

Acts, and are carried out by substantially similar methods. She says: "It is truly described as 'a plan for providing healthy women for profligate men.' . . . By this law policemen—not the local police, but special Government police, in plain clothes—were employed to look after the poor women and girls in a subjected town and its neighbourhood. (The subjected towns were certain military and naval stations. In 1864 they numbered 11; by 1869 they had increased to 18.) These police spies had power to take up any woman, they pleased, on suspicion, that she was not a moral woman, and to register her name on a shameful register as a prostitute. She was then forced to submit to the horrible ordeal of personal examination, which cannot be described here. It was an act on the part of the Government doctor such as would be called an indecent or criminal assault if any other man were to force it upon a woman. And it was the State which forced this indecent assault on the persons of the helpless daughters of the poor."

When these Acts were in force the metropolitan police who enforced them "knew that there was a trade in English girls, and regarded it with indifference. In an official report, an English officer of police said of an English girl who escaped from a foreign brothel, that she had 'absconded,' as if it were a quasi-criminal offence to run away from a licensed brothel." Regulation makes the police who are associated with it colourblind, or worse.

From this slight survey of the methods of regulation, it will be seen that it has failed to effect anything except to create a feeling of false security; but that it has done much to make the position of the White Slave Traders more secure, and their business more profitable.

Of the various efforts that have, and are still being made for the suppression of the Trade it is only possible to touch briefly. As the large majority of both men and women are apathetic, much of the work is of necessity educational, and for that purpose the various societies publish weekly, monthly, or quarterly periodicals, as well as pamphlets and books, among which may be mentioned:—

"The Shield," published by the British Committee of the International Federation for the Abolition of State Regulation of Vice. This com-

mittee has also published a number of pamphlets and books by Mrs Josephine Butler and others.

"The Awakener," a penny weekly published by "The White Slave Abolition Publications, Limited." A very good paper, first published about the time of the passing of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill (White Slave Act) last year, and still in its first volume.

The National Vigilance Association has published two sixpenny books, "The White Slave Traffic" and "In the Grip of the White Slave Trader," which have been instrumental in protecting some girls from procurers. It has also taken part in, and organised, various conferences and congresses, the last of which was held in London last June-July. At this Congress almost every country in the world was represented. King George sent a special message of encouragement from himself and Queen Mary. It was attended by representatives of the Home Office, the India Office, the Colonial Office, and the Foreign Office, on behalf of their departments. This was referred to by the President, the Earl of Aberdeen, as a proof of the interest shown by the Government in the work of the International Bureau. That may be so, and also last year Parliament passed the Criminal Law Amendment Bill to better protect girls and punish procurers. But the revelations of the infamous Piccadilly Flat case make it doubtful how far their sympathy is of a practical nature. In this case the woman Gerald was arrested, tried and convicted for keeping a disorderly house, but none of the men who were her customers were arrested, nor were their names published. At the time of her arrest three girls of 17, 18, and 19 years were in the house. "The Christian Commonwealth" of August 20th, speaking of this case, says:—On three occasions Mr Keir Hardie, who deserves great credit for his pertinacity, called attention to the Piccadilly Flat case. His references showed that most revolting practices were carried on in this infamous den, and the demand that the whole matter should be investigated grows in spite of Mr McKenna's protestations and denials. The longer the facts are withheld the graver the accusations become. Mr Ramsay MacDonald, for example, affirmed in his last Parliamentary letter that if Mr McKenna had told us what he knows 'he would have published the names

of some of the leading peers of England.' The Home Secretary displays a singular inability to realise the real nature of the agitation caused by this case, and shelters himself behind the quite inadequate plea that there is no legal evidence to convict the woman Gerald of the offence of procuration. But even the Deputy-Chairman who tried the woman declared that there was "some evidence" of his offence, but that it was not the charge in the indictment against her. It will not do for the Home Secretary to waive aside the whole agitation simply on the ground that the names in the woman's ledger and diary are in her handwriting, and that the letters were signed only with 'nicknames.' Does he expect the woman's ledger and diary to contain any one else's handwriting? In any event, as Mr MacDonald says, the names are there, and ought not to be there. If they are there unjustly, it will be comparatively easy for the owners to clear themselves. We repeat that we have utterly no wish to make political capital out of this case. Our demand is that those who are charged with the administration of the law shall be cleared of the suspicion that people of wealth and influence have been shielded, and a very light punishment inflicted on their partner in guilt, simply because they have wealth and influence."

The contrast of Mr McKenna's attitude towards this case with his treatment of the militant suffragettes is striking. This woman was sentenced to the second division; many suffragettes are sent to the third. She has been indicted on a minor offence, and her accomplices shielded. Whatever our opinion may be of the militant suffragettes, surely no one would put them on the same footing as a procurer.

Many of those who joined the National Committee for the suppression of the traffic at first thought much of the horrors of the White Slave Traffic and little of regulation. Gradually they have been driven to the conclusion that the State toleration of vice is the mainstay of the traffic.

We may appear to some to have emphasised unnecessarily the evils of regulation. We have done this because we believe that the majority of the women in our Dominion do not know that regulation is largely responsible for the hold that the traffic has obtained in older countries.