverted their minds. Yet this first direct step towards an adequate educational approach to this subject has been surprisingly difficult owing to the self-consciousness of grown-up people; for while the children receive the teaching quite simply, their parents often take alarm. Doubtless cooperation with parents will be necessary before the subject can fall into its proper place in the schools. In Chicago, the largest women's club in the city has established normal courses in sex hygiene attended both by teachers and mothers, the National and State Federations of Women's Clubs are gradually preparing thousands of women throughout America for fuller cooperation with the schools

in this difficult matter. In this, as in so many other educational movements, Germany has led the way. Two publications are issued monthly in Berlin, which promote not only more effective legislation but more adequate instruction in the schools on this [end page 98] basic subject. These journals are supported by men and women anxious for light for the sake of their children. Some of them were first stirred to action by Wedekind's powerful drama "The Awakening of Spring," which, with Teutonic grimness, thrusts over the footlights the lesson that death and degradation may be the fate of a group of gifted school-children, because of the cowardly reticence of their parents.

A year ago the Bishop of London gathered together a number of influential people and laid before them his convictions that the root of the social evil lay in so-called "parental modesty," and that in the quickening of the parental conscience lay the hope for the "lifting up of England's moral tone which has for so long been the despair of England's foremost men."

In America the eighth year-book of the National Society for the Scientific Study of Education treats, of this important subject with great ability, massing the agencies and methods in impressive array. Many other educational journals and organized societies, could be cited as expressing a new conscience in regard to this world-old evil. The expert educational opinion [end page 99] which they represent is practically agreed that for older children the instruction should not be confined to biology and hygiene, but may come quite naturally in history and literature, which record and portray the havoc wrought by the sexual instinct when uncontrolled, and also show that, when directed and spiritualized, it has become an inspiration to the loftiest devotions and sacrifices. The youth thus taught sees this primal instinct not only as an essential to the continuance of the race, but also, when it is transmuted to the highest ends, as a fundamental factor in social progress. The entire subject is broadened out in his mind as he learns that his own struggle is a common experience. He is able to make his own interpretations and to combat the crude inferences of his patronizing

companions. After all, no young person will be able to control his impulses and to save himself from the grosser temptations, unless he has been put under the sway of nobler influences. Perhaps we have yet to learn that the inhibitions of character as well as its reinforcements come most readily through idealistic motives.

Certainly all the great religions of the world [end page 100] have recognized youth's need of spiritual help during the trying years of adolescence. The ceremonies of the earliest religions deal with this instinct almost to the exclusion of others, and all later religions attempt to provide the youth with shadowy weapons for the struggle which lies ahead of him, for the wise men in every age have known that only the power of the spirit can overcome the lusts of the flesh. In spite of this educational advance, courses of study in many public and private schools are still prepared exactly as if educators had never known that at fifteen or sixteen years of age, the will power being still weak, the bodily desires are keen and insistent. The head master of Eton, Mr. Lyttleton, who has given much thought to this gap in the education of youth says, "The certain result of leaving an enormous majority of boys unguided and uninstructed in a matter where their strongest passions are concerned, is that they grow up to judge of all questions connected with it, from a purely selfish point of view." He contends that this selfishness is due to the fact that any single suggestion or hint which boys receive on the subject comes from other boys or young [end page 101] men who are under the same potent influences of ignorance, curiosity and the claims of self. No wholesome counter-balance of knowledge is given, no attempt is made to invest the subject with dignity or to place it in relation to the welfare of others and to universal law. Mr. Lyttleton contends that this alone can explain the peculiarly brutal attitude towards "outcast" women which is a sustained cruelty to be discerned in no other relation of English life. To quote him again: "But when the victims of man's cruelty are not birds or beasts but our own countrywomen, doomed by the hundred thousand to a life of unutterable shame and hopeless misery, then and then only the general average tone of young men becomes hard and brutally callous or frivolous with a kind of coarse frivolity not exhibited in relation to any other form of human suffering." At the present moment thousands

of young people in our great cities possess no other knowledge of this grave social evil which may at any moment become a dangerous personal menace, save what is imparted to them in this brutal flippant spirit. It has been said that the child growing up in the midst of civilization [end page 102] receives from its parents and teachers something of the accumulated experience of the world on all other subjects save upon that of sex. On this one subject alone each generation learns little from its predecessors.

An educator has lately pointed out that it is an old lure of vice to pretend that it alone deals with manliness and reality, and he complains that it is always difficult to convince youth that the higher planes of life contain anything but chilly sentiments. He contends that young people are therefore prone to receive moralizing and admonitions with polite attention, but when it comes to action, they carefully observe the life about them in order to conduct themselves in such wise as to be part of the really desirable world inhabited by men of affairs. Owing to this attitude, many young people living in our cities at the present moment have failed to apprehend the admonitions of religion and have never responded to its inner control. It is as if the impact of the world had stunned their spiritual natures, and as if this had occurred at the very time that a most dangerous experiment is being tried. The public gaieties formerly allowed in [end page 103] Catholic countries where young people were restrained by the confessional, are now permitted in cities where this restraint is altogether unknown to thousands of young people, and only faintly and traditionally operative upon thousands of others. The puritanical history of American cities assumes that these gaieties are forbidden, and that the streets are sober and decorous for conscientious young men and women who need no external protection. This ungrounded assumption, united to the fact that no adult has the confidence of these young people, who are constantly subjected to a multitude of imaginative impressions, is almost certain to result disastrously.

The social relationships in a modern city are so hastily made and often so superficial, that the old human restraints of public opinion, long sustained in smaller communities, have also broken down. Thousands of young men and women in every great city have received none of the lessons in self-control which even savage tribes imparted to their children when they taught them to master their appetites as well as their emotions. These young people are perhaps further from all com- [end page 104] munity restraint and genuine social control than the youth of the community have ever been in the long history of civilization. Certainly only the modern city has offered at one and the same time every possible stimulation for the lower nature and every opportunity for secret vice. Educators apparently forget that this unrestrained stimulation of young people, so characteristic of our cities, although developing very rapidly, is of recent origin, and that we have not yet seen the outcome. The present education of the average young man has given him only the most unreal protection against the temptations of the city. Schoolboys are subjected to many lures from without just at the moment when they are filled with an inner tumult which utterly bewilders them and concerning which no one has instructed them save in terms of empty precept and unintelligible warning.

We are authoritatively told that the physical difficulties are enormously increased by uncontrolled or perverted imaginations, and all sound advice to young men in regard to this subject emphasizes a clean mind, exhorts an imagination kept free from sensuality and insists upon days [end page 105] filled with wholesome athletic interests. We allow this regime to be exactly reversed for thousands of young people living in the most crowded and most unwholesome parts of the city. Not only does the stage in its advertisements exhibit all the allurements of sex to such an extent that a play without a "love interest" is considered foredoomed to failure, but the novels which form the sole reading of thousands of young men and girls deal only with the course of true or simulated love, resulting in a rose-colored marriage, or in variegated misfortunes.

Often the only recreation possible for young men and young women together is dancing, in which it is always easy to transgress the proprieties. In many public dance halls, however, improprieties are deliberately fostered. The waltzes and two-steps are purposely slow, the couples leaning heavily on each other barely move across the floor, all the jollity and bracing exercise of the peasant dance is eliminated, as is all the careful decorum of the formal dance. The efforts to obtain pleasure or to feed the imagination are thus converged upon the senses which it is already difficult for young people to under- [end page 106] stand and to control. It is therefore not remarkable that in certain parts of the city groups of idle young men are found whose evil imaginations have actually inhibited their power for normal living. On the streets or in the pool-rooms where they congregate their conversation, their tales of adventure, their remarks upon women who pass by, all reveal that they have been caught in the toils of an instinct so powerful and primal that when left without direction it can easily overwhelm its possessor and swamp his faculties. These young men, who do no regular work, who expect to be supported by their mothers and sisters and to get money for the shows and theatres by any sort of disreputable undertaking, are in excellent training for the life of the procurer, and it is from such groups that they are recruited. There is almost a system of apprenticeship, for boys when very small act as "look-outs" and are later utilized to make acquaintances with girls in order to introduce them to professionals. From this they gradually learn the method of procuring girls and at last do an independent business. If one boy is successful in such a life, throughout his acquaintance [end page 107] runs the rumor that a girl is an asset that will bring a larger return than can possibly be earned in hard-working ways. Could the imaginations of these young men have been controlled and cultivated, could the desire for adventure have been directed into wholesome channels, could these idle boys have been taught that, so far from being manly they were losing all virility, could higher interests have been aroused and standards given them in relation to this one aspect of life, the entire situation of commercialized vice would be a different thing.

The girls with a desire for adventure seem confined to this one dubious outlet even more than the boys, although there are only one-eighth as many delinquent girls as boys brought into the juvenile court in Chicago, the charge against the girls in almost every instance involves a loss of chastity. One of them who was vainly endeavoring to formulate the causes of her downfall, concentrated them all in the single statement that she wanted the other girls to know that she too was a "good Indian." Such a girl, while she is not an actual member of a gang of boys, is often attached to one by so many loyalties and [end page 108] friendships that she will seldom testify against a member, even when she has been injured by him. She also depends upon the gang when she requires bail in the police court or the protection that comes from political influence, and she is often very proud of her quasi-membership. The little girls brought into the juvenile court are usually daughters of those poorest immigrant families living in the worst type of city tenements, who are frequently forced to take boarders in order to pay the rent. A surprising number of little girls have first become involved in wrong-doing through the men of their own households. A recent-inquiry among 130 girls living in a sordid red light district disclosed the fact that a majority of them had thus been victimized and the wrong had come to them so early that they had been despoiled at an average age of eight years. Looking upon the forlorn little creatures, who are often brought into the Chicago juvenile court to testify against their own relatives, one is seized with that curious compunction Goethe expressed in the now hackneyed line from "Mignon:"

"Was hat Man dir, du armes Kind, gethan?" [end page 109]

One is also inclined to reproach educators for neglecting to give children instruction in play when one sees the unregulated amusement parks which are apparently so dangerous to little girls twelve or fourteen years old. Because they are childishly eager for amusement and totally unable to pay for a ride on the scenic railway or for a ticket to an entertainment, these disappointed children easily accept many favors from the young men who are standing near the entrances for the express purpose of ruining them. The hideous reward which is demanded from them later in the evening, after they have enjoyed the many "treats" which the amusement park offers, apparently seems of little moment.

Their childish minds are filled with the memory of the lurid pleasures to the oblivion of the later experience, and they eagerly tell their companions of this possibility "of getting in to all the shows." These poor little girls pass unnoticed amidst a crowd of honest people seeking recreation after a long day's work, groups of older girls walking and talking gaily with young men of their acquaintance, and happy children holding their parents' hands. This cruel exploitation of the childish [end page 110] eagerness for pleasure is, of course, possible only among a certain type of forlorn city children who are totally without standards and into whose colorless lives a visit to the amusement park brings the acme of delirious excitement. It is possible that these children are the inevitable product of city life; in Paris, little girls at local fêtes wishing to ride on the hobby horse frequently buy the privilege at a fearful price from the man directing the machinery, and a physician connected with the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children writes: " It is horribly pathetic to learn how far a nickel or a quarter will go towards purchasing the virtue of these children."

The home environment of such children has been similar to that of many others who come to grief through the five - cent theatres. These eager little people, to whom life has offered few pleasures, crowd around the door hoping to be taken in by some kind soul and, when they have been disappointed over and over again and the last performance is about to begin, a little girl may be induced unthinkingly to barter her chastity for an entrance fee. [end page 111]

Many children are also found who have been decoyed into their first wrong-doing through the temptation of the saloon, in spite of the fact that one of the earliest regulations in American cities for the protection of children was the prohibition of the sale of liquor to minors. That children may be easily demoralized by the influence of a disorderly saloon was demonstrated recently in Chicago; one of these saloons was so situated that the pupils of a public school were obliged to pass it and from the windows of the schoolhouse itself could see much of what was passing within the place. An effort was made by the Juvenile Protective Association to have it closed by the chief of police, but although he did so, it was

opened again the following day. The Association then took up the matter with the mayor, who refused to interfere, insisting that the objectionable features had been eliminated. Through months of effort, during which time the practices of the place remained quite unchanged, one group after another of public-spirited citizens endeavored to suppress what had become a public scandal, only to find that the place was protected by brewery interests [end page 112] which were more powerful, both financially and politically, than themselves. At last, after a peculiarly flagrant case involving a little girl, the mothers of the neighborhood arranged a mass meeting in the schoolhouse itself, inviting local officials to be present. The mothers then produced a mass of testimony which demonstrated that dozens and hundreds of children had been directly or indirectly affected by the place whose removal they demanded. A meeting so full of genuine anxiety and righteous indignation could not well be disregarded, and the compulsory education department was at last able to obtain a revocation of the license. The many people who had so long tried to do away with this avowedly disreputable saloon received a fresh impression of the menace to children who became sophisticated by daily familiarity with vice. Yet many mothers, hard pressed by poverty, are obliged to rent houses next to vicious neighborhoods and their children very early become familiar with all the outer aspects of vice. Among them are the children of widows who make friends with their dubious neighbors during the long days while their mothers [end page 113] are at work. I recall two sisters in one family whose mother had moved her household to the borders of a Chicago segregated district, apparently without knowing the character of the neighborhood. The little sisters, twelve and eight years old, accepted many invitations from a kind neighbor to come into her house to see her pretty things. The older girl was delighted to be "made up" with powder and paint and to try on long dresses, while the little one who sang very prettily was taught some new songs, happily without understanding their import. The tired mother knew nothing of what the children did during her absence, until an honest neighbor who had seen the little girls going in and out of the district, interfered on their behalf. The frightened mother moved back to her old neighborhood which she had left in search of cheaper rent, her pious soul stirred to its depths that the children for whom she patiently worked day by day had so narrowly escaped destruction.

Who cannot recall at least one of these desperate mothers, overworked and harried through a long day, prolonged by the family washing and cooking into the evening, followed by a night of [end page 114] foreboding and misgiving because the very children for whom her life is sacrificed are slowly slipping away from her control and affection? Such a spectacle forces one into an agreement with Wells, that it is a "monstrous absurdity" that women who are "discharging their supreme social function, that of rearing children, should do it in their spare time, as it were, while they 'earn their living' by contributing some half-mechanical element to some trivial industrial product." Nevertheless, such a woman whose wages are fixed on the basis of individual subsistence, who is quite unable to earn a family wage, is still held by a legal obligation to support her children with the desperate penalty of forfeiture if she fail.

I can recall a very intelligent woman who long brought her children to the Hull House day nursery with this result at the end of ten years of devotion: the little girl is almost totally deaf owing to neglect following a case of measles, because her mother could not stop work in order to care for her; the youngest boy has lost a leg flipping cars; the oldest boy has twice been arrested for petty larceny; the twin, boys, in [end page 115] spite of prolonged sojourns in the parental school, have been such habitual truants that their natural intelligence has secured little aid from education. Of the five children three are now in semi-penal institutions, supported by the state. It would not therefore have been so uneconomical to have boarded them with their own mother, requiring a standard of nutrition and school attendance at least up to that national standard of nurture which the more advanced European governments are establishing.

The recent Illinois law, providing that the children of widows may be supported by public funds paid to the mother upon order of the juvenile court, will eventually restore a mother's care to these poor children; but in the meantime, even the poor mother who is receiving such aid, in her forced search for cheap rent may be continually led nearer to the

notoriously evil districts. Many appeals made to landlords of disreputable houses in Chicago on behalf of the children living adjacent to such property have never secured a favorable response. It is apparently difficult for the average property owner to resist the high rents which houses in certain districts of the [end page 116] city can command if rented for purposes of vice. I recall two small frame houses identical in type and value standing side by side. One which belonged to a citizen without scruples was rented for \$30.00 a month, the other belonging to a conscientious man was rented for \$9.00 a month. The supposedly respectable landlords defend themselves behind the old sophistry: "If I did not rent my house for such a purpose, someone else would," and the more hardened ones say that "It is all in the line of business." Both of them are enormously helped by the secrecy surrounding the ownership of such houses, although it is hoped that the laws requiring the name of the owner and the agent of every multiple house to be posted in the public hallway will at length break through this protection, and the discovered landlords will then be obliged to pay the fine to which the law specifically states they have made themselves liable. In the meantime, women forced to find cheap rents are subjected to one more handicap in addition to the many others poverty places upon them. Such experiences may explain the fact that English figures show a very large proportion of widows and deserted [end page 117] women among the prostitutes in those large towns which maintain segregated districts.

The deprivation of a mother's care is most frequently experienced by the children of the poorest colored families who are often forced to live in disreputable neighborhoods because they literally cannot rent houses anywhere else. Both because rents are always high for colored people and because the colored mothers are obliged to support their children, seven times as many of them, in proportion to their entire number, as of the white mothers, the actual number of colored children neglected in the midst of temptation is abnormally large. So closely is child life founded upon the imitation of what it sees that the child who knows all evil is almost sure in the end to share it. Colored children seldom roam far from their own neighborhoods: in the public playgrounds, which are theoretically open to them, they are made so

uncomfortable by the slights of other children that they learn to stay away, and, shut out from legitimate recreation, are all the more tempted by the careless, luxurious life of a vicious neighborhood. In addition to the colored girls who have thus from [end page 118] childhood grown familiar with the outer aspects of vice, are others who are sent into the district in the capacity of domestic servants by unscrupulous employment agencies who would not venture to thus treat a white girl. The community forces the very people who have confessedly the shortest history of social restraint, into a dangerous proximity with the vice districts of the city. This results, as might easily be predicted, in a very large number of colored girls entering a disreputable life. The negroes themselves believe that the basic cause for the high percentage of colored prostitutes is the recent enslavement of their race with its attendant unstable marriage and parental status, and point to thousands of slave sales that but two generations ago disrupted the negroes' attempts at family life. Knowing this as we do, it seems all the more unjustifiable that the nation which is responsible for the broken foundations of this family life should carelessly permit the negroes, making their first struggle towards a higher standard of domesticity, to be subjected to the most flagrant temptations which our civilization tolerates.

The imaginations of even very young children [end page 119] may easily be forced into sensual channels. A little girl, twelve years old, was one day brought to the psychopathic clinic connected with the Chicago juvenile court. She had been detained under police surveillance for more than a week, while baffled detectives had in vain tried to verify the statements she had made to her Sunday-school teacher in great detail of certain horrible experiences which had befallen her. For at least a week no one concerned had the remotest idea that the child was fabricating. The police thought that she had merely grown confused as to the places to which she had been "carried unconscious." The mother gave the first clue when she insisted that the child had never been away from her long enough to have had these experiences, but came directly home from school every afternoon for her tea, of which she habitually drank ten or twelve cups. The

skilful questionings at the clinic, while clearly establishing the fact of a disordered mind, disclosed an astonishing knowledge of the habits of the underworld.

Even children who live in respectable neighborhoods and are guarded by careful parents so [end page 120] that their imaginations are not perverted, but only starved, constantly conduct a search for the magical and impossible which leads them into moral dangers. An astonishing number of them consult palmists, soothsayers, and fortune tellers. These dealers in futurity, who sell only love and riches, the latter often dependent upon the first, are sometimes in collusion with disreputable houses, and at the best make the path of normal living more difficult for their eager young patrons. There is something very pathetic in the sheepish, yet radiant, faces of the boy and girl, often together, who come out on the street from a dingy doorway which bears the palmist's sign of the spread-out hand. This remnant of primitive magic is all they can find with which to feed their eager imaginations, although the city offers libraries and galleries, crowned with man's later imaginative achievements. One hard-working girl of my acquaintance, told by a palmist that "diamonds were coming to her soon," afterwards accepted without a moment's, hesitation a so-called diamond ring from a man whose improper attentions she had hitherto withstood. [end page 121]

In addition to these heedless young people, pulled into a sordid and vicious life through their very search for romance, are many little children ensnared by means of the most innocent playthings and pleasures of childhood. Perhaps one of the saddest aspects of the social evil as it exists to-day in the modern city, is the procuring of little girls who are too young to have received adequate instruction of any sort and whose natural safeguard of modesty and reserve has been broken down by the overcrowding of tenement house life. Any educator who has made a careful study of the children from the crowded districts is impressed with the numbers of them whose moral natures are apparently unawakened. While there are comparatively few of these non-moral children in any one neighborhood, in the entire city their number is

far from negligible. Such children are used by disreputable people to invite their more normal playmates to house parties, which they attend again and again, lured by candy and fruit, until they gradually learn to trust the vicious hostess. The head of one such house, recently sent to the penitentiary upon charges brought against her by the Juvenile [end page 122] Protective Association, founded her large and successful business upon the activities of three or four little girls who, although they had gradually come to understand her purpose, were apparently so chained to her by the goodies and favors which they received, that they were quite indifferent to the fate of their little friends. Such children, when brought to the psychopathic clinic attached to the Chicago juvenile court, are sometimes found to have incipient epilepsy or other physical disabilities from which their conduct may be at least partially accounted for. Sometimes they come from respectable families, but more often from families where they have been mistreated and where dissolute parents have given them neither affection nor protection. Many of these children whose relatives have obviously contributed to their delinquency are helped by the enforcement of the adult delinquency law.

One looks upon these hardened little people with a sense of apology that educational forces have not been able to break into their first ignorance of life before it becomes toughened into insensibility, and one knows that, whatever may [end page 123] be done for them later, because of this early neglect, they will probably always remain impervious to the gentler aspects of life, as if vice seared their tender minds with red-hot irons. Our public-school education is so nearly universal, that if the entire body of the teachers seriously undertook to instruct all American youth in regard to this most important aspect of life, why should they not in time train their pupils to continence and self-direction, as they already discipline their minds with knowledge in regard to many other matters? Certainly the extreme youth of the victims of the white slave traffic, both boys and girls, places a great responsibility upon the educational forces of the community.

The state which supports the public school is also coming to the rescue of children through protective legislation. This is another illustration that the beginnings of social advance have often resulted from the efforts to defend the weakest and least-sheltered members of the community. The widespread movement which would protect children from premature labor, also prohibits them from, engaging in occupations in which [end page 124] they are subjected to moral dangers. Several American cities have of late become much concerned over the temptations to which messenger boys, delivery boys, and newsboys are constantly subjected when their business takes them into vicious districts. The Chicago vice commission makes a plea for these "children of the night" that they shall be protected by law from those temptations which they are too young and too untrained to withstand. New York and Wisconsin are the only states which have raised the legal age of messenger boys employed late at night to twenty-one years. Under the inadequate sixteen-year limit, which regulates night work for children in Illinois, boys constantly come to grief through their familiarity with the social evil. One of these, a delicate boy of seventeen, had been put into the messenger service by his parents when their family doctor had recommended out-of-door work. Because he was well-bred and good-looking, he became especially popular with the inmates of disreputable houses. They gave him tips of a dollar and more when he returned from the errands which he had executed for them, such as buying candy, cocaine or [end page 125] morphine. He was inevitably flattered by their attentions and pleased with his own popularity. Although his mother knew that his duties as a messenger boy occasionally took him to disreputable houses, she fervently hoped his early training might keep him straight, but in the end realized the foolhardiness of subjecting an immature youth to these temptations. The vice commission report gives various detailed instances of similar experiences on the part of other lads, one of them being a high-school boy who was merely earning extra money as a messenger boy during the rush of Christmas week.

The regulations in Boston, New York, Cincinnati, Milwaukee and St. Louis for the safeguarding of these children may be but a forecast of the care which the city will at last learn to devise for youth under special temptations. Because the

various efforts made in Chicago to obtain adequate legislation for the protection of street-trading children have not succeeded, incidents like the following have not only occurred once, but are constantly repeated: a pretty little girl, the only child of a widowed mother, sold newspapers after school hours from the time she [end page 126] was seven years old. Because her home was near a vicious neighborhood and because the people in the disreputable hotels seldom asked for change when they bought a paper and good-naturedly gave her many little presents, her mother permitted her to gain a clientele within the district on the ground that she was too young to understand what she might see. This continued familiarity, in spite of her mother's admonitions, not to talk to her customers, inevitably resulted in so vitiating the standard of the growing girl, that at the age of fourteen she became an inmate of one of the houses. A similar instance concerns three little girls who habitually sold gum in one of the segregated districts. Because they had repeatedly been turned away by kind hearted policemen who felt that they ought not to be in such a neighborhood, each one of these children had obtained a special permit from the mayor of the city in order to protect herself from "police interference." While the mayor had no actual authority to issue such permits, naturally the piece of paper bearing his name, when displayed by a child, checked the activity of the police officer. The incident was but one more [end page 127] example of the old conflict between mistaken kindness to the individual child in need of money, and the enforcement of those regulations which may seem to work a temporary hardship upon one child, but save a hundred others from entering occupations which can only lead into blind alleys. Because such occupations inevitably result in increasing the number of unemployables, the educational system itself must be challenged.

A royal commission has recently recommended to the English Parliament that "the legally permissible hours for the employment of boys be shortened, that they be required to spend the hours so set free, in physical and technological training, that the manufacturing of the unemployable may cease." Certainly we are justified in demanding from our educational system, that the interest and capacity of each child leaving school to enter industry, shall have been studied

with reference to the type of work he is about to undertake. When vocational bureaus are properly connected with all the public schools, a girl will have an intelligent point of departure into her working life, and a place to which she may turn in time of need, for help and advice [end page 128] through those long and dangerous periods of unemployment which are now so inimical to her character.

This same British commission divided all of the unemployed, the under-employed, and the unemployable as the results of three types of trades: first, the subsidized labor trades, wherein women and children are paid wages insufficient to maintain them at the required standard of health and industrial efficiency, so that their wages must be supplemented by relatives or charity; second, labor deteriorating trades, which have sapped the energy, the capacity, the character, of workers; third, bare subsistence trades, where the worker is forced to such a low level in his standard of life that he continually falls below self-support. We have many trades of these three types in America, all of them demanding the work of young and untrained girls. Yet, in spite of the obvious dangers surrounding every girl who enters one of them, little is done to guide the multitude of children who leave school prematurely each year into reasonable occupations.

Unquestionably the average American child [end page 129] has received a more expensive education than has yet been accorded to the child of any other nation. The girls working in department stores have been in the public schools on an average of eight years, while even the factory girls, who so often leave school from the lower grades, have yet averaged six and two-tenths years of education at the public expense, before they enter industrial life. Certainly the community that has accomplished so much could afford them help and oversight for six and a half years longer, which is the average length of time that a working girl is employed. The state might well undertake this, if only to secure its former investment and to save that investment from utter loss.

Our generation, said to have developed a new enthusiasm for the possibilities of child life, and to have put fresh meaning into the phrase "children's rights," may at last have the courage to insist upon a child's right to be well born and to start in life with its tiny body free from disease. Certainly allied to this new understanding of child life and a part of the same movement is the new science of eugenics with its recently appointed university professors. Its organized societies publish an ever-increasing mass of information as to that which constitutes the inheritance of well-born children. When this new science makes clear to the public that those diseases which are a direct outcome of the social evil are clearly responsible for race deterioration, effective indignation may at last be aroused, both against the preventable infant mortality for which these diseases are responsible, and against the ghastly fact that the survivors among these afflicted children infect their contemporaries and hand on the evil heritage to another generation. Public societies for the prevention of blindness are continually distributing information on the care of new-born children and may at length answer that old, confusing question "Did this man sin or his parents, that he was born blind?" Such knowledge is becoming more widespread every day and the rising interest in infant welfare must in time re-act upon the very existence of the social evil itself.

This new public concern for the welfare of little children in certain American cities has resulted [end page 131] in a municipal milk supply; in many German cities, in free hospitals and nurseries. New York, Chicago, Boston and other large towns, employ hundreds of nurses each summer to instruct tenement-house mothers upon the care of little children. Doubtless all of this enthusiasm for the nurture of children will at last arouse public opinion in regard to the transmission of that one type of disease which thousands of them annually inherit, and which is directly traceable to the vicious living of their parents or grandparents. This slaughter of the innocents, this infliction of suffering upon the new-born, is so gratuitous and so unfair, that it is only a question of time until an outraged sense of justice shall be aroused on behalf of these children. But even before help comes through chivalric sentiments, governmental and municipal agencies will decline to spend the tax-payers' money for the relief of suffering infants, when by the exertion of the same authority they

could easily provide against the possibility of the birth of a child so afflicted. It is obvious that the average taxpayer would be moved to demand the extermination of that form of vice which has been [end page 132] declared illegal, although it still flourishes by official connivance, did he once clearly apprehend that it is responsible for the existence of these diseases which cost him so dear. It is only his ignorance which makes him remain inert until each victim of the white slave traffic shall be avenged unto the third and fourth generation of them that bought her. It is quite possible that the tax-payer will himself contend that, as the state does not legalize a marriage without a license officially recorded, that the status of children may be clearly defined, so the state would need to go but one step further in the same direction, to insist upon health certificates from the applicant for a marriage license, that the health of future children might in a certain measure, be guaranteed. Whether or not this step may be predicted, the mere discussion of this matter in itself, is an indication of the changing public opinion, as is the fact that such legislation has already been enacted in two states, which are only now putting into action the recommendation made centuries ago by such social philosophers as Plato and Sir Thomas More. A sense of justice outraged by the wanton destruction of [end page 133] new-born children, may in time unite with that ardent tide of rising enthusiasm for the nurture of the young, until the old barriers of silence and inaction, behind which the social evil has so long intrenched itself, shall at last give way.

Certainly it will soon be found that the sentiment of pity, so recently aroused throughout the country on behalf of the victims of the white slave traffic, will be totally unable to afford-them protection unless it becomes incorporated in government. It is possible that we are on the eve of a series of legislative enactments similar to those which resulted from the attempts to regulate child labor. Through the entire course of the last century, in that anticipation of coming changes which does so much to bring changes about, the friends of the children were steadily engaged in making a new state, from the first child labor law passed in the English parliament in 1803 to the final passage of the so-called children's charter in 1909. During the long century of transforming pity into political action there was created that social sympathy

which has become one of the greatest forces in modern legislation, and to which we may confidently [end page 134] appeal in this new crusade against the social evil.

Another point of similarity to the child labor movement is obvious, for the friends of the children early found that they needed much statistical information and that the great problem of the would-be reformer is not so much overcoming actual opposition-the passing of time gradually does that for him-as obtaining and formulating accurate knowledge and fitting that knowledge into the trend of his time. From this point of view and upon the basis of what has already been accomplished for "the protection of minors," the many recent investigations which have revealed the extreme youth of the victims of the white slave traffic, should make legislation on their behalf all the more feasible. Certainly no reformer could ever more legitimately make an emotional appeal to the higher sensibility of the public.

In the rescue homes recently opened in Chicago by the White Slave Traffic Committee of the League of Cook County Clubs, the tender ages of the little girls who were brought there horrified the good clubwomen more than any other aspect [end page 135] of the situation. A number of the little inmates in the home wanted to play with dolls and several of them brought dolls of their own, which they had kept with them through all their vicissitudes. There is something literally heart-breaking in the thought of these little children who are ensnared and debauched when they are still young enough to have every right to protection and care. Quite recently I visited a home for semi-delinquent girls against each one of whom stood a grave charge involving the loss of her chastity. Upon each of the little white beds or on one of the stiff chairs standing by its side was a doll belonging to a delinquent owner still young enough to love and cherish this supreme toy of childhood. I had come to the home prepared to "lecture to the inmates." I remained to dress dolls with a handful of little girls who eagerly asked questions about the dolls I had once possessed in a childhood which seemed to them so remote. Looking at the little victims who supply the white slave trade, one is reminded of the burning words of

Dr. Howard Kelly uttered in response to the demand that the social evil be legalized and its victims licensed. He says:
[end page 136] "Where shall we look to recruit the ever-failing ranks of these poor creatures as they die yearly by the tens of thousands? Which of the little girls of our land shall we designate for this traffic? Mark their sweet innocence to-day as they run about in our streets and parks prattling and playing, ever busy about nothing; which of them shall we snatch as they approach maturity, to supply this foul mart?"

It is incomprehensible that a nation whose chief boast is its free public education, that a people always ready to respond to any moral or financial appeal made in the name of children, should permit this infamy against childhood to continue! Only the protection of all children from the menacing temptations which their youth is unable to withstand, will prevent some of them from falling victims to the white slave traffic; only when moral education is made effective and universal will there be hope for the actual abolition of commercialized vice. These are illustrations perhaps of that curious solidarity of which society is so rapidly becoming conscious. [end page 137]