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WHAT PRODUCES CRIMINALS.

Some of the Causes That Fill Our Prisons With Unfortunate Men and Women.

Much interest just now in criminals. Much horror aroused by depravity. Many plans more or less appropriate for making the air pure.

Many good people, politicians, women and clergymen, who spent the summer at the seaside, willing now to spend a few days wiping "crime" off the leath.

What is Crime? Who are the criminals? Who makes the criminals?

Do criminals viciously and voluntarily arise among us eager to lead hunted lives, to be jailed at intervals, to crawl in the dark, dodge policemen, work in stripes and die in shame? Hardly, says the Examiner.

Will you kindly and patiently follow the lives quickly sketched, of a boy and a girl?

The Girl.

Born poor, born in hard luck, her father, or mother, or both, victims of long hours, poor fare, bad air and little leisure.

As a baby she struggles against fate and manages to live while three or four little brothers and sisters die and go back to kind earth.

She crawls around the halls of a tenement, a good deal in the way. She is hunted here and chased there.

She is cold in winter, ill fed in summer, never well cared for.

She gets a little so-called education. Ill-dressed and ashamed beside the other children, she is glad to escape the education. No one at home can help her on. No one away from home cares for her.

She grows up white, sickly, like a potato sprouting in a cellar. At the corner of a fine street she sees the carriages passing with other girls in warm furs, or in fine cool summer dresses.

With a poor shawl around her and with heels run down she peers in at a restaurant window, to see other women leading lives very different from hers.

Steadily she has impressed upon her the fact, absolutely undeniable, that as the world is organized there is no especial place for her—certainly no comfort for her.

She finds work, perhaps. Hours as long as the daylight.

Ten minutes late—half a day's fine.

At the end of the day aching feet, aching back, system ill fed, not enough earned to live honestly—and that prospect stretching ahead farther than her poor eyes can see.

"What's the charge, officer?"

"Disorderly conduct, Your Honor."

There's the criminal, good men, politicians, women and clergymen, that you are hunting so ardently.

The Boy.

Same story, practically.

He plays on the tenement staircase—cuffed off the staircase.

He plays ball in the street—cuffed, if caught by the policeman.

He swings on the area railing, trying to exercise his stunted muscles—cuffed again.

In burning July, with shirt and trousers on he goes swimming in the park fountain—caught and cuffed and handed over to a Children's Society.

A few months in a sort of semi-decent imprisonment; treated in a fashion about equivalent to that endured by the sea turtle turned over on its back in the market, he escapes to begin the same life once more.

He tries to work.

"What do you know?"

"I don't know anything; nobody ever taught me."

He cannot even endure the discipline of ten hours' daily shoveling—it takes education to instill discipline, if only the education of the early pick and shovel.

He has not been taught anything. He has been turned loose in a city full of temptation. He had no real start to begin with, and no effort was ever made to repair his evil beginning.

"What's the charge, officer?"

"Attempted burglarly; pleads guilty."

"Three years in prison, since it is his first offense."

In prison he gets an education. They teach him how to be a good burglar and not get caught. Patiently the state boards him, and educates him to be a first-rate criminal.

There's your first-rate criminal, Messrs. clergymen, good men, politicians and benevolent women.

Dear clergymen, noble women, good men and scheming politicians, listen to this story:

In the South Sea Islands they have for contagious diseases a horror as great as your horror of crime.

A man or woman stricken with a loathsome disease, such as smallpox, is seized, isolated, and the individual sores of the smallpox patient are earnestly scraped with sea shells—until the patient dies. It hurts the patient a good deal—without ever curing, of course—but it relieves the feelings of the outraged good one who wield the sea shells.

You kind-hearted creatures, hunting "crime" in great cities, are like the South Sea Islanders in their treatment of smallpox.

You ardently wield your reforming sea shells and you scrape very earnestly at the sores so well developed.

No desire to decry your earnest efforts.

But if you ever tire of scraping with sea shells, try vaccination, or, better still, try to take such care of youth, to give such chances and education to the young, as will save them from the least profitable of all careers—Crime.

Rich good men, nice clergymen, com-

fortable benevolent ladies—every man and woman in the workhouse, every wretched creature living near a "red light" would gladly change places with any of you.

Scrape away with your sea shells, but try also to give a few more and few better chances in youth to those whom you now hunt as criminals in their mature years.

God creates boys and girls, anxious to live decently.

Your social system makes criminals and fills jails.

ENEMIES IN CAMP.

How often and impressively has it been preached to organized labor, to exercise, before all, the necessary virtue to subordinate their own "I am" to the interests of the entire labor movement. We may, in fulminatory words, with the full enthusiasm of our conviction, declare war against the capitalistic system and its excrescences, we may use all our power on the economical field, to clip these excrescences and to humanize them in order to establish, if not a complete equalization of all workingmen, yet the consciousness of their identical interests; but all our pains, our endeavors and ambitions will be in vain as long as the strongest shield of capitalism, the unsolidarity of the workers, the egotism and self-interest of a few can develop and expand. "The foes we hate the most in human souls, are want of sense and ignorance." The unsolidarity and egotism are only brethren of want of sense and ignorance.

We can excuse and forgive unorganized, unlightened workingmen when they, on account of lack of knowledge and not aware of the importance and significance of the struggles and the fights of the working class, in many cases not conscious of the wrong they are doing, throw stones and dead weight against the wheels of progress, says the Brauer Zeitung. But a touch of mourning and disheartening grief—no, of scorn, of indignation and wrath affects our mind when we observe how working men, members of a trades union, who through the same means have gained a considerable betterment of their living conditions, scatter to the winds all lessons that the common struggle has forced on us; and follow their own selfish interests, reckless of others, despite all the abhorrence they create among their class-comrades, regardless of whether their co-workers suffer under their folly. We fight as trade unionists against some individual capitalists; but on economical as well as on political lines we struggle for the entire commonwealth, not only to gain some advantages for a few. We pity and hate the scab, although he often on account of ignorance, more often on account of hunger, turns back on the struggling comrades of his class, for they know he is in the most instances only a product of the system; but we must and will have contempt for, abhor and condemn those individuals, who, in spite of a better knowledge, only inspired by their egotism, wickedness and rascality, try to obscure the ideals of the labor movement to the disadvantage and harm of their fellow-fighters, through whose assistance, support and common cause they first had elevated their conditions. Such individuals are excrescences, not healthy twigs, on the tree of the labor movement; and excrescences must be cut off; the quicker the better.

Some one says regarding Roosevelt's extreme anxiety to burn gunpowder on any or all occasions, that he is "a bulldog with confused ideas."

THE CHANGES OF TIME.

The Laborer During the Reign of Edward Third, and the Laborer of Today.

"Five centuries and a half ago the black death stalked through Europe, and when it rested from slaughter half of the inhabitants of England had perished. And then Labor began to raise its head. There was as much land as ever, and there were as many landlords, but there were only half as many workers to till the fields. And so the workers were in demand, and when employers began competing for their services they found they could command higher wages, says the New York Journal. Whereupon the illustrious King Edward III, with his wise men, enacted his gracious statute of laborers.

"Any worker who left his service before the end of the term agreed, without permission, was to be imprisoned, as was anybody else who presumed to employ him. Anybody who paid more than the legal wages was to be fined double the amount, to be paid to anybody who felt himself aggrieved. Any contract previously made for the payment of higher wages was to be void. All laborers and mechanics were to be committed to the nearest jail if they took more than the customary wage.

"That was the legislation under good King Edward III in the year of our Lord 1349. And nearly 500 years later it was still a crime in England for workingmen to combine to raise their wages. During all that time legislation was one long conspiracy against the masses of the nation for the profit of a small class. The members of that class monopolized the law-making power, and used it ruthlessly for their own benefit. The so-called 'House of Commons' was an oligarchy as narrow and selfish as the Grand Council of Venice.

"Now the masses are courted. Industry in England is entirely in the hands of the trade unions; they dictate how much shall be paid for labor, how long a man shall work, and how much he shall do.

"All English statesmen admit that high wages are a good thing, and if Parliament were to touch the subject at all it would try to raise the rewards of labor instead of forcing them down. This is Edward VII's advantage in reigning in the twentieth century instead of in the fourteenth. If he had been living at the time of the black death, no doubt he would have been shocked at the presumption of a demand for twopence a day on the part of laborers who had been living comfortably on a penny. He would have wondered what the world was coming to, and he would have addressed the Archbishop of Canterbury in a decree designed to keep presumptuous workmen in their places.

"But the world 'do move,' and royalty moves with it. There will be no more 'statutes of laborers' in England, or any other constitutional country, until the laborers are running the machinery of production for the public. And when that time comes, legislators will be concerned with making an equitable distribution of the products of labor, not with depriving the producers of what they earn. No doubt any kings surviving in that day would be full of sympathy with the spirit of the age. But people who want to see kings then will have to look for them in Westminster Abbey."

A twenty-three million dollar syndicate will absorb Detroit street railways. Oh, we must have competition.

John A. Sheehan
Stark