

# WORK among the FALLEN

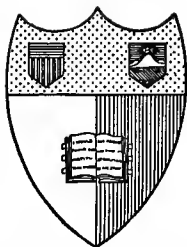
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as seen in the

## PRISON CELLS

By the REV. G. P. MERRICK

With a preface by the  
Venerable Archdeacon  
FARRAR



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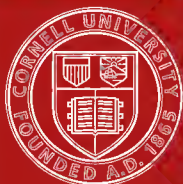
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WORK AMONG THE FALLEN.





# WORK AMONG THE FALLEN.

As Seen in the Prison Cell.

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE RURI-DECANAL CHAPTER  
OF ST. MARGARET'S AND ST. JOHN'S, WESTMINSTER,  
IN THE JERUSALEM CHAMBER, ON THURSDAY,  
JULY 17, 1890.

BY

THE REV. G. P. MERRICK, M.A., M.B.,  
*Chaplain of H. M. Prison, Millbank.*

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

THE VEN. F. W. FARRAR, D.D., F.R.S.,  
*Archdeacon of Westminster, Chaplain in Ordinary to the Queen and  
to the House of Commons, and Rural Dean.*

WARD, LOCK AND CO.  
LONDON, NEW YORK, AND MELBOURNE.



## INTRODUCTION.

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THE paper here printed was read before the Clergy in my Rural Deanery, and as it expresses the results of an almost unrivalled experience, it was felt by the assembled Clergy that the statistics obtained from the collation of so vast a number of cases ought not to be thrown away.

The Chaplain of Millbank Prison has here expressed himself with extreme delicacy and singular moderation; the remarks and inferences deserve the careful consideration of all philanthropists, and especially of the Members of Parliament who make our laws. No service which a Member of Parliament can render is comparable in value to that which may result from wise endeavours to promote social amelioration. Mr. Merrick speaks with authority, because his facts are

derived from long experience and patient toil. His remarks on the relation of drink to immorality; on the disgraceful condition of some of our public thoroughfares; on the number of domestic servants which swell the wretched multitude of the fallen; on the awful brevity of these guilty and wasted lives; on the greater severity needed in dealing with immoral houses; on the relations of educational progress to criminal careers; on the conditions of success in Homes and Penitentiaries; on the startling mortality which prevails among illegitimate children, and on many other subjects, require that earnest attention which I hope that they will receive. His statistics are not only curious, and in some instances unaccountable; they also carry with them a weight of warning, and give rise to the gravest moral considerations.

F. W. FARRAR.

# WORK AMONG THE FALLEN.

AS SEEN IN THE PRISON CELL.

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I CANNOT conceive of many places from which one can obtain a more extensive view of the world of human nature, than that which is found within the walls of H.M. Prison, Millbank. All sorts and conditions of men and women, and more particularly women, come there, and open up to one's gaze many phases of life and character, of which people at large are hardly aware, and which it is the privilege of an exceeding few only to see. The world looks upon the stage front of its criminal theatre, and knows little or nothing of what is going on behind the scenes. It sees the actors of the play and their drama, and, without much thought, says that the spectacle offends them, and at once giving

way to despair, closes its heart and purse against all efforts which have for their object the reclamation of the "fallen," and cries out in the accents of an abandoned hope, "who will show us any good?" If, however, the world did happen to get behind the curtain, and talk to and work amongst those who form the *mise en scène*, it would soon change its opinion, would soon have abundant reason to express surprise, "to thank God and take courage" that matters were infinitely better than at first sight they appeared to be. To one who, like myself, labours amongst these portrayers of every kind of human passion, there is always furnished evidence of more worthy parts—evidence that God has not left even the most degraded outcast without some trace of His Holy Spirit, some ember of better things which, if only judiciously kindled, would burn brightly to the glory of God and the credit and happiness of its possessor. Of course, we have much to disappoint us in our work—money, time, and labour, all apparently expended to no purpose, and the case seemingly more determined to be "a child of hell" than before. But, on the other hand, God is very gracious to us, and, when we have little

expected it, has given us for our grain of corn a plenteous harvest of good results. Though we have relapses, and very sad ones too, yet we have almost daily testimony that our labours have not been in vain, but have been made productive to an extent almost marvellous. During the past year, for instance, we have placed large numbers of women in reformatory institutions on their discharge from prison, so that they might regain their forfeited characters and positions. We have restored many erring children to their homes and sorrowing parents and friends. We have aided several to emigrate, and to recover, amid new and helpful influences and associations, their lost good names and employments. We have helped hundreds, by grants of clothing and the like, to take once more a respectable position in that line of life from which they had strayed. All along the line we are receiving satisfactory accounts of the conduct and progress in the right direction of many of those whom we assisted to better things. Altogether, I must have in my possession thousands of letters of a pleasant character from those who were once in a prison cell, but who are now in various walks of life earning for themselves a

good report; and so reviewing all that one knows and sees, one is able to say, with much thankfulness, that the good greatly outweighs the evil which is found by him who ministers within the prison walls.

There is hardly an event of importance in public or social life which does not send a ripple over the surface of our existence at Millbank. It is astonishing how much one learns there of what is taking place in the outside world. It is not too much to say that the revelations of a Metropolitan prison such as ours would be anything but an incomplete history of the events of our time. The assembling and breaking up of Parliament, elections of all kinds, trade improvement and depression, Derby day, the influenza—not to speak of dock, police, and other strikes—all affect us in an unmistakable and remarkable manner. For instance, not many years ago an excursion steamer, the "Princess Alice," was run into and sunk by an out-going collier as she was coming up the River Thames. As you may remember, the catastrophe was an appalling one, upwards of seven hundred people returning home from a pleasure trip being drowned. For several weeks



after the dreadful event we were receiving almost daily cases, who had gone down to Woolwich, and other places near the scene of the disaster, in order to identify the bodies of their dead relatives, and who had, through drink and other causes, got into the hands of the police.

Again, during the long depression to which trade was subject, our admissions were, comparatively speaking, low; but, during the last year or more, trade has improved, and so has the number of our inmates, if we can call *that* improvement. Though we have three miles of prison cells, we can hardly find accommodation for the men and women—sometimes as many as a hundred—who flock to us every night. Within the last fortnight we have been sending away women to other prisons, so that we may have cellular room for those who still are coming.

Again, it may perhaps surprise you to learn that five out of the poor women who were the victims of the Whitechapel murderer, a couple of years ago, had been in the Millbank Prison, and that one of them was released from the place and received a gift of clothes from me within twenty-four hours of her murder. But you will be doubt-

less more astonished to know that the last murder was the indirect cause of no less than four women coming to prison. Three of these cases were acquaintances and near neighbours of the poor murdered girl. They saw all the horrors which were disclosed when the room where the dead woman lay was entered, and what with their "upset feelings," as they said, and their being called upon in public-houses to narrate what they had seen, their subsequent presence at Millbank through drink was a result simply inevitable. Even such an auspicious event\* as that which took place at the Abbey last Saturday did not pass off without sending to us those who could tell us very much about the matter.

But it is not my purpose to take you round all the points of the compass of human and social interest which find a centre in the huge penal establishment at Westminster. It is not my intention either to trespass upon your courtesy by asking you to listen to that which I may be able to narrate to you generally about what I see, and hear, and do, in the prison cell. My object in this paper is to call your attention to one

\* Mr. H. M. Stanley's wedding.

branch only of the extensive work with which I am connected. That branch also has so many other smaller branches, and covers such a large area of ground, that I can scarcely hope to do more than briefly, in my limited time and space, point out to you one or two of its prominent features.

And even in this task which I have set before me, I am afraid that its title suggests more than my performance will realize. For in truth, I am only about to supply you with some tables of statistics which, while conveying information that perhaps may be new to you, are none the less unattractive, though suggestive figures. I should not have presumed to furnish you with these, but that I ventured to think that they might, by pointing out causes and thus hinting at remedies, be serviceable to my brethren who have, in the exercise of their priestly office, to deal with that class of persons commonly called "fallen women."

It has been my practice during my connection with H.M. Prison Service, to make shorthand notes of that which my charge has narrated to me about herself and her circumstances. I have thus

the particulars of the lives of considerably more than one hundred thousand women written down—particulars which fill the pages of several books. This has enabled me to furnish the information which follows, and which refers to some sixteen thousand cases taken consecutively. The value of these notes is not so much in their number, and that is great, as in the fact that they represent the statements of the women themselves, and not what I think or have thought about them.

I could have taken more cases than these, but I thought that sixteen thousand would serve your wishes and requirements as well as my own purpose, and would give numbers sufficiently large to enable one to arrive at definite conclusions.

1. I think that it may interest you to know something of the birth-places of those about whom I am proposing to supply other information.

The number of cases which furnish these details is 13,915. Out of these 13,915 women who led an immoral life I found that

5570	were born in	Middlesex,
1033	„	Kent,
668	„	Surrey,

411	were born in	Essex,
446	„	Devon,
336	„	Lancashire,
347	„	Hants,
275	„	Sussex,
270	„	Warwick,
249	„	Suffolk,
243	„	Wiltshire,
214	„	Yorkshire,
209	„	Gloucestershire,
197	„	Hertfordshire,
194	„	Dorsetshire,
164	„	Somersetshire,
161	„	Berkshire,
158	„	Oxford,
153	„	Cambridge,
142	„	Norfolk,
123	„	Staffordshire,
121	„	Worcestershire,
110	„	Lincolnshire,
87	„	Leicestershire,
78	„	Bedfordshire,
72	„	Derbyshire,
67	„	Buckinghamshire,
66	„	Glamorganshire,
62	„	Northamptonshire
55	„	Nottinghamshire,
57	„	Cornwall,
51	„	Herefordshire,
49	„	Northumberland,
45	„	Durham,
42	„	Brecon,
34	„	Monmouthshire,

32	were born in Salop,
31	„ Pembrokeshire,
26	„ Cumberland,
20	„ Chester,
17	„ Isle of Man,
5	„ Rutland,
65	„ Wales, County not ascertained
310	„ Scotland,
413	„ Ireland,
58	„ Channel Islands,
143	„ British Colonies,
127	„ Germany,
22	„ United States,
30	„ Russia,
and 27	„ other European Countries.

I have not given the names of the towns or villages which were the actual birth-places of these cases, but only the names of the counties, thinking that they would suffice for the purpose of the paper. At the top of this list come the four Metropolitan counties—Middlesex, Surrey, Kent, and Essex. Out of the sum-total of the four—viz., 7682, I am disposed to say that 7000 can fairly be claimed by London. If this estimate be correct, you will see that about half of the number, 13,915, come from the provinces and elsewhere. I compiled some statistics on this point ten years or so ago, and they give much the same result.

This fact opens up a series of questions relative to immigration to London, about which much might be said ; but this is not a suitable occasion for their discussion.

With reference to some of the figures, I would observe that Colchester has contributed largely to the numbers associated with Essex, and that Plymouth has done the same thing for Devon, Portsmouth for Hampshire, Liverpool for Lancashire, and Cardiff for Glamorgan. From which you will probably conclude that the military, naval, and shipping centres, are not good nurseries for morality. Oxfordshire, it may be seen, sent us 158, while Cambridgeshire contributed 153, only 5 less. The returns of 413 for Ireland, and 27 for France, Italy, and some other European countries, do not represent the number of women who from those lands have found their way to Millbank, but only those who on entering the prison have registered themselves as Protestants, and who have thus been under my spiritual care. The majority of those who have come from those countries have been Roman Catholics, and, as such, have been placed under the charge of the Roman Catholic priest. My figures do not com-

prise any of these cases, but only those of whom I have had personal knowledge. There is one item in this list which has doubtless attracted your attention, and that is the number of German girls (127) who have left their homes to find themselves, after a time, drifting to a life "on the streets of a foreign city." In many cases they have been led to come to England in the expectation of obtaining wages and situations superior to those which they could get in their own country. But they have found to their cost that the streets of London are not paved with gold, and that the struggle for existence here is just as keen and hard as it is in their Fatherland. Far from home, friends, and available help, tempted in all directions, being without resources, they have yielded to what they deemed a necessity, and have found sooner or later an asylum on the public pavements. In some cases they have been decoyed to London by fraudulent means for the express purpose of replenishing the dreadful "market." There are always at the shipping ports and railway stations people on the look-out for these poor girls when they reach our shores. I have come across instances where men have been



employed for this special diabolical object. I am happy to say that I have been the privileged instrument of sending back several of these German, as well as other foreign girls, to their homes and kindred, and, I trust, to reputable modes of living.

While I am referring to the birth-places of these poor women, I may be allowed to make a few remarks on a subject which is akin to it. I have frequently heard it said, and I have seen it stated in newspapers and books—the fact has been alluded to in the House of Commons recently—that the East End of London is the cradle, and school, and home of the majority of thieves, drunkards, and “fallen women” of the Metropolis. I am glad to state, though at the expense of other parts of London, that I am in a position to deny absolutely the truth of the assertion. Though the East End of London gives a home to many hundreds of thousands of human beings, and comprises miles of street and road whose invariable features are poverty and destitution, misery and squalor—a very desert of the good things of this life — yet it has a smaller criminal and dissolute population (not in comparison, but in fact), than any other large area in

London. Within these last few weeks I have taken note in consecutive order of the *present* addresses of 1331 prisoners who have recently passed through the cells of Millbank, and I have found that the whole of the East End, from the Thames to Tottenham, and from Shoreditch to Barking, is responsible for 242 cases. But the relatively limited area of the Surrey side of the water, never going far from the river banks, has sent us 246. It will doubtless interest you more if I furnish you with definite details on this point. The Metropolitan district which sends the greatest number of criminals to prison is the Borough, which gives us 133 cases.

Bermondsey	has	51	cases.
Lambeth	„	42	„
Battersea	„	20	„

The parish of Paddington, with its beautiful squares, its fine mansions overlooking the Park, takes the second place with 114 cases.

The neighbourhood of	The Strand	has	68	cases.
„	Holborn	„	35	„
„	St. Giles'	„	17	„
„	St. Martin's	„	24	„
„	Bloomsbury	„	15	„
„	Piccadilly	„	4	„

The neighbourhood of	Westminster	has	58	cases.
"	Chelsea	"	41	"
"	Kensington	"	8	"
"	Fulham	"	19	"
"	Hammersmith	"	11	"
"	St. Luke's	"	26	"
"	Clerkenwell	"	30	"
"	The City	"	10	"
"	St. Pancras	"	40	"
"	Marylebone	"	58	"
"	Islington	"	49	"
"	Hornsey	"	6	"
"	Hampstead	"	5	"
"	Kentish Town	"	6	"
"	Camden Town	"	13	"
"	Somers Town	"	2	"
"	Hoxton	"	8	"
"	Kingsland	"	6	"
"	Tottenham	"	6	"
"	Clapton	"	4	"
"	Hackney	"	20	"
"	Bethnal Green	"	20	"
"	Shoreditch	"	46	"
"	Whitechapel	"	52	"
"	Wapping	"	29	"
"	Stepney	"	8	"
"	Bow	"	17	"
"	Limehouse	"	6	"
"	Poplar	"	20	"
"	Barking	"	5	"
"	Tidal Basin	}	15	"
"	Victoria Docks			
"	Canning Town			

The neighbourhood of Kennington	has	12 cases.
„ Newington	„	6 „
„ Walworth	„	18 „
„ Camberwell	„	13 „
„ Brixton	„	5 „
„ Clapham	„	15 „
„ Peckham	„	16 „
„ Deptford	„	37 „
„ Woolwich	„	20 „
„ Greenwich	„	3 (?)
„ Other Surrey districts	„	20 „

The returns for Greenwich I accidentally destroyed, and so the number (3) furnished here does not represent the criminal statistics of that district.

Unless we say that all the criminals in the West End are caught, and all those in the East escape, these figures appear to me to be fairly conclusive on the point, as Millbank is the only prison for women in the Metropolis, its jurisdiction extending over the counties of Middlesex, Surrey, the south part of Essex to Southend, and the north part of Kent to Gravesend. I am inclined to say, notwithstanding the dreadful Whitechapel murders, that an "honourable mention" is due to the East End of London in that, though it is so vast in its poverty and privations, yet it is not,

comparatively speaking, worthy of the invidious libels of crime and immorality which are so frequently uttered against it.

2. The next series of figures tells us of the trades and occupations of the fathers of these cases, and thus gives us in another way an idea of the social rank of the women who designate themselves "unfortunates." I have ascertained the particulars in 11,413 cases.

3564	were	Carpenters,
1268	„	Labourers,
544	„	Shopkeepers,
403	„	Factory and other Foremen,
399	„	Mechanics,
393	„	Soldiers,
385	„	Carmen,
373	„	Publicans,
364	„	Farmers,
368	„	Sailors,
264	„	Railway Servants,
225	„	Builders,
209	„	Waiters and Servants,
207	„	Shop Assistants,
190	„	Costermongers,
181	„	Clerks,
175	„	Commercial Travellers,
157	„	Policemen,
155	„	Dock Labourers,
154	„	Coachmen,

147	were	Boat and Ship-masters.
136	„	Shoemakers,
133	„	Horsekeepers,
128	„	Professional Men,
122	„	Cabmen,
85	„	Horse Proprietors and Dealers,
82	„	Officials in Institutions,
71	„	Dealers and Merchants,
66	„	Artists of various kinds,
13	„	Gentlemen,
2	„	Ship-owners,
450	„	Other vocations.

The fact that the carpenters and labourers head this list seems to be strange, but it does not imply, in my opinion, that members of these callings are less capable, affectionate, or careful parents than men of other vocations, but only that, of skilled and unskilled workmen, they form the most numerous class. It cannot be that their employment prevents them from giving that attention to those interests which their families require. For with the "shopkeepers," "professional men," "merchants," "artists," "gentlemen," "ship-owners, there must be opportunities for personally overlooking the education and moral training of their children which are denied to the carpenters and labourers, and yet I find that no less than 824 of

these classes supplied me with objects upon which to exercise reformatory influences. Again, if the education of the girls generally depends upon their mothers, my answer at once is that the wives of the carpenters and labourers do their duty to their husbands and children as wisely and as well as the wives of any other class. It may be, also, that the women use these terms, "carpenter" and "labourer," with a generic import, and with a comprehensiveness which minds a little more logical in tendency would reject. The figures simply state an arbitrary fact for which there does not appear to me to be any satisfactory explanation, other than that which I mentioned, and they are only serviceable, I think, in the direction alluded to.

3. This next list of figures is one of considerable interest, instruction and suggestiveness. It comprises the statements of some 14,790 cases, and refers to their trade or occupation in life. Of these 14,790 women

5823	had been Domestic Servants,
95	„ Nurse-maids,
1122	„ Laundresses,
864	„ Charwomen,
97	„ Housekeepers,

779	had been	Barmaids and Waitresses,
258	„	Shop Assistants,
113	„	Nurses,
82	„	Governesses,
32	„	Book-keepers,
46	„	Shop-keepers,
23	„	Dealers,
943	„	Dressmakers,
156	„	Mantlemakers,
234	„	Milliners,
386	„	Machinists,
315	„	Needlewomen,
40	„	Bonnet-makers,
127	„	Fur Sewers,
466	„	Tailoresses,
844	„	Factory Girls,
511	„	Trade Hands,
142	„	Book Folders,
120	„	Fancy-box Makers,
119	„	Costermongers,
47	„	Flower Girls,
191	„	Ballet Dancers,
28	„	Singers,
9	„	Actresses,

while 838 were of no trade or occupation, and had never done anything to earn their living.

Roughly stated in may be said that

Domestic Servants	furnished	8001	cases.
Barmaids	„	1050	„
Governesses	„	183	„



Needlewomen	furnished	2667	cases.
Trade girls	„	1617	„
Street sellers	„	166	„
Theatre and Music Hall	„	228	„
No calling	„	838	„

I will not attempt to explain these figures. If I say that the never-ending labours of the maid-of-all-work, and the small earnings and long hours of the poor factory girl and needlewoman lead them to seek a livelihood "on the streets," I am met with the fact that it is not always the lodging-house drudge, the match-box maker, the miserably paid sempstress who goes astray, but that there is a great company of superior domestic servants, barmaids, shop-girls, teachers, and 838 who have never done any work at all, who are swelling the ranks of the so-called "unfortunate." One would think, too, that the girls who sell flowers, play barrel-pianos, hawk wares, and otherwise earn their living in the streets, would be most subject to temptation, most likely to fall into sin, yet my figures give only 166 who have found the public thoroughfares a snare. It seems that open air occupations are more favourable to morality than are those conducted under other circumstances. But

this idea opens up a wide field of speculation into which I am at present not disposed to enter.

4. With reference to the offences for which the women have been sent to prison, I may state that out of 14,110 cases

9443		were charged with Drunkenness and disorderly conduct.
1607	„	Street quarrels with other women.
774	„	Robbing men in the streets.
586	„	Robbing men in houses of ill-fame.
1181	„	Robberies of other kinds.
101	„	Pocket picking.
122	„	Keeping disorderly houses.
76	„	Misdemeanours, such as suicide, child desertion, and so on.
50	„	Base coining.
98	„	Disturbances in Workhouses.
72	„	Other offences not here specified.

It does not seem out of place to remark here, that though something like 11,000 out of the 14,110 cases were sent to prison, owing directly or indirectly to excessive drinking, yet I have not met with many instances where for the sake of intoxicating liquors a woman has taken to the life of a prostitute. I have found, however, that not one woman out of ten can pursue that terribly exacting

and exhausting life without a free resort to stimulants to prompt her to it, and that the "life" has not resulted so much from the "drink" as that the "drink" has been almost an absolute necessity of the "life." Thousands of times I have heard the remark from the poor creatures, "We could not go out if we didn't drink. We must drink, and that is how it is we get a taste for it." I am very much within the bounds of truth, when I say that I have not met a hundred women—perhaps out of a hundred thousand—who have said that they like their wicked and wretched mode of life. They loathe it, and their repugnance to it can only be stifled when they are more or less under the influence of intoxicating drinks. We must not forget that modesty is particularly a woman's natural possession, and it is only when she is impelled to do so by drink, or necessity, or by her utilized affections, that she allows it to leave her. "There is not much to like in that kind of life, sir," said a young girl to me the other morning; and I have heard the same sentiment expressed on numberless occasions since I first entered the Prison Service. I may add that I am continually coming across cases, where the "street" is resorted to only during

the time that more reputable work fails, and the women cannot pay their rent. When their trade revives they gladly forsake the streets, and as they say, "Keep within doors." But these cases do not come within the range of my figures.

The life of an "unfortunate" is a very hard one, and I have scarcely known an instance where it has not brought great disappointment, great poverty and privations to her who has led it. The rocket goes up with a gorgeous display of fireworks, but the charred unsightly stick soon comes down with a heavy thud to the ground. And so is it with these women. They come to us in beautiful array, say at Christmas, and not many months later in garments hardly worth shillings. I have seen many a career commenced under what some people would call most brilliant circumstances, and ended in destitution, all within a few months. Nearly all the fine dresses that we see belong not to the wearers, but to the house to which the girls are attached, or to the wardrobe shop from which they have been hired. I have seldom put the question, "Have you any clothes in pawn?" even to the most gaily attired women who have come to us, without receiving the immediate

answer, "Yes." Further, the tastes, thoughts, manners, language, personal appearance — the whole woman—suffer in this course of life a deterioration which finds no parallel in any other, the particulars of which are known to me. Under these circumstances of hardship and poverty and so on, it seems surprising that any woman is found to take to such a profitless career. I do not think that they would, if the glamour of the life before they entered it did not blind them.

## 5.

In 5547 cases I found that the	fathers were living.
5677	„ mothers were living.
4558	„ both parents were dead.
2174	„ the fathers were dead.
1366	„ the mothers were dead.
386	„ there were step-fathers.
330	„ there were step-mothers.

If you add together all the cases where one or both parents are dead, you will see that no less than 8098 poor girls have had very little parental care. I wonder whether the absence of home ties and influences have had anything to do with the drifting of these human barques from their natural moorings down the river of life to destruction?

In 3106 cases where the women had been married, I found that 187 were living with their husbands, but that their prostitution was carried on clandestinely.

270 women were living with their husbands, and were supporting them by their wrong-doing.

476 had been driven from their homes by the brutality of their husbands.

408 had been deserted by their husbands.

419 had suffered cruelty as well as desertion at the hands of their husbands, another woman generally being the indirect cause.

71 had their husbands in prison, and were obliged to go out "on the streets" to maintain themselves during the husband's absence.

443 had been put away by their husbands on account of misconduct, and

859 were widows.

Though some of the separations were attributed to incompatibility of temper, yet I generally found that infidelity on one side or the other was really the cause.

With reference to the large number of widows who have taken to an immoral calling, I may state the majority of them apparently had been rendered so disqualified by married life for any settled and remunerative employment, that when they lost their husbands they were almost resourceless, and

hardly knew what to do for a living—at least, so they gave me to understand.

Amongst those who had been married, and were mothers, I found that 2372 of their children were still living, while 546 of them were dead. Amongst those who had not been married, but yet had been mothers, I learnt that 1593 illegitimate children were living, but that no less than 1854 had died. I venture to think that these figures are terribly suggestive. With the legitimate children the rate of mortality is about 23 per cent., but with the illegitimate children the rate is upwards of 116 per cent. ! When I associate these figures with such methods of child murder as baby-farming, for instance, and think of the neglect, cruelty, sufferings of the poor little offspring of shame, I am almost petrified with horror. If you have seen the face of a child who was on the eve of death from starvation brought about by a mother's wilful neglect, you will never forget the shocking sight.

6. Though I use the term "seduction" in the figures which I am now about to bring before your notice, I do so more as a matter of convenience than as a statement of fact. The term "gone wrong," which the cases themselves use, would

perhaps be better, though it does not convey the double—the positive and negative—meaning which my figures require. The reason of this will appear later on.

In 14,563 cases I found that

11 were seduced before they were 11 years of age.			
36	”	12	”
62	”	13	”
104	”	14	”
358	”	15	”
1192	”	16	”
1425	”	17	”
1369	”	18	”
1225	”	19	”
1158	”	20	”
947	”	21	”
703	”	22	”
991	”	23	”
746	”	24	”
609	”	25	”
658	”	26	”
381	”	27	”
450	”	28	”
133	”	29	”
437	”	30	”
252	”	31	”
265	”	32	”
216	”	33	”
193	”	34	”
81	”	35	”
125	”	36	”



140	were seduced before they were	37	years of age.
128	„	38	„
174	were seduced between	39	and 49
	„	50	„

I found also that in 14,631 cases, 17 women had got into the hands of the police on the same day that they had commenced an immoral life, that 180 had met with the same fate before a week was over.

249	before 2 weeks had passed.
244	„ 3 „ „
458	„ 1 month „
450	„ 2 months „
1045	„ 3 „ „
2138	„ 6 „ „
5173	„ 12 „ „
1077	„ 18 „ „
1956	„ 2 years „
1041	„ 3 „ „
646	„ 4 „ „
356	„ 5 „ „
214	„ 6 „ „
157	„ 7 „ „
133	„ 8 „ „
81	„ 9 „ „
108	„ 10 „ „
207	between 11 and 20 years,

while one woman waited 27 years before that life involved her in such disgrace.

With reference to the number of children under fifteen years of age who have been led astray, I am under the impression that though the law is more stringent on the matter, yet the offence is more frequent than it was formerly. This week a paper has been placed in my hands which shows that during the last twenty years criminal assaults on women, and they have been mostly on children, have increased from 305 in the year 1868, to 689 in 1888—more than double.

I am glad to be able to say that the sending of these 17 cases, and of the following 180, to prison so soon after their embracing the shocking life, was in result the saving of many of them for worthier pursuits. Some were restored to their sorrowed relatives, and some were placed in suitable penitentiaries or reformatory institutions.

7. When several years ago I commenced my work within the prison walls, I was of the opinion, as many people are, that the career of every woman "on the streets" could be written and summed up in these few words—seduced, deserted by lover, cast off by relations. I thought that every poor outcast was the victim of some man's brutal

lust and heartless abandonment. But, much to my astonishment, and it saddened me to learn it, I soon found, on the authority of the erring women themselves, that the common impression and my own were altogether wrong, and that men, though deserving the greatest condemnation for their sinful action in the matter, were not the direct authors of all that one sees so flagrantly paraded in the public thoroughfares of the Metropolis. I discovered that the woman's special enemy was not so frequently a man but a member of her own sex, and often the very woman herself.

Of course, in so far as they presented the demand and thus caused the supply, the men were fearfully guilty before God. But this is a question which the purpose of my paper does not allow me now to consider. My simple point is, that according to the statements of the women themselves, which my figures represent, men are not so often the first agents in this work of the devil as is generally supposed. The record of some three thousand cases made several years ago, corrected my old and more chivalrous ideas on the subject, and that which after a further observation of

many years I now mention only confirms what my former figures testified.

Out of 16,022 cases taken consecutively, I find that

5061 women voluntarily left their homes or situations and adopted what one designated "a life of pleasure."

3363 cases pleaded poverty and necessity, resulting from a lack of employment, as their excuse.

2808 cases were led away by other girls.

3154 women were seduced, and, becoming unsettled, drifted on "to the streets."

1636 were betrayed under a promise of marriage, and having lost their characters, and being abandoned by their seducers and relatives, felt that they had no alternative but to seek a home and livelihood amongst the "fallen."

From these figures you will see that 4790 cases owed their fall and ruin directly to men, while 11,232 had to acknowledge that their fall was due to other causes.

Of the 3363 women who pleaded poverty as their excuse, a large number owed their destitution not to the lack of friends or of opportunity, but to their own indolence and incapacity. It is surprising and sad to observe how imperfectly women in the so-called lower classes are trained to earn their living. In very many instances their ability

to work at the needle, at the wash-tub, with the duster, and even at the trades of which they profess to know something, is so indifferent that it is hardly worth paying for in the shape of wages. Their powers in these respects are so limited that their exercise can afford them neither interest, pleasure, nor profit. Though we have hundreds of women at Millbank who call themselves needlewomen, yet we are constantly experiencing a difficulty in finding those who can do the most elementary needlework satisfactorily. I am inclined to hazard the opinion that if girls were made competent workwomen, their interest in the better phases of life would be greater, more intelligent and stable, and their hearts and bodies preserved for purer and worthier things.

But to return. Out of these 16,022 cases I believe that upwards of 11,000 were led away by such allurements as,

“ Nothing to do.”

“ Plenty of money.”

“ Your own mistress.”

“ Perfect liberty.”

“ Being a lady,” as they say.

I have come across only a very few cases

where grosser tastes have influenced the woman to sacrifice her respectability. All that I have gathered tends to emphasize the fact to which I alluded just now, that impurity for its own sake has no attractions for a woman. Again, in these figures there is much suggestive matter which time and space compel me to pass by.

Of some 2836 instances where women had been directly betrayed by men, I found that 657 cases were laid to the charge of so-called "*gentlemen*," and that 2179 cases had been led astray by men in their own rank of life. On further investigation, I ascertained that the term "*gentleman*" was used in a very large sense, often meaning a commercial traveller, clerk, shop assistant, or somebody wearing other than ordinary workman's clothes. I found that they made a distinction between a "gentleman" who was just above them in the social scale, and one, a "real gentleman," who occupied a station in life greatly superior to their own. This leads me to say that the number 657 may be fairly reduced and the other number 2179 proportionately increased. Again, my notion that seduction was an art practised somewhat exclusively by members of

the so-called higher classes was corrected by the revelation of these figures.

2256 women voluntarily entered into a state of concubinage with a man, who after a time became tired of the connection, and then deserted his compromised partner. In 535 instances the woman herself grew weary of the intimacy, and leaving the man, found her way eventually to the "streets." These figures show that whatever the obligations of such a connection might be, the woman was four times more bound by them, four times more faithful to her partner than was the man to whom she entrusted herself.

In 1830 instances I learnt that the girl, growing dissatisfied with the restraints of home, ran away from it. In 358 cases the parents turned the girl out of the house in consequence of her fondness for bad companions and late hours. 592 women informed me that they had lost their situations through staying out too late at night; and this "staying out" was, in many cases, rather purposed than otherwise.

Perhaps the most sad and revolting class of cases is that which follows.

I found that 35 women were prostituting

themselves in order to support their fatherless children ; that

46	did so to maintain	Aunts and Grandmothers,
57	„	Parents,
149	„	Younger Brothers and Sisters,
233	„	Mothers,
21	„	Fathers,
102	„	Paramours, and
270	„	Husbands.

One can hardly enumerate the last three items without feeling moved to an almost intemperate anger. I may add that I have not met a case where an *elder* brother has lived upon his sister's dishonour.

In those cases specified above, where the wife had gone on the "street" to support her husband, the woman has long passed her girlhood. In the majority of instances she has been married "from the streets," and has returned to the wretched life at the solicitation of a lazy, worthless husband. I am afraid that it is not an uncommon thing for a man to marry a poor woman of this class, in order that, when he loses his work, or gets tired of it, she may keep him by the sale of herself. Many women have told me that when they married, they



with great delight renounced all intention of leading an immoral life, honestly purposing to be good and faithful wives to their husbands. Finding, however, that their husbands had no such respectable thoughts concerning them, and were hoping to make a "market" out of them, they left them, and went back to the life from which they had expected they were ever set free. Their very creditable remarks on the subject frequently led me to think that they had been sincere in their wishes and purpose to live up to and like the duties of that "honourable estate" to which they had been called. But to return to the point from which I digressed.

It has been said that early marriages tend to wife desertion and to worse evils. In nearly all the cases that have come under my notice, where the wife has been deserted, and has become an "unfortunate," the woman was considerably beyond twenty-one years of age before she took to immorality for a living. So far as my figures and experience go, I venture to think, that though early marriages are to be strongly deprecated on the grounds of health and providence, they are not responsible for so much prostitution and crime as

they are often credited with. In fact, the outcry against early marriages frequently produces an effect which is not at all contemplated by those, who, with the best of intentions, raise it. The moral sense and intelligence of very many amongst the lower orders are so limited, that they can only recognize the letter and not the spirit of the prohibition. The sexes are told that early marriages are imprudent and "wrong;" and so they do not marry—that is, bind themselves together in any religious or public ceremony—but they live together in a state of concubinage, purposing, when they are older, and have saved a little money, to get married. In the majority of such cases, the promised marriage never takes place, but the parties sooner or later separate—the poor woman to seek her living in the saddest way the world knows. But even in these cases the girls have reached womanhood before they have abandoned themselves to a life of shame. The following figures are of interest in connection with this point. Out of 2735 cases where women had commenced their downward career in this fashion, I found that in 59 instances the concubinage had ended in a month, in

75 cases that it had ended in 2 months,			
156	”	3	”
357	”	6	”
232	”	9	”
374	”	12	”
192	”	18	”
422	”	2	years,
213	”	3	”
168	”	4	”
130	”	5	”
145	”	6	”
48	”	7	”
36	”	8	”
81	”	9	”
35	”	10	”
72	”	12	” and upwards.

Very few cases indeed have I come across where the original promise of marriage after concubinage has been fulfilled.

8. The next point which will receive our attention is that of the religious education which these cases have received. On this matter 14,126 cases will furnish us with information. 11,920 of this number designated themselves members of the Church of England. Of these

3445 had been confirmed.

9702 had given up the habit of attending their Church some time before their “fall.”

- 1386 had ceased to do so when they went wrong.
- 441 were still to be seen regularly attending their Church.
- 36 went occasionally.
- 335 had never entered a Church or taken part in a religious service.
- 307 had been brought up as Roman Catholics ; and of these
- 227 had been confirmed,
- 21 still attended Mass,
- 63 had been baptized, but had not attended their duties ; and
- 223 had given up religious observances for some years.

These figures do not represent the number of Roman Catholics who have been imprisoned at Millbank, but only those who, though brought up as such, have entered themselves as Protestants, or, as one pronounced it, "pestilent." The Roman Catholics have their own chapel services and priest, and they do not appear in these records only so far as I have mentioned. Many of the old prison hands come into the place at one time as members of the Church of England, and at another as Roman Catholics, changing their creed as often as they enter the prison gates. They not un-

frequently comment on their act, one woman remarking, "It does not matter, sir; all religions are the same to me. I am not particular." 1899 women said that they had been brought up as Dissenters. Of this number 1624 had abandoned their religious profession for some years; while 275 were still regular occupants of a pew in their favourite place of worship.

It is very remarkable that, altogether, not less than 773 women, out of the total number, considered that leading a life of gross immorality was not inconsistent with the regular practice of attending a church or chapel. Their ideas on this point are often very curious. One woman told me that she was "certainly on the streets," but that she had not sunk so low as not to say her prayers night and morning. In another case a woman said that she did not attempt to reconcile her mode of life with her church going, but that she liked the services, and went to them accordingly. Another informed me that she was one of a class spoken of in the Bible—that the class had always existed, and that it "was not condemned in the case of Tamar"! And she finished up her defence of her

conduct by saying, "I am one of them, sir." If this were her interpretation of Holy Writ, I do not pretend to say how she read it. As I remarked just now, I am convinced that there are many poor men and women who do not in the least understand what is implied in the term "immorality." Out of courtesy to you, they may assent to what you say, but they do not comprehend your meaning when you talk of virtue or purity; you are simply talking over their heads. I hope that you will pardon my bringing forward one illustration—and I have many—of what I say. A young woman promised me that she would leave the man with whom she had been living, and have nothing more to do with him. He had no intention of marrying her, and the connection was a foolish and wicked one. Some two years later she came back to prison, and I learnt that she had had not only another illegitimate child in the meanwhile, but that she was likely to become the mother of a third. I took her sharply to task about the matter, and you may imagine how shocked I was when she protested that not only had she kept her promise by leaving the man, but that

the recent child and the expected one were by other fathers!

The religious knowledge of some 10,910 cases who were not Roman Catholics, I found to be as follows :—

- 695 knew nothing about what the Bible tells us of God, our Blessed Lord, the Creation, the Crucifixion, or of anything of that which we call religious teaching.
- 5636 knew something about such matters, perhaps up to the 1st Standard.
- 2625 would pass the 2nd Standard.
- 1503 were equal to the 3rd Standard.
- 321 were fairly well versed in religious knowledge, while 130 were able to pass a searching examination on the subject generally.

I drew up figures showing the percentage of confirmations, in all the Dioceses in England, amongst those who had drifted into the rough waters which beat against the walls of Millbank. But on consideration, thinking that they would serve no great purpose, I have not made use of them in this paper.

Further, I tested the powers of some 14,615 cases in their powers of reading, writing, and cyphering. I found that

3237	women could neither read nor write.
2293	were equal to the 1st Standard.
3104	„ 2nd „
4721	„ 3rd „
1260	„ 4th „ and many to the higher Standards.

In nearly all cases I perceived that the religious was much inferior in quality and quantity to the secular knowledge, and that the evidences of systematic religious teaching were very rare. It appeared to me that whatever knowledge of religious matters they had, they owed it more to the Sunday than to the Day school, more to the Church than to the Code. In fully one-third of the cases the women were not sufficiently educated to be enabled to read a book, so as to take in an idea from it. If the home influences were not good, and the girl's innate modesty were not greatly developed, I am afraid that ignorance, folly and vice, had it pretty much their own way with them.

In case it may not be generally known, I may state that we have schoolmasters and schoolmistresses in the Prison Service, and that, subject to conditions of age, sentence and eligibility, all prisoners have the privilege of receiving instruction



in the schools. We nearly always succeed in raising the prisoner a Standard or two while she is in the school, if she is at all apt and industrious. Many a prisoner has learnt to read and write in the prison cell, and has sent from the prison to her friends at home, the first letter that she herself has ever penned. They generally call attention with much satisfaction to the fact that it is the first production of the kind from them, one prisoner remarking recently that "prisons was some good after all, you see, as they learns you to read and write."

In closing this statistical and the most useful part of my paper, I may say that the rate of mortality amongst these poor creatures is terribly high. By one means and another, I have gathered information on the question, and I find that the average number of years which they live after having taken to a "life on the streets" is about three years and six weeks. The testimony on this point all the world over is, I believe, much about the same, the variation being very slight. Their being out in all weathers; their irregular hours, short and broken slumbers; their irregular meals, at one time starving, at another surfeiting; often only drink and no food at all; the constant drain on

their natural strength which is never replenished—all these causes tend to make their lives very precarious and brief. Unless they give up the wretched calling and otherwise live carefully, the first attack of serious illness is one which they seldom survive. I believe that the regular rest, the food, poor as it is, and life of the prison are simply a salvation to many of them. Repeatedly I have heard the statement made by the prisoners, "I have never felt better in my life." On one occasion I heard that no less than six young girls of this class who had been with us a short time previously had died within a few days of each other in the Parochial Infirmary.

Having endeavoured to give you an idea of the circumstances of these social outcasts, I shall be asked probably what remedy I have to propose for the terrible evils to which I have alluded. It is much easier to point out a fault than it is to suggest effectual measures for its correction. I fear that I am one of those whose powers lie in the easier direction, and that I have very little that is new to offer. However, I think that I may venture, as briefly as I can, to express my opinion on

one or two matters which are connected with the subject. First of all, I may say that I don't think that there is any one remedy which will bring about the reformation that we want. The evil is the result of many causes, and, if to be treated with any degree of success, must be assailed in many ways. Secondly, let me say that I might have asked you to bear with me, while I submitted to you thoughts about religious training, secular education, home influences, technical instruction, as antidotes to the state of things respecting which I have furnished you with figures—thoughts about the treatment of the seducer by the law, and by a society which seems to regard God's law of purity as binding only on the woman and not on the man, and which appears strangely to forget that the strongest denunciations of Holy Writ on this point are uttered not against the weaker, but against the so-called stronger sex—and thoughts about the part which public places of amusement play in the matter. But I have brought before your notice a subject larger than my time or paper allow, and I cannot ask your generous indulgence further than to make just one remark about the condition of the public streets of London, and then to pass on to a brief

consideration of the two matters—one preventive and the other reformatory—to which I alluded.

With reference to the condition of our public thoroughfares, it appears to me to be unfair to three classes of persons that their eyes and moral sense should be insulted as they are by the presence of these women plying their offensive trade so openly as they do:—

1. It is very unfair that poor girls whose lot in life is hard and cheerless, should be tempted to sell themselves to immorality through the glamour of dress, apparent prosperity, ease and freedom which is everywhere being flaunted before their eyes. We condemn these girls for going astray, and yet we allow inducements to wrong-doing presented by their own sex to assail them at every corner.

2. It is very unfair to men who do not all appreciate the leers and solicitations which they get from the “unfortunates” in the street. I am under the impression that the streets of London have seduced thousands of men who never entertained the idea of consorting with these people until it was so prominently thrust before them, as it is permitted to be in our public thoroughfares.

3. It is very unfair to pure-minded women generally that they cannot go to such a gay and attractive street as the Strand, for instance, without being jostled by these shameless creatures. Formerly, women were being sent to us daily for accosting men in the streets, but now, unless she happens to be drunk and disorderly, we hardly receive one. We have had as many as nine women from Victoria Station, and I remember King's Cross sending us fifteen cases, and Waterloo Road nearly as many in one night. Now, however, the discretion of the police in this matter has been considerably curtailed, and so the streets are subject to no law but license.

1. One of the matters to which I wish to refer in closing my paper is that of disorderly houses. I may be allowed, perhaps, to express the opinion that so long as the keeping of these houses is treated not as a crime, but as an offence which may be condoned by the payment of a fine, so long will the curse and nuisance flourish. Acts of Parliament will not make people moral, but they will undoubtedly act as a terror to evil-doers, and they do certainly deter many who are on the borderland of wrong-doing from sever-

ing their connection with a reputable life. They can make the keeping of a disorderly house a much more expensive and penal employment than it is at present. In the course of the year we have sent to us a great many cases for this offence. But there are few of these brothel-keepers who have not escaped nearly all of their imprisonment by the payment of a fine, which sometimes has amounted to £50. If the offence were always visited with imprisonment, without the option of a fine, it would not, I think, be so frequently committed. The readiness with which these heavy fines are paid suggests, amongst other matters, that they must come from a reserve fund, from the lessee of the house, or from the pockets of the regular patrons and clients of the establishment, and that the profits which are made in the infamous business must be something enormous. As an instance of this, I may mention that one, whose fine of £20 was paid within a few days after her admission into the prison, informed me that she gave no less than £175 for the "goodwill and furniture" (her own words) of a little house in a very poor neighbourhood at the East End of London. She said that she made a good

income out of it, paying off the £175 and supporting her husband and three children in circumstances of comfort, though the locality was a poor one, and her receipts were made up of small sums.

These houses have many methods of replenishing their stock of "human goods and chattels." Formerly, they depended upon the artifices of the procurer, procuress, and decoy girl in the streets, at the railway stations, and at places of public resort; but legislative enactments have seriously interfered with this mode of satisfying their requirements. A new and favourite recruiting ground is the registry office for servants. The keepers of these houses go to the registry office and ask for a servant. As they seem particular as to character, promise good wages, and are plausible, they readily procure what they want. The wretched victim soon finds that by accepting a situation in such a house she has lost her character, and is then easily persuaded to yield to the wishes and advice of the female fiend who entrapped her. No inquiries are made as to the respectability of these pretended mistresses, and so the girl leaves the registry office to become, sooner or later, the degraded outcast of the

“streets.” There is much to be said of the extortion, cruelty, tyranny, and the like to which the women are subject in these houses; but the matter requires considerable space, and is worthy of a paper to itself.

2. The second point, upon which I venture to express my opinion, is connected with those institutions called Homes and Penitentiaries, which have for their praiseworthy object the reclamation of these poor women. There is a prejudice amongst these “unfortunates” against these Homes and Refuges, which is as general as it is unaccountable. I have tried to ascertain what has been the real ground of complaint against these beneficent institutions, and to the credit of their managers I must confess that there is little or nothing to lay to their charge. The women have stated to me that in the Homes there was not enough to eat, and that the stay in them was too long. Strange to say, though the women have led idle lives, yet they have never found fault with the kind or quantity of work which they are required to do in the Homes.

Nearly always I have found that my informants themselves have never been in a Home, and have



had, therefore, no personal experience of what they assert. They have repeated simply what they have heard ; and in a few cases only have they been able to furnish me with the name of a Home where they imagined the inmates were not well treated. I need hardly remark that beyond hearsay there was no foundation for their statements. It is surprising and sad to find that when women have "fallen" they seldom warn others against following their example. On the contrary, they try to drag others down, and, what is worse, keep them down to their own wretched and wicked level. The figures to which I drew attention just now, namely, the 2808 who were led away by other girls—in some cases by sisters—show what very zealous agents in the cause of evil are women who themselves have given way to sin.

Though we have the "silent and solitary" system in force at Millbank, yet my most persistent labours amongst my erring flock are in the direction of endeavouring to weaken the bad influences which the older and more depraved female offenders try to bring to bear upon the younger and more innocent. I remember, on one occasion, that a girl aged eighteen was sent to us under a

very heavy sentence for an assault, but in reality for the serious moral injuries which she had done to upwards of forty younger girls—her school-fellows. Last week] (July, 1890) I had to speak to a prisoner who had been turned out of two, if not more Homes, in consequence of her malevolent attempts to further corrupt those with whom, for the purposes of reformation, she was associated.

This leads me to remark that in seeking a Home for a "fallen woman," or penitent, we should be guided by two principles:—1. We should never place her where she is likely to lower the moral tone of the other inmates (and this is often done to the injury of many a good institution); and, 2. We should never send her to a Home where she herself is likely to receive moral injury by being associated with girls more experienced than herself in sinful ways. If the work of reformation amongst these women is to be successful, the cases must be classified most carefully. Because, for instance, the girl has happened to have an illegitimate child, it does not follow that in fact or in inclination she is not better than a "street-walker." Her "misfortune," as she terms it, may make

her a penitent, but it does not convert her into a shameless prostitute. Even my charges stand upon their dignity. Thieves pride themselves that they do not go "on the streets" or drink; the "unfortunates" that they do not steal, and so on. "I have never done anything of *that* kind," I often hear them say, alluding in a disparaging manner to an offence different from that which has consigned them to the gaol. These are distinctions, and are so, I think, with a difference. The more within certain limits their own estimation of the matter is considered and acted upon, the more likely is their reformation to be brought about.

Again, the length of the probation to which a penitent should be subject is a matter for the exercise of judgment. In some cases a short stay in a Home is worse than useless. The reclamation has not had time to be effected, and the girl becomes set against all such methods of saving her for a better life. In other cases, a long probation robs the girl of hope and energy, and the very long lane in front of her causes her to give way to despair, and to abandon all self-effort at reformation.

I am of the opinion, too, that in both temporary Refuges or permanent Homes, the rooms and furniture should be made to look bright, comfortable, inviting. "The way of transgressors is hard," but I am afraid that we often make the return journey much harder and more unattractive than it need be. Religion and virtue are not always well and appropriately dressed when their garments are coarse and sombre.

Of course, it is not every girl who goes into a Home in every way suitable that settles down to a reformed life. There are many cases of relapse, even though much money, time, and thought have been expended upon them. Some women seem to have been so spoilt by their miserable life as to be unable to conform to the quiet and orderly existence of a Home, or to remain in a situation, or to adopt any mode of living where there is not constant change and excitement. Such cases are very difficult to manage, and are a source of much trouble to the authorities of the Homes, and to all those who have taken them by the hand to help them.







