

Pam / R-78

TO OUR READERS  
Property of  
**ARNOLD BROWN**  
To whom please return

In presenting our statement of this case I prefer to place first the Defence of Mr. Stead, because it tells the whole story from beginning to end, and shows not only what was done, but why it was done.

I have not, however, thought it worth while to report herein the Magistrate's interruptions of, or arguments with, Mr. Stead. These are all fully reported in his own pamphlet on the case. I have simply shown which parts of the defence the Magistrate refused to hear.

It is for the fathers and mothers of England to say what shall be the future of these defendants and of the real criminals for whose punishment they secured the passing of the Criminal Law Amendment Act.

The part of The Salvation Army, its Officers and Soldiers in this matter is long since determined. As the Chief-of-Staff and Madame Combe (who but a few months ago sold up her home in Switzerland to devote herself to this War) have rushed to the rescue of the poor victims of lust, and incurred the wrath of all the vilest men in this country by so doing, so will we one and all give ourselves up to do and to suffer for the perishing.

In this let us now and ever stand together as one man, and then whether they succeed in hounding our beloved comrades to prison or no, God will give us His blessing and lead us to victory.

G. S. RAILTON.

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TO DEAR REVEREND BROTHERS  
WILLIAM BROWN  
TO WHOM THESE PAPERS  
ARE SENT BY THE EDITOR OF THE  
"STANDARD"

It is necessary for the sake of the  
public that the facts of the case should  
be made known to the world.

I have not been able to report  
the facts of the case in a  
more satisfactory manner than  
I have done.

I am for the friends and  
the cause of the poor and  
the oppressed.

The part of the case which  
is most interesting is the  
part which shows the  
conduct of the Salvation Army.

Before proceeding to describe  
the nature and object of the  
Secret Commission, of which  
I had the honour to be the  
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opportunity of explaining  
that the Salvation Army had  
no part whatever in  
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employment of those  
subterfuges indispensable  
for the efficiency of a  
detective department.

They took charge of girls  
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away from the vicious  
surroundings of a  
drunken home in a  
Marylebone slum.]

# THE TRUTH

ABOUT THE

## ARMSTRONG CASE AND THE SALVATION ARMY.

### MR. STEAD'S DEFENCE.

The Paragraphs placed in brackets were not allowed to be read.

#### Conspiracy of Virtue against Vice.

[I am charged with conspiracy. What I did was to expose a conspiracy of vice and crime by a combination with the friends of law and virtue. It is an old maxim that when evil persons conspire, good citizens are compelled to combine, if only to expose the conspirators and frustrate their designs. The only novelty in the present case is that the Government select for prosecution, not the conspirators of vice, but the combiners for virtue. What I did was to commit the mere semblance of a crime in order to render the perpetration of actual crime more difficult, its detection more certain, and its punishment more severe. Whether in so doing I have unwittingly overstepped the boundary which the law has set, is a question on which I confidently appeal to the verdict of the court. It would be the height of presumption in me to discuss questions of law in the presence of counsel, and in my observations to-day, which I will studiously endeavour to compress into as short a compass as possible, I will confine myself to such a statement of facts as is indispensable to place the court in possession of the true bearings of this case, and to enable it to understand how it came to pass that I have rendered myself liable to a criminal prosecution.]

#### The Role of The Salvation Army.

[Before proceeding to describe to the court the nature and object of the Secret Commission, of which I had the honour to be the chief, I take the earliest opportunity of explaining that The Salvation Army had no part whatever in operations involving the employment of those subterfuges indispensable for the efficiency of a detective department. They took charge of girls after I had rescued them—as, for instance, they undertook to train Eliza Armstrong after I had assured them that she had been sold to Rebecca Jarrett for immoral purposes, and that the only hope of rescuing the child from a life of shame was for them to keep her in safety, far away from the vicious surroundings of a drunken home in a Marylebone slum.]

#### The Pity of it.

[How then is it that we stand here accused of conspiracy to commit a series of crimes with which even our worst enemies do not pretend that we have the slightest sympathy? It is because of our very abhorrence of those crimes, it is because the knowledge that they were being committed with impunity all around us, burnt like fire in our brain, and would not let us rest night or day, that we were driven to those methods which have landed us in the position we occupy at this hour. Those who have never stirred hand or foot during the long years through which English girls have been left the helpless prey of lust and crime, may now affect a holy horror at the action which we have taken in order to bring this reign of criminal vice to an end; but it was their dull apathy, their chilly indifference, or their cruel scorn, which drove me to resort to the only methods by which the law could be altered and legal protection secured for our girlhood.]

[I have never defended or palliated, and I am not about either to defend or to palliate, the offences of which I stand accused. They are to me probably as hateful, if not more hateful, than to any one in this court. To pretend even a desire to commit them for purposes of verification and crimination was loathsome to me, almost heart-breaking, as those associated with me can testify. More than once I broke down utterly in the midst of my investigations—once on the night of the very day on which Eliza Armstrong was sold, and again on a subsequent night when another mother had been pressing me to buy her twelve-year-old daughter for prostitution for the sum of £3. It was unutterably painful. But the very sting of the thought brought with it strength and resolution. If it was a cruel thing to play the part of a purchaser of innocent maidens for an imaginary violation, was it not far more cruel to allow them to continue to be sold in real earnest into a life of shame? And so the very anguish that the playing of my assumed rôle occasioned me spurred me on and nerved me to persevere.]

I bought Eliza Armstrong to save Eliza Armstrong, and not only that child who was before you in court, but many thousand others as young and innocent as she, over whom, as the direct and immediate consequence of what I did for Eliza Armstrong, the law has now cast its protecting shield.]

#### Desperate Ills need Desperate Remedies.

[Desperate diseases demand desperate remedies. Homicide is justifiable when in no other way can the hand of the murderer be stayed. And the reason why I became a party to the events which have brought me here was because the situation was so desperate, that nothing else remained to be done to compel the House of Commons to make the emendations in the law necessary for the protection of girls between thirteen and sixteen from corruption and ruin. Such at least was my deep and painful conviction. I acted upon my conviction, and I am proud to take the responsibility for my acts.]

[What, may I ask the Court, was the condition of affairs when I began my investigations? The first reliance of every citizen is the law of the land, and what was the law of the land? The law of the land, according to the weight declaration of the highest authorities, was deplorably faulty. The law itself shielded instead of punishing the evil-doers, and this state of things was notorious. In 1880, Mr. Benjamin Scott, Chamberlain of the City of London, chairman of an influential committee for the exposure and suppression of the traffic in English girls for purposes of Continental prostitution, who for years had been painfully conversant with the horrors of the white slave trade, addressed a letter to Lord Granville calling attention to the subject, urging the imperative importance of a parliamentary inquiry as to the legal remedies needed to check this export of English girls to foreign brothels. In 1881 Lord Dalhousie moved for the appointment of a Select Committee of the House of Lords. In introducing the subject he stated that the subject had been before the attention of the Government since 1874, when the knowledge of the trade had first been brought before the Foreign Office. In 1880, Mr. Snagge, a very able member of the English bar, who has since been made one of her Majesty's county court judges, had made a full and exhaustive inquiry into the subject both at Antwerp and Brussels. He reported that for many years there had been a traffic systematically carried on in England, and especially in the streets of London, whereby many English girls, most of them under the age of twenty-one, had been enticed away to become inmates of brothels in consideration of fees or commissions paid by the keepers of the houses to the procurers who brought them over. Mr. Snagge said Lord Dalhousie "was able to establish the fact that there were upwards of twenty procurers who had been at work to the knowledge of the police since 1865. Twenty procurers regularly at work for sixteen years in a veritable Slave Trade—all of them known to the police; and yet in all these years not one prosecution. The first prosecution of the Treasury is directed against those who procure; to stop procuration, they strike, not the real traders in girls, but against those whose one

consuming passion was to protect our English girls from a veritable slavery to vice. But let me quote again from Lord Dalhousie:—

He would fall if he were to attempt to give to their lordships an adequate description of the life of shame, degradation, and wretchedness which that vile, iniquitous traffic had inflicted on our countrywomen. He felt sure that their lordships would be of opinion that no time should be lost in putting a stop to a practice which, in ardent villainy and rascality, surpassed all that they knew of any other trade in human beings, and in any part of the world, either in ancient or in modern times.]

#### 1881: "No Time to be Lost."

["No time should be lost"—that was in 1881. Lord Dalhousie was followed by Lord Shaftesbury, whose authority on such a subject is unequalled. He confirmed Lord Dalhousie. Lord Shaftesbury said:—

Nothing more cruel, appalling, or detestable could be found in the history of crime all over the world than that abominable traffic. . . . Anything more horrible, or anything approaching the wickedness and cruelty perpetrated in those dens of infamy in Brussels, it was impossible to imagine. . . . He could only say that, in order to stop the traffic now going on, it would be necessary to lay bare as many horrors and as much cruelty as had ever been exhibited in the history of the world.]

[And, last of all, Lord Granville declared that whereas he at first suspected there was exaggeration, he had found on examination that there was no exaggeration. All these ghastly stories of vice and crime, of unhappy maidens in brothels from which they could escape never more, as to which Lord Dalhousie and Lord Shaftesbury had vouched, Lord Granville declared to be not exaggerated in the least. It is now four years since the Legislature was informed on the highest authority that the facts were unimpeachable the horrors unexampled, the law most inefficient and the criminals unpunished. What was done?]

#### 1882: The Evil "Appalling."

[In 1881, a Select Committee was appointed. It was a most influential committee. It contained among its members the present Prime Minister, Lord Cairns, Lord Shaftesbury, Lord Bramwell, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and several other noblemen well known for their philanthropy and legal acumen. They began their sittings in 1881; they concluded them in July, 1882. And what was the report? They confirm the statements as to the extent and reality of the traffic, and then they impeach our law as follows:—

In other countries female chastity is more or less protected by law up to the age of twenty-one. No such protection is given in England to girls above the age of thirteen. The evidence before the Committee proves beyond doubt that juvenile prostitution, from an almost incredibly early age, is increasing to an appalling extent in England, and especially in London.

The committee are unable adequately to express their sense of the magnitude, both in a moral and physical point of view, of the evil thus brought to light, and of the necessity for taking vigorous measures to cope with it. They will, therefore, at once state the recommendations which they are prepared to make as to all the matters to which they have referred.]

#### 1883 and 1884: The Bill Burked in the Commons.

[These recommendations were nine in number but, notwithstanding their urgency and the necessity for taking vigorous measures at once, nothing could be done in 1882. In 1883 a Bill framed upon the recommendations of the Lords Committee was introduced and passed through the House of Lords. It was dropped in the House of Commons. In 1884 Lord Dalhousie re-introduced the Bill into the House of Lords, and it was sent down to the Commons again in July.

The collision between the two Houses over the question of the Reform Bill led the Government to sacrifice the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, together with all other legislative proposals before the House, in order to concentrate attention upon the constitutional struggle, which some months later was terminated by a compromise. I protested in the "Pall Mall Gazette," but I protested in vain. In 1885 the Bill, this time being considerably watered down—the age of consent being fixed at fifteen instead of sixteen—was introduced a third time in the House of Lords and passed. It came before the House of Commons on the night on which the House rose for the Whitsuntide recess. Sir W. Harcourt, who was then Home Secretary, moved its second reading in a House of twenty members. It was met with a chorus of hostility, and it was at last talked out, much to his own satisfaction, by Mr. Cavendish Bentinck, M.P. for Whitehaven. The Bill, the country was assured, was dead. Its authors and its opponents alike regarded it as *de facto* defunct. No one in Parliament seemed to care about it, save its official authors, and they despaired of being able to pass it in face of the hostility of an obstructive minority in the House and the general apathy outside.]

#### May, 1885: The Bill Defunct.

[Thus it came to pass that at the end of May, 1885, a measure the need for which had existed for at least twenty years, and the urgent necessity for which had been officially declared in 1881, had for the third time met its fate in the House of Commons. That was the condition of things in relation to the subject when I began the operations, of which the purchase of Eliza Armstrong formed one of the earlier incidents, the object of which was to bring into clear relief before the country the necessity which Ministers and the House of Peers had repeatedly attested any time since 1881.

The difficulty was in the House of Commons, not in the House of Lords. The House of Commons was apathetic, hopelessly apathetic. I do not undertake to explain why, in a question which pre-eminently concerns the daughters of the people, the House of Commons should be more indifferent than the House of Lords. I attributed it to the fact that those who had votes were not sufficiently in earnest about the matter to make it necessary for the Bill to be passed at all costs. You can get the House of Commons to do anything, if only you can make row enough in the constituencies or an obstruction in the House, and up to May this year no one was sufficiently in earnest to make a row, while, as to obstruction, there were only twenty persons in the House when it was talked out on its second reading on May 20.

The House of Commons knew the importance of the Bill. The report of the Lords' Committee was in the hands of every member. They knew what was going on. Yet they took no steps to mend matters. The House of Lords, which has no constituents, showed itself more keenly sensitive to the protection of female honour and the liberty of English girls than the House of Commons. People began to say that it was because the popular House was honeycombed with immorality; on both front benches sat men who could be met elsewhere than at St. Stephen's. Men do not gather grapes off thorns or figs off thistles, and stringent legislation against the

fraud and force by which brothels are recruited could hardly be expected from legislators who were said to be familiar visitors at Berthe's in Milton Street, or Mrs. Jeffries's in Chelsea. Be that as it may, the indifference or hostility of the House of Commons was so notorious that when Mr. Cavendish-Bentinck talked out the Bill no one ventured to hope that it would ever re-appear until after the General Election. The stimulus was lacking. The one dominant factor in constitutional government—the clearly-expressed command of an aroused public opinion—was absent. The Legislature was like a steam-engine without steam. It could not be made to go until the steam was generated; and on the night of May 20 no one believed that it was possible to generate a sufficient head of steam of public opinion to carry the thing through.]

#### The Press Dumb.

[In ordinary cases, where the law is admittedly bad and the Legislature notoriously apathetic, the usual remedy is found in the press. But upon this subject the press was worse than useless. Almost all the influential journals, from motives good or bad, were in a conspiracy of silence. Although I did not know it at the time, my assistant, Mr. Jacques, had in April proposed to several newspapers to undertake a tour through the brothels of the Continent in order to discover and rescue any English girls who might be imprisoned there. My contemporaries replied, one after another, that, although it might be true enough that English girls were imprisoned in houses of ill fame in every capital on the Continent, the subject was too scabrous for them to take it up. A month later after I had begun my inquiries I heard of Mr. Jacques's proposal to the other papers, and this led to my suggesting that before undertaking the foreign tour he should help me in my investigations at home, although they were on altogether different lines, and had nothing in common with his original scheme. The subject, although terrible, is not the less loathsome, and is for this reason, in the opinion of Mr. Poland, better let alone. The committee for suppressing the traffic in English girls had sent out its harrowing pamphlets to every editor in the country, with what result? Editors, like members of Parliament, knew everything and did nothing. Beyond some more or less perfunctory expressions of regret that the Criminal Law Amendment Bill was dead, the papers said nothing, and would do nothing.]

#### The Society for the Protection of Women.

[When the law is faulty, the Legislature indifferent, and the press silent, there is still hope, if societies formed by public-spirited philanthropists for the protection of the poor, and the oppressed are keenly alive to the necessity for unceasing vigilance, and usparing in their exertions to prevent wrong. Unfortunately I found that many of the societies had sunk into ruts, from which they were unable to rouse themselves. Jealousies, professional or sectarian, divided and paralysed them, and first-hand information as to the reality of the crimes referred to in the Report of the Lords' Committee could not be obtained from them. This I might have expected, but I was astounded to discover, in the person of the President of the Council of the Society for the Protection of Women and Children, one of the best authorities on the

subject of brothels at home and abroad, who denied the existence of the trade which the Government and the House of Lords had described in such terrible terms, who ridiculed the idea that any woman ever became a harlot excepting of her own free choice, "on promotion," as he termed it, and who assured me that the society of which he was President almost always found that women were in the wrong, that in fact aggressive woman was always outraging the shrinking modesty of virtuous man. To bring to a crucial test the possibility of securing any assistance for the victims of the crimes inflicted by brutal lust on unfortunate and friendless girls, I mentioned to him that the other day at Trevor Square a girl who had been just two weeks confined of a child was tied up naked to a nail in the wall and flogged by the man who kept her in so atrocious a manner that he made the flesh fly and the blood flow, while her shrieks for mercy were heard all over the house. "What," I asked, "would your Society do if I placed that case in your hands?" "Nothing," said he. "The girl consented to be tied up to receive a birching. If she got more than she bargained for, that is not our affair." "But," I replied, "do you mean to say that your Society would not interfere in case it were proved that a girl had been flogged within an inch of her life to minister to the jaded lust of a debauched patron?" "Certainly not," he replied. "These things are governed by freedom of contract, and if once a girl consents to be strapped up she must take all she gets. We certainly would not interfere." After that it was evident that hope from the Society for the Protection of Women and Children there was none.]

[The law was bad, the Legislature indifferent, the press silent; even the Society for the Protection of Women and Children was hostile, but there still might have been hope if the magistracy and the police had been stern to repress crime and discourage vice.]

#### The Jeffries Case Hushed Up.

[Unfortunately the last resource failed us. After many months of patient labour, after a long and laborious accumulation of evidence, the committee for suppressing the foreign traffic in English girls determined to take proceedings against a famous procuress for the foreign market, and a prosecution was set on foot against Mrs. Jeffries, of Chelsea. I need not dwell upon the obstacles placed in the way of that prosecution, and I need only refer to its sudden and unexpected close. That Mrs. Jeffries was breaking the law was notorious enough. She herself admitted to one of my staff that she had taken at least one English girl to the King of the Belgians for justful purposes. She was prosecuted because she was believed to be making a systematic business of the trade in English children. But this brothel-keeper and procuress was influentially connected. Princes and dukes, Ministers of the Crown and Members of Parliament were said to be among her customers. Witnesses were ready to swear to the presence of exalted personages and high officials in the disorderly houses at Chelsea, when suddenly the prosecution was brought to a close by a prearranged plea of guilty and a fine of £200, just one quarter the sum which it was stated in court used to be paid to her annually by the King of the Belgians. The

impression produced was very bad. It was deepened by the fact, also sworn to in court, that the police officer who had refused to be bribed by the brothel-keeper Jeffries had been first ridiculed by his superiors for his virtue, then censured for reporting the fact that "her houses were patronized by the aristocracy," and ultimately degraded and practically driven to resignation. Why should the procuress be let off practically scot free while the policeman whom she attempted in vain to corrupt was practically ruined? This may be answered when the reason is given why I am prosecuted and not the real traders in girls. I demanded in the "Pall Mall Gazette" either that Minahan should be prosecuted for perjury or that his superior officer should be dismissed the force. Nothing was done. Repeated efforts were made to bring the case before Parliament, but without effect. The general impression produced by the trial and its hushing up found vigorous expression in a sermon preached by Mr. Spurgeon on June 7, 1885:—

To our infinite disgust and horror, the names of certain of the greatest in the land are at this hour openly mentioned in connection with the filthiest debauchery. Faithfulness requires plain speech; but it is a hideous evil that the drugs of vice should be the chosen luxury of certain of our hereditary legislators and rulers. Woe unto thee, O land, when thy great ones love the harlot's house! Deep is our shame when we know that our judges are not clear in this matter, but social purity has been put to the blush by magistrates of no mean degree; yet, it is said that the courts of justice have lent themselves to the covering and hushing up of the iniquities of the great. Shall not God be grieved by such a nation as this? He who has read a certain story, which is but too well known, must have felt his ears tingle and his heart tremble. There were judges once who would not have suffered the laws to be trampled on by the great, but would have dealt out equal justice to rich and poor: I cannot persuade myself that it will be otherwise now, and yet I fear the worst. O God, have mercy upon the land whose judgment-seats and palaces are defiled with vice!

The Jeffries case was hushed up on May 10. Ten days later the Criminal Law Amendment Bill was talked out on the second reading, and the very lowest depth appeared to have been reached. All hope of amending the law seemed to be lost. Not twenty members of the House of Commons could be got to attend when the long-deferred Bill was brought in for a second reading; the press was silent as the grave; and the one attempt to put the law in motion had terminated in a miscarriage of justice in which the penalty fell most severely upon those who sought to punish the evildoers.]

#### The Last Chance for the Bill.

[It was at this stage, when almost all hope was gone, that Mr. Benjamin Scott came to the office of the "Pall Mall Gazette," charged with a message from his committee begging me, if possible, to take the matter up. I had previously received most urgent letters from Miss Ellice Hopkins, imploring me to take action, and I was personally only too anxious to comply. On the 11th of April Miss Hopkins wrote to me as follows:—"You once promised that you would insert in your paper anything I wrote on the protection of the young. Will you have the courage to insert this awful little paper? The facts are awful, I know; but they are facts about children. Some that I know, but have not dared to give are far worse than those I have given, and it does seem to me that it is false delicacy to leave these poor mites suffering these nameless horrors because we are too delicate to interfere. I am sick of people who shuffle nervously into a pair of lavender kid gloves, when it is a matter of pulling a child out of an open

drain into which it has fallen through the carelessness in leaving it unfenced, exclaiming, 'Oh, it is such a very delicate question that I cannot be mixed up in it.' God knows that if I could save these unhappy children I would be 'mixed up' with the mud in which they are being suffocated, until no one could know which was me and which was it. You can excise if you think that some of the things are too awful. But we have tried in vain to work the question privately."

Mr. Benjamin Scott brought me news of a horrible outrage committed on a child about thirteen by a wealthy customer of Mrs. Jeffries, in one of Mrs. Jeffries's brothels. They had been prepared to prove this on sworn evidence in court. This connected the failure of the Jeffries prosecution and the foreign trade with the violation and entrapping young girls, and materially contributed to dispose me to take up the question.]

#### A Desperate Venture.

[But a newspaper editor has to think of many things, and the risk was enormous. I was naturally loth to imperil a great position and influence in what seemed a forbidding and forlorn crusade in favour of a lost cause. When, however, I reflected on the facts and saw that the Bill was hopelessly lost unless some one took it in hand, I had no option but to risk all in a desperate attempt to rouse public opinion to a sense of the imperative necessity of forcing the Bill through. I made that desperate attempt: I risked all; and I achieved my end. That the Criminal Law Amendment Act is now on the Statute-Book, instead of being indefinitely postponed till some session of the new Parliament, is primarily due to the fact that I and those whom you are now asked to commit for trial at the Old Bailey have ventured our substance, our reputation, our liberty—aye, and even our lives—in a daring and marvellously-successful attempt to bring vividly home to the heart, the conscience, and the imagination of the country some slight idea of the horrors of that organised system of criminal vice which the Government had been denouncing since 1881, but with which they were powerless to cope until we came to their assistance in 1885. And yet, in the strange irony of circumstances, the first act of the Treasury is to prosecute as criminals the men and women but for whom the criminal law would still have been unamended, and to pursue as abductors guilty of indecent assault those whose conduct was admittedly prompted by their zeal for the prevention of abduction and the punishment of all who lay an impure hand on an English girl.]

#### No Help from the Police.

[I spent Whit Monday in reading up the debates on the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, and saw at a glance that all that was needed to carry that measure in face of all obstacles was a graphic and vivid description of the actual evils with which the measure was framed to deal. Did these evils exist, or had they disappeared since the Lords' Committee reported? That was the first question, and to answer that I addressed myself without delay. But in seeking to strengthen the law by which vicious criminals could be punished, I soon found that no assistance would be rendered me by the

police. However willing they might be to assist in unearthing the criminal vice in London, of which, as every experienced officer in the force is well aware, we have but skimmed the surface, they dare not speak without permission from headquarters, and that permission was absolutely refused. I approached the late Home Secretary through a mutual friend, as the Minister interested in the passing of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, and asked him respectfully if he would permit the superintendents of police to furnish me with the information in their possession which would enable me to bring the evidence of the Lords' Committee down to date and rouse public opinion in favour of the bill. Sir W. Harcourt replied expressing satisfaction that public opinion should be directed to the bill, but refusing absolutely to permit the metropolitan police to place any information whatever at my disposal. From the police, therefore, I could hope for no assistance, not even in collecting evidence to enable their official chief at the Home Office to carry his bill through Parliament. The only service in this cause rendered by the official custodians of public morality has been the prosecution of those to whose efforts is due the carrying of the bill which Sir W. Harcourt in three successive years had failed to pass.]

#### Collecting Information.

[Cut off from all hope of assistance by the officials, whose functions ought naturally to have made them our zealous helpers, I had to fall back upon ex-officials, jail chaplains, rescue workers, reclaimed brothel-keepers, and others who were in a position of independence, enabling them to speak with freedom of the result of their experience. Their evidence was unanimous. They all testified to the fact that young girls, unwitting and unwilling, were constantly procured for dissolute men, inveigled into brothels, outraged with impunity, and then spirited away from brothel to brothel, or taken out of the country to feed the slave markets of the regulated prostitution of the Continent. All agreed that the evil, instead of being abated, had rather increased within the last two years. Above the age of thirteen the law ensured impunity to crime, provided that by any pretext an ignorant consent was wrung, it might be from an intoxicated child, by an experienced and ruthless debauchee. I am assured by the Chaplain of one of Her Majesty's prisons that in a home for fallen children near Newport there are some fifty children under ten, all of whom have been violated. In Sister Emma's home in Farnham there were last May forty girls under twelve, all of whom had been violated, and only in four cases had there been any one punished for the crime. In southern London men had been shown in public court to have outraged—one sixteen, the other a dozen children, but in one case only was there a conviction. The children over thirteen had consented, those under thirteen did not know the nature of an oath. In the eight weeks between the beginning of our investigations and the end of July no fewer than thirty cases, involving injury to forty-three girls between three and thirteen years of age, were brought before the law courts. Every year new homes for ruined children were being opened to provide for the shattered wrecks of English girlhood.]

## Some Maddening Facts.

[In the conspiracy of lust and hunger I was assured that even mothers traded on their offspring, and sacrificed their daughters to prostitution for cash down. This fact is repeatedly asserted in the evidence taken by the Lord's Committee, which busy Mr. Poland may not yet have had time to read, or may think "better left alone." A woman whom I am proud to call my friend was actually prosecuted before the late Mr. Serjeant Cox for assaulting a mother who had consented to a paramour "cleansing himself" on the person of her innocent eleven-year-old daughter; and I was furnished with particulars of other cases in which drunken and immoral mothers had sold their daughters to wealthy purchasers. Subsequently, in the course of my inquiries, I came across at least three mothers who were perfectly ready to contract with me for their daughter's shame. One was most anxious, repeatedly renewing the negotiations to sell her twelve-year-old daughter outright to me for £3 or £4; in the other cases the mother only proposed to sell the daughter's virginity. Nor is it only poverty that drives to this extremity of crime. The tenant of a villa in St. John's Wood, who had been praising her daughter's graces and accomplishments, remarked drily when I said she would take good care no one was allowed to seduce such a daughter, "It depends upon the price."]

[In January last, in a brothel in the East of London, a sailor was offered the brothel-keeper's own daughter of eleven. He could not stand that, and brought the case before the Thames police-court. The mother's justification was, "I have kept her by it; and what I have done for her she will have to do for me; that's fair." The law took the child from her and sent her to an industrial school. A still more horrible case was reported to me from the north of England, in which a mother confessed on her deathbed that she had strapped her daughter down to the bed in order to compel her to submit to the dishonour for which a customer had paid. It was only the other day that a woman met a friend of mine—a public servant of unblemished repute—at the door of his own house in Victoria-street, and offered him her daughter for the night for a sovereign. I could take you to a brothel where the keeper prostituted her three daughters, one after the other, to wealthy customers, and is now prostituting her niece with the child's mother's consent. In brothels children are often reared for debauchery, and their maidenhood is kept solely to increase their value in the market of vice. One of the first cases heard under the new Act at Nottingham was that in which a mother was proved to keep the brothel in which her daughter of fifteen was a prostitute. Facts like these seem to me sufficiently maddening to justify almost any attempt to stop such crimes.]

## Mrs. Butler introduces Jarrett.

[Among the reclaimed procuresses and keepers of bad houses is Rebecca Jarrett. She was introduced to me by Mrs. Josephine Butler—a lady whose name ranks with those of Miss Nightingale and Mrs. Browning as the three foremost among the womanhood of this century. I was told Jarrett was a woman who had once been the worst of her sex, but who for the last six months was consumed by a remorseful

desire to make some amends for the crimes which in her long career of vice she had committed against her sex. She was reluctant to tell me the story of her past life—with good cause. It was a terrible narrative. A tale not only of shame but of crime—of the procuring of innocent children for the worst purposes and their sale to dissolute customers, who for £10 or £20 could purchase liberty to rape with impunity. Truthful although the confession appeared, I was loath to believe it. It was true that in the main it had been confirmed by the highest ex-official testimony, but I would not believe it was possible until I could see the evidence with my own eyes.]

[If drunken and immoral women were in the habit of procuring innocent girls for houses of ill-fame the fact could be verified without difficulty. If virgins were constantly being sold for dishonour, the most conclusive proof would be to buy one or two, ostensibly for outrage, but really to rescue them from their impending fate. To personate the dissolute customer, to assume for purposes of detection a disguise of all others most abhorrent to me, and the one which of all others it was most difficult for me to sustain seemed to me much the most direct and effective method of confirming or confuting the accuracy of the statements which I had received from many sources, but for which I would not vouch unless I could speak of their occurrence from my own personal knowledge. Any scruples which I had as to the propriety of taking this course were silenced by the conviction that by pretending to buy the children for immoral purposes I should in reality be saving them from a horrible destiny. In coming to this decision I am aware that I stood and stand almost alone. I admit absolutely and without reserve that unless it was a supreme necessity it cannot possibly be justified. It is one of those things which a man must do or leave undone on his own responsibility. I sought no counsel, and I ask no absolution. If in carrying out that resolution, I have technically broken the law unwittingly, I do not flinch from bearing the penalty. I would only ask that I and I alone may bear the punishment for the offence which I alone conceived, and which I alone would have executed had it been possible at that early stage of the proceedings to have dispensed with the aid of agents.]

## Jarrett Holds Back.

[Unfortunately I was pressed for time. It was believed to be indispensable, if the Bill were to pass, that the articles should appear at the close of the Whitsun recess. I was therefore reluctantly obliged to employ Rebecca Jarrett in a transaction for which I alone ought to have borne the full legal, as I certainly bear the whole moral responsibility. She was most reluctant to return even for once and for purposes of demonstration to her old rôle of procuress. Mrs. Butler was very anxious lest the virtue of the recently-reclaimed convert should be exposed to the strain of too great a temptation, and the attempt to demonstrate the existence of a system of crime might result in the loss of a soul. Jarrett pleaded to be spared this burden. I was inexorable. I said to her, "You have told me that you have procured and ruined in terrible earnest scores of innocent girls. If you are really penitent, make amends

for your crime by procuring one, not for ruin but for rescue, whose purchase will save more girls from being sold in the future than all those whom you have ruined in the past." And Rebecca, drunkard and prostitute as she had been in the past, responded to that appeal with fear and trembling, believing that she was exposing herself to risk of eternal damnation if she once more fell before the temptation of drink to which she was exposed in endeavouring to make some atonement for her former crimes.]

## The Archbishop of Canterbury is told.

[And here let me explain that by way of keeping myself within the law I went to a lawyer who has long been actively interested in enforcing the laws for the protection of women and children, and told him of my purpose. I explained that, in order to verify the existence of a regularly-organised traffic in the virtue of English girls, I proposed, for the purpose of detection, to enter the market, buy girls, take them over the ground as if they were really going to be dishonoured, and then send them out of the country. I told him that I did not ask his advice as to whether this was or was not the best thing to do. I only wanted to have his opinion as a lawyer as to whether, in case I should be run in while apparently engaged in objectionable transactions, I should be held answerable for offences which I was only pretending to commit. This, of course, was a very great risk. If the police had been efficient and on the alert, it was quite possible that I might have been arrested before my object was known or my purpose accomplished. I had not at that time conceived the supreme absurdity of a prosecution after the whole object and intent of my transactions had been before the world for nearly three months. The lawyer whom I consulted advised me that there could be no crime without criminal intent. That was a broad principle, and so long as my intent was not criminal, but the reverse of criminal, he did not think that I need apprehend a criminal prosecution. I asked him, "How can I best establish the absence of criminal intent?" He replied, "You had better take into your confidence some Member of Parliament or other public personage who would be the last person whom you would inform of your project if it had been really of a felonious nature. Reflecting on this advice, I determined to go and tell the Archbishop of Canterbury. If I really meditated the commission of crimes, the Primate of the English Church was the very last person to whom I would resort, and accordingly I communicated to his Grace the resolution at which I had arrived. I explained to him very fully and frankly the hopeless deadlock at which the Criminal Law Amendment Bill had arrived, and declared my determination to personate a criminal in order to detect crime. I told him that I was going to brothels and brothel-keepers in order to see whether they would procure girls for cash down, that I intended to buy girls, and to send girls out of the country, and in short to appear to commit all the offences against which the new bill was framed, in order to raise sufficient public interest in the measure to secure its passing this session. His Grace the Archbishop, as I expected, did his best to dissuade me from an enterprise fraught with so much moral and material risk. "There is no other way," I replied, "in which the work can

be done. I know the enormous difficulties of treating the subject in the press. If it is to be done at all I must have facts at first-hand, otherwise I may as well leave it alone. And, after all, the material risk of being killed is only that taken by every common soldier in the Soudan; and as for the moral risk of personation, it is faced by every detective who is employed in unearthing the secrets of conspirators." His Grace remarked that "it might be necessary that such work should be done, but it did not follow, therefore, that I was called to do it." "That is a matter for the individual conscience to decide; but if I refuse, who else will undertake it? If I refuse to do this the bill will not pass this year. I dare not take the responsibility of refusing to take the only means of passing a measure so urgently needed and so hopelessly blocked. But I did not come to ask your counsel, which of course I knew must be adverse. I only came to inform you privately of my resolution, so that in case I should be run in I may be able to subpoena your Grace as a witness that I had no criminal intent in operations which for the time being might have the semblance of criminality." I then made a similar communication to Cardinal Manning, not, of course, entering into detail about names, places, or particular methods, but merely telling him that, with the assistance of agents, I was about to personate for a short time one of the many wealthy debauchees to minister to whose lust so many hundreds of the children of the poor are annually sacrificed. Before the inquiry closed, I communicated the nature of my operations, more or less in detail, to members of the present Ministry, many members of Parliament, and, had I wished to protract the present inquiry, I could have produced any number of witnesses to speak to the *bona fides* of the spirit in which I entered upon the events which have landed me here.]

## Jarrett agrees to buy a Child.

[I will now resume the thread of my narrative. Jarrett consented, most reluctantly and under moral pressure of the most imperious kind, to resume for once the old rôle of procuress, which she had often played before in grim earnest, but was confronted by a great difficulty. This kind of thing, she said—and in this she was perfectly right—could not be done in a hurry. She had been out of the business for more than six months. She was reluctant to go back among her old friends. She was also most reluctant to criminate her old companions. I promised her that I would not mention the names of the persons who sold the child. My object was not to punish individuals, but to verify the existence of a system, to demonstrate the facility with which girls could be procured for a life of shame, to prove that the worst outrage might be perpetrated with impunity in London brothels, and to show the ease with which the victim might be made to disappear on the Continent without the police or the public having the slightest clue to where she could be found. Compared with such an object, the mere identification of particular individuals concerned me nothing; the system was everything.]

Had it been otherwise, I would have taken more trouble to have obtained incriminating evidence which would have effectually closed the mouths of the witnesses for the prosecution.

But the simplest and most natural method was to make it as like the real thing as possible. In my own investigations I was foiled on one occasion by giving the manager of one of the most fashionable brothels in the north-west reason to suspect that I was more anxious to commit her rather than to procure the children for whom I was inquiring. In all transactions of this incriminating character, negotiators naturally take care to dispense with witnesses, and as for receipts, unless they were very reckless or very drunk, you might as well ask them to register the sale of a child at Somerset House.

#### Jarrett reports Progress.

On the evening of the Tuesday before Derby day Mrs. Jarrett informed me that she had been in her old haunts, that she had seen an old friend who did not know of her change of life, a woman with whom she used to drink in old days, and who she gave me to understand was living in a bad house in a Marylebone slum. She told me that this woman would get her a child the next day, and that the price would be £5. I had supplied her with all the money for expenses, but I paid her no salary. Like all the others who helped us, she was supposed to work for the sake of the cause, not for the sake of gain. None of the members of the Secret Commission were paid.

I gave her £5 for the purchase of the child, and told her that she had to be very careful that the parents or guardians of the child were fully aware why the child was wanted, and that she had on no account to bring me any girl who was not procured by a bad woman with the consent of her parents or guardian for immoral purposes. This, she assured me, was fully understood by the woman to whom she had applied for a child. She told me that she had told the woman that she was keeping a gay house, that she was living with a commercial traveller, and that she wanted a child, a pure child, just over thirteen, for a man. This child was to be handed over next day. Part of the purchase-money was to be paid down, the rest had to be sent after the child's virginity had been attested by a competent authority.

#### The Points to be Proved.

Now, in order to explain what was subsequently done, I must briefly state what it was that I wished to prove. It was asserted and denied that innocent children could be procured for immoral purposes with the consent of their mothers. It was asserted and denied that a mid-wife whose name was given to me was in the habit of certifying the virginity of young girls before they were dishonoured, that she was willing to undertake their repair after their violation, and, further, that she was willing to sell drugs for the purpose of rendering the children unconscious during the perpetration of the crime. It was further asserted and denied that a brothel keeper would admit a young girl of thirteen to her premises for immoral purposes and that she would supply her customers with drink without a licence. And, lastly, it was asserted and denied that girls of thirteen could be taken out of the country, placed abroad in places where all trace of them could be lost, and where all the efforts of the police failed to find them. I wanted to set all these questions at rest once for all before committing myself to my statement on this subject.

#### The Irony of the Situation.

Facts enough, it may be said, there were already. Where, for instance, is the girl Kate Hearnden, who, at the age of seventeen, was spirited away from Folkestone by a procuress more than a year ago, all trace of whom the police have utterly failed to find? And what has been done even to attempt to discover the man who, aided by a procuress, in the self-same month that I took Eliza Armstrong to the house of ill-fame in Poland Street, did actually violate a girl of fourteen in that self-same brothel, and therefore furnished me with the original of "Lily" in the Maiden Tribute. That girl is no myth, as Mr. Poland kindly suggested. I picked her up off the streets and placed her in good hands, and in case of need I can produce her in the witness-box, together with the young companion to whom she told her tragic tale as soon as she escaped from the house. The real criminal who actually violates children escapes scot-free. All the energies of the prosecution are dedicated to the punishment of those who, in order to prevent the crime, show how easily it might have been accomplished. If I had only violated Eliza Armstrong, and taken the usual precautions adopted by such criminals against detection and discovery, there would have been one more lost girl in London streets to-day, but I should have escaped scot-free. Even when I had published all the details of the apparent crime in the papers, the police seemed to be utterly at a loss, and not until they had been furnished with the child's address, and till delivered up to her mother, and proclaimed in the hearing of all London my responsibility for all that was done, did they take any effective action against any one concerned. When the actual criminals take similar pains to proclaim their deeds abroad, the Treasury will perhaps institute a prosecution against the perpetrators of an actual rape, but apparently not till then. The crowning proof of the ineptitude of the forces available for the detection and suppression of criminal vice is surely afforded by this demonstration of the energy and perspicacity of Scotland Yard in the pursuit of the alleged abductors of Eliza Armstrong.

#### How the Child was kept Ignorant.

[Similar facts to the abduction of Kate Hearnden, and the rape of the girl whom I call "Lily," might be multiplied to any extent by those who take the trouble to ascertain how the standing army of London prostitution is recruited. But I wanted what Mr. Labouchere called "cast iron facts," which would enable me to speak of my own knowledge of the business. At the same time I wanted to save the innocent medium of the experimental demonstration from any contaminating suspicion of the purpose for which she was procured. This was to me a *sine qua non*. It was a task of no ordinary difficulty. The child had to be given to understand that she was engaged for a situation, at the same time that her mother and the procurer were to be made to believe beyond doubt that she was being sold into prostitution. If the girl had any suspicion that she was wanted for immoral purposes, and had still consented to have come with Jarrett, it would have created a presumption that she was not an innocent girl, but was, in short, little better than a little harlot, palmed off upon a credulous or inexperienced

customer. To the girl, therefore, it was necessary that the transaction from first to last should be simply and solely an engagement to service, and it is this fact which has enabled the witnesses for the prosecution to represent her engagement solely in that light. But, at the same time, it was indispensable that the procuress and the mother should be given to understand by Jarrett that the child was wanted for immoral purposes. Hence the conversation between Jarrett and the mother and the procuress when they were alone must necessarily have an altogether different character to that which took place when the girl was also present. It is solely concerning the conversation which took place when the girl was present that the witnesses have spoken. Of the other conversation, in which Mrs. Jarrett expressly stated that she kept a gay house, that she wanted a young girl just over thirteen for a man, and the payment of the money—£2 to one and £1 to the other—of this they naturally say nothing, and profess to know nothing. Such denials are a matter of course after exposure; nor is it conceivable, were they ten times more guilty, that they should take any other course.

#### The Evening of the Derby Day.

On the evening of Derby day I went by appointment to Albany Street and had tea with Eliza Armstrong and Mrs. Jarrett. The conversation was general, concerning her schooling, her teachers, her excursions into the country, and I need hardly say that I was most careful to say nothing that could in any way lead the child to suspect that she had not been solely engaged for the situation into which I intended to place her. After she had left the room, Mrs. Jarrett told me how she had got the girl. She said that she had paid £2 to the procuress and £1 to the mother. Two pounds more was to be sent to the former if the child was all right—that is to say, if she was found to be pure. If she was not pure she had to be returned as she went—that is to say, without being tampered with by any man, and no more money was to be paid. I asked her if she was quite sure the mother consented, knowing why her daughter was wanted. "Quite sure," she replied, "and to make it still more certain I sent the child back to bid her good-bye when I had dressed her in her new clothes, so that even then if she repented she could have stopped the child; but she had gone out drinking with the money I had given her, and did not even bid her daughter good-bye." Jarrett told me distinctly that she had told the mother her daughter was wanted for a man, that she must be pure, and that she had told Mrs. Broughton that if she had been too familiar with boys she would not suit. The mother was quite willing she should go.

#### Jarrett's assurances of the Mother's Consent.

It was upon this repeated and emphatic assurance of Jarrett's that I took the steps which have brought me here. I had only known Jarrett about a week, but she came to me with an emphatic testimonial as to her trustworthiness from the one lady in all England upon whose opinion concerning such women I should be inclined to rely. Mrs. Butler, from a close intimacy extending over some months, told me that I could implicitly trust Jarrett. So far as I could see there was no reason to distrust her.

She had not volunteered for this work. I had thrust her into it, she being most unwilling. Her consent had been wrung from her by an appeal to her sense of her own guilt in the past, and her desire to make reparation in the future. All her expenses were paid without question. She had broken with her old friends; her prospects with Mrs. Butler would be ruined if she played me false. Her dealings with me so far as they went had been very straightforward, and I may say that when she and the witnesses for the prosecution were examined before the Mansion House Commission, where both sides were fully and impartially heard, the unanimous opinion of those present differed entirely from that of Mr. Poland, who merely hears one side on account of the enforced silence of the prisoner in the dock. I had no reason to suspect her under such circumstances of a swindle so base as one which would expose her at the same time to a double charge of fraudulent abduction from the parents and that of obtaining money under false pretences from me, and would crown a career of vice and crime with the culminating outrage of deceiving those who had done their utmost to start her in a new career of virtue and of good works.

#### The Examination at the Midwife's.

Having thus through a trusty agent, bought Eliza Armstrong, I determined to make her the unconscious instrument of checking such sales in the future. First of all, there was the mid-wife. I was incredulous that in the midst of our city such a creature could exist. To prove that fact, no method was so simple as to test her with a sample case. I sent Mr. Jacques, as my courier, to explain to the midwife that a wealthy gentleman, with a penchant for little children, had procured a little girl of whose virginity he wished to be satisfied before seduction. Would she examine the child for that purpose? The midwife made no objection. An appointment was made for the Wednesday evening. In conversation with Mr. Jacques, she mentioned that she often made such examinations, naming a one-armed customer for whom she had certified many virgins, and subsequently attended to the injuries inflicted by their violation. Her fee for the purpose was one guinea. Rebecca Jarrett and Mr. Jacques attended with the girl Eliza at the hour fixed. Mr. Jacques waited behind a curtained-off partition while the examination took place. The child was told that it was necessary to see that she was all right for her situation, and she consented. The examination was momentary, and no objection whatever was made by the girl. I was advised that the examination being made with consent was perfectly lawful. Had the girl objected we would of course have abandoned that part of the project. No one can feel more strongly than I do about the hatefulness of enforced examinations.

[I was largely instrumental in securing the punishment by a civil action of two doctors in the North of England who made a compulsory examination of a girl suspected by the police of concealment of birth. I endeavoured, but endeavoured in vain, to secure the alteration of the law in two directions, so as to render penal that which is now legal enough. At present the defence of consent disposes of an indecent assault if the girl is above the age of thirteen.

I wanted that raised to sixteen, and failed. Mr. Stansfeld, on the strength of this examination of Eliza Armstrong, proposed to make it a special offence to examine a girl with a view to her violation. The amendment was defeated, Sir W. Harcourt arguing that medical men in the ordinary routine of their profession had so often to make examinations of this nature that it would be unfair to punish them, specially if it should happen that any one of these examinations were unwittingly to be made for an immoral purpose. Servant girls taken from a low neighbourhood, girls suspected of pregnancy, are not unfrequently examined by medical men at the request of their mistresses, and with their own consent, and there was nothing suggestive of immorality in this examination by one of her own sex to which Eliza Armstrong was subjected. I saw her immediately afterwards, and she made no remark, although she recognised me as the friend whom she met at tea. Nor did she ever allude to the examination even to her mother until questioned on the point by the police. Such silence in case of a real indecent assault with immoral intent would be held conclusive evidence of consent, as, indeed, it was held this very week by Mr. Paget in Hammersmith police-court in a case of alleged rape. The law can hardly take a severer view of an act in which the intent was pure than it does in cases in which the intent was criminal. So far as I am personally concerned, I am content if the healthy moral indignation which my conduct has excited against all those who lightly examine or indecently touch the person of a woman should react against myself as one of its first victims. What I caused to be done by a woman to a girl was decency and prudery itself compared with the shameless and nameless outrage which at the hands of men the law of the land, suspended but unrepealed, decrees as the periodical condition on which the State certifies women as fit instruments for the lust of its soldiers.]

#### At Poland Street.

The examination over, the midwife assured Mr. Jacques that the child was a virgin. "Poor little thing," she said, "she will suffer a great deal." In order to allay her sufferings the midwife sold Jacques a bottle of chloroform, a small bottle—here it is, if the prosecution wish to have it (producing the phial, which was handed to Mr. Poland)—for which he paid 30s. Its value at a chemist's would be about 1s. She said that her clients always found it most effective, but she gave no directions as to its use. The conversation took place in French between Mr. Jacques and the midwife, the child, of course, understanding nothing. I am advised to interpolate one sentence here, if the clerk of the court will take it down. It is, "Here I would say that I have no intention or wish to shield this midwife. On the contrary, although it was no part of my original design to expose or punish any persons by name, yet I shall not regret if in this case, without any intention on my part, the Treasury should at last bring to justice one real criminal."

Mr. STEAD then proceeded:—I met the party outside the door, and accompanied them to Poland Street. The foreign woman who kept the house of accommodation above the ham and beef shop made no difficulty about giving us

accommodation. It was a little before ten o'clock, and the child thought she had come to an hotel. We took two rooms for the four of us, paying about seven-and-sixpence a room. In order that there might be no doubt as to the knowledge of the keeper of the house of the youth of the child, we summoned her upstairs, and ordered some whiskey and lemonade. She brought us the spirit, which we threw away when her back was turned, and drank the lemonade. In order to make quite sure that the child could be procured and placed quite at my mercy in a brothel, I asked Jarrett to call me in. The girl has already told you what happened. Emptying a little chloroform on a handkerchief, she asked the child to take a good sniff of it. The child, not liking the smell, flung the handkerchief away. That, according to the story of the prosecution, is the administering of a drug which figures so prominently in the summons. It was with no intent to do her harm, it was to shield her from knowing even that a man had entered her room that she was asked to sniff the handkerchief. I wished her to be kept quite ignorant of the whole affair. I wanted her to be sound asleep when I entered her room, and it was not until Jarrett assured me she was sleeping that I entered the room. Unfortunately she was not asleep. My step—for I never spoke—roused her. She cried out, as many another poor child has done in London brothels, "There is a man in the room." I at once withdrew. Mrs. Jarrett soothed the child, and told her it would be better to go elsewhere for a quieter lodging. She dressed her and took her to a respectable house, where she passed the night. That was all that passed in that brothel. Eliza Armstrong passed out as pure as she entered it, not exactly knowing whether "the man" had really been in the room or whether it was a mere vision of the night. No hand was laid upon her to do her harm. Had she been my own daughter I could not have been more careful to shield her from the very suspicion of evil.

I tried, with the assistance of Mr. Stansfeld, to introduce a clause into the Criminal Law Amendment Bill making it penal to take any woman or girl to a brothel without telling her what it was. He failed to secure the acceptance of that amendment, and, however improper it may be to take a child of thirteen to a brothel under pretext that it is an hotel, it is not even under the new law a legal offence, unless she is taken there for purposes of carnal intercourse, which even the prosecution do not allege against me in this case.

#### Why the Child was sent to Paris.

I sent her to Paris. I had two reasons for doing this. First, I wished to show the ease with which a girl who had been ruined might be made to disappear abroad without any clue being afforded of her removal, and secondly I wished to place her as far as possible from the influence of a drunken mother, who had sold her child to shame. Whether I was right or wrong in believing the report which Rebecca Jarrett brought me concerning the negotiations by which the child came into her possession, is a point on which opinion may differ. There can, however, be no question as to the sincerity with which I accepted the report of my agent. I believed that I had in my possession the innocent

daughter, whom an unscrupulous neighbour and a drunken mother had sold to a professed brothel-keeper for purposes of vice, and if for one moment your worship could place yourself in imagination in possession of such an article you will be able to appreciate the difficulty of my position. If I had placed her in a situation near at hand the mother might find her out, and the child might return to be sold a second time, and that to a customer who would really outrage the girl whom I hoped to save.

#### The Salvation Army receives her.

[Thanks largely to the story of Lily, Mr. Labouchere was successful in introducing a clause into the Criminal Law Amendment Act, which expressly sanctions the removal of girls from the care of parents who assent to their seduction or prostitution; but last June that clause was as yet undrafted, and if the girl was to be kept out of harm's way it could only be effected by placing her in a situation a great distance from London.] According to the witnesses for the prosecution, there was no stipulation whatever as to place attached to the terms of service. Eliza Armstrong was to travel about, and the range of her travels was left absolutely undefined. In order secure that the girl should be well placed in good hands at a distance from home I applied to Mr. Bramwell Booth to help me in this matter. Mr. Bramwell Booth responded to my request with the readiness which the chiefs of The Salvation Army have ever shown when an opportunity was offered them of doing anything, however slight, to seek and save the fallen and the lost. I assured Mr. Booth that the child, Eliza Armstrong, had been sold to Rebecca Jarrett for prostitution.

I told him that I believed if she were allowed to return to her home she would in all probability be ruined, and I declared that as the mother had fully consented to her leaving home to go with Jarrett anywhere, there could be no question of any trouble arising as to removing the child without her parent's consent. I undertook to pay all expenses, including the child's wages, while she was being trained to household work in the situation which was to be found for her in France, if he, on the other hand, would see both that she was well done to, carefully trained and brought up in a Christian home. He consented, believing my statement to be correct, and that the mother had actually sold her child for vice. Next morning I saw Eliza Armstrong, Jarrett, and Madame Combe into the train for Paris.

#### Mr. Stead avowed his Responsibility.

[A ministerial crisis had just occurred, and for a week we were in suspense as to whether or not Lord Salisbury would form a Ministry. I was busy completing the Report of the Secret Commission. After the Report was published I was so absorbed in the discussion which followed and in the consideration of the recasting of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, rendered both possible and necessary by my investigations, that I paid little heed to the agitation which Mr. Thomas had commenced in the case of Eliza Armstrong.] I never saw Mr. Thomas till the 29th of July, and then I assured him in the most emphatic terms that I and I only was responsible for Eliza Armstrong, that Jarrett had merely acted as my agent in effecting the

purchase of the girl, and that The Salvation Army had no responsibility in the matter beyond taking charge at my request of a girl whom I believed would probably be sold to vice if she returned to her home. As he was acting as representative for the mother, with whom he left the Mansion House immediately after this statement of mine, I naturally expected, if the mother really wished to have her child restored, that she would make a formal demand to me to that effect. Yet no such demand was made either then or at any subsequent date. Therefore I took no action in the matter, and left the child where she was. I heard occasionally from Mr. Booth as to inquiries made by the police, the nature of which confirmed me in the belief that it was best to wait until the mother formally demanded her child.

The police, I was informed, indicated it as their belief that the mother would be satisfied to leave Eliza in her situation if assured that the child was really safe, and even the correspondence shows they had left upon Mr. Bramwell Booth's mind a very distinct impression that Mrs. Armstrong was a drunken woman, that Charles Street was a bad locality, and that it would be much better not to send the child back if it could be avoided. Whether Mr. Booth was right or wrong in that impression is another matter. That was the report which he made to me as to the nature of his interviews with the police. I replied stating that much as I deprecated the return of the child to the demoralised surroundings of a drunken home, it would be necessary to hand her over, even to certain ruin if the mother or the police formally demanded her return. This decision Mr. Bramwell Booth communicated to Mrs. Armstrong on August 1. Mr. Poland stated accurately its value when he said that Mr. Booth told the mother, "Go away and consult your husband, and if you really want the child back you shall have her." That was the way in which the matter was left on August 1, and from that day to this there is not the slightest evidence for saying Mr. Booth has ever received any intimation whatever from Mr. or Mrs. Armstrong as to their wishes about their daughter.

#### No Demand for the Child's Restoration.

On the 13th of August, in reply to a letter from Mr. Booth inquiring whether any further intimation had been received at Scotland Yard as to the intention of the mother, an inspector called at the Headquarters of The Salvation Army, and Mr. Booth reported his interview to me next day, informing me that the inspector called to say that Inspector Borner, who had the case in hand, was out of town till the 24th, and unless it was particularly wished otherwise they preferred to let the matter stand over till he came back, that someone connected with one of the fallen women's societies was really taking the most active part in the matter, and that they had heard nothing further from the mother, who she quite understood was to communicate further with them if she wanted her child.

Naturally, after such a communication from Scotland Yard, I felt I need take no further concern about the matter beyond having the girl near at hand in case a formal demand was actually made by the parents for her return.

She was brought to Paris in accordance with my wish, and held at call until more information was forthcoming as to the wishes of the mother.

The attitude on the part of the custodians of the child was publicly stated in "Lloyd's Newspaper" of August 15, which contained a letter from Mr. Bramwell Booth to the editor, stating that Mrs. Armstrong had not yet communicated to him the decision of her husband about the child—a matter on which he has since sworn she never consulted him—and continuing as follows:—"The police inform me that up to yesterday (the 14th of August) they did not know what Mrs. Armstrong's wishes really are. Until I am definitely informed of the parents' decision, I naturally must continue to take care of the girl. But to show my *bona fides* in the matter, I am quite prepared to hand over the child to the editor of 'Lloyd's Newspaper' on Monday or Tuesday, if you will take the responsibility."

#### The Child is Restored.

It was not till Saturday, the 22nd August, two days before Inspector Borner was expected to return, that I met Mr. Catlin by accident at the office of The Salvation Army. In the course of a private conversation he assured me that the woman Armstrong had told him or his reporters that she really wished to have her child back. I at once asked Mr. Booth to telegraph for the child to be brought to my house at Wimbledon, and wrote to the mother by Mr. Thicknesse the letter which has been read in court, offering to give back the child, but pointing out the obvious disadvantages, after all the talk which there had been, of sending the child back into Charles Street. On Sunday Mr. Thicknesse informed me that the mother wished at least to see her child, and an interview was at once arranged between the mother and daughter at my house. Inspector Borner accompanied the party from Charles Street, and he has subsequently astonished me by stating in court that he took with him a company of detectives in plain clothes. He might as well have brought a battery of artillery, especially as he stated that he had no instructions to put any pressure on the mother either to leave her child or take it away, being merely charged, in case she brought her child home, to take her to Scotland Yard. He could hardly have needed a company of plain-clothes detectives to compel the mother to bring her daughter to Scotland Yard. To the restoration of the girl to her mother, the moment she formally demanded her, there was never any objection, and the moment the mother expressed that wish to my wife it was complied with.

#### The Mother's Receipt.

Before handing Eliza Armstrong over to her mother, Mr. Thicknesse, at my request, asked the mother if she wished to have a medical certificate of her daughter's being uninjured, which at their only interview Mr. Bramwell Booth had promised to secure for her if she wished it. If so, Mr. Jacques was authorised to call in a doctor, who would at once furnish her with it. The mother absolutely refused. She had talked with her daughter, she said, who was quite sure no one had outraged her. She expressed her readiness to sign a statement to that effect. That

statement was read over to her sentence by sentence, Mr. Thicknesse pausing for her assent to each before he proceeded to the next. After he had read the last—"I am quite satisfied she has been subjected to no outrage or bad usage"—and received her assent, he handed her the paper containing the declaration in order that she might read it herself. Then she signed it in his presence, and the matter was completed.

#### What had been Proved.

That is, your worship, a straightforward statement of the part which I played in the purchase, examination, removal, and restoration of Eliza Armstrong. By the aid of that child I was able, without exciting in her mind even a suspicion of immoral thought, to prove the procurement of a child of tender years, her certification from violation, the sale of a drug in order to facilitate the perpetration of a crime, the unquestioned admission of so young a child into a house of ill-fame, the sale of drink by the brothel-keeper, and the possibility of removing a child under the most suspicious circumstances to the Continent without exciting alarm or occasioning remark. That was what I set myself to accomplish, and that is what I succeeded in accomplishing.

#### The Ineptitude of the Police.

But I did more than I contemplated doing. I succeeded, without any intention on my part, in exhibiting the manner in which the police overlook what appear to be real crimes, and the extraordinary way in which they pursue the investigation of cases they profess to follow up. The story which excited the neighbours of the Armstrongs appeared in the "Pall Mall Gazette." Information as to the original of Lily was, therefore, in possession of the "Pall Mall Gazette." But never in the whole course of their inquiries did the police, directly or indirectly, ask me to furnish them with any information whatever. Until Inspector Borner was good enough to invest my house with a company of plain-clothes detectives, I received no communication whatever from Scotland Yard. I had gone out of my way to assure the Home Secretary, in one of the two private interviews which he was good enough to accord me, that I would be only too glad to place any information which I had at his disposal for purposes of investigation, but no inquiry was made. Scotland Yard is not more than five minutes' walk from Northumberland Street; but while it was thought advisable to send detectives to scour the country from Winchester to the south of France, no one ever seems to have thought of making even a passing inquiry at the newspaper office where all the stir had originated. Only less extraordinary was their conduct in relation to The Salvation Army. On the 1st of August the police report that Mr. Booth offered to return the child if the parents really want to have her back. On the 7th Mr. Booth writes asking if they had heard of the parents' decision. On the 14th an inspector informs Mr. Booth that they had heard nothing, and asks him to allow the matter to remain over till the 24th. Five days later, however, without any further communication whatever having been made to Mr. Booth, although there was lying at Scotland Yard his letter of the 7th of August, anxiously inquiring what decision the parents have arrived at, and

saying, "I rely upon you letting me know what is the fact," the police authorities send the father and a detective all the way to the south of France to hunt for a child, who had already been brought to Paris to be ready for delivery within twelve hours of receipt of definite information as to the wishes of the parents. It is difficult to say whether the fatuity, the extravagance, or the bad faith of this manoeuvre is most flagrant. Mr. Poland speaks about the pursuit being hot, and growing hotter. Mr. Poland is happily impervious to the ridiculous, for do not the facts, your worship, prove the pursuit never began until all apparent need for it was over, and all the subsequent zeal of the police was merely a roundabout method of forcing an open-door? If one thing is brought out more clearly than another by the way in which this case has been handled by Scotland Yard, it is that no criminal who first outrages and then places an English girl in a foreign brothel need be in danger of detection unless he advertises his misdeeds in the newspapers and then forwards to the authorities his name and address. Even then it will take the Department six weeks to trace his victim, and they will only succeed in their search if her abductor co-operates in her restoration.

#### The Contradictions in the Evidence.

I do not propose to comment upon the nature of the evidence that has been produced to prove the charges brought against us. The admissions made by Mrs. Broughton and Mrs. Armstrong under cross-examination are sufficient to justify a wholesome incredulity as to the story which the prosecution rely upon for their case. They charge us with abduction and taking a child out of her mother's house and out of the country without her mother's consent, and they prove it by producing the mother, who swears that she assented to her child's departure, and the intermediary, who expressly states that there was no limitation made as to her travelling about whether within the country or without. And here let me say that, although we bought her for prostitution and used her for demonstration, whatever was the contract between Jarrett and the mother, the understanding with the child herself was to rescue her by placing her in a situation. The examination by the midwife and the taking her to a brothel were incidents important but not vital. We could have bought her to place her direct in service, as I might buy any other child who is now in the market for vice, without sending her either to midwife or to brothel. They swear that they never consented to the prostitution of their child, and it is admitted in evidence that neither in word or deed was the purity of the child assailed. They swear that we engaged her for a situation, and they admit that we placed her in a situation. They swear that they expected her to do the scrubbing in a house kept by a woman who but the other day, and even at the moment, so far as they were informed, was a drunken prostitute; and they produce the girl, who gives evidence that she was put to service in the house of a Christian lady, who, to say the least, was a better mistress than even in their most sanguine moments they could have hoped Jarrett could have been. They swear that nothing was said about wages, but we pay her wages at double the rate mentioned at the

only interview in which the subject was mentioned to the mother. They charge us with indecent assault, and they produce as their sole witness the child, who declares that, so far from resenting the examination by one of her own sex, she never mentioned it to any one, even to her mother, until she was put up to it by the police or the Treasury, I don't know which.

They accuse us of administering a noxious drug with intent to do harm, and again their only witness declares that the drug was never administered, and that she refused to smell the handkerchief that was offered to her to sniff. There is hardly a single point, even as to the day of the alleged abduction, upon which the evidence of one witness is not contradicted by the evidence of another, and even if that is not sufficient, the witnesses frequently contradict themselves in cross-examination. What the witnesses for the prosecution have proved is that Mrs. Armstrong is occasionally a drunken woman, to whom Mr. Armstrong twice in a single day administers personal chastisement; that on Tuesday night, when Mrs. Jarrett's proposal was first made to her, she resented it by calling Mrs. Broughton opprobrious epithets, which is hardly the usual reward for offering one's daughter a good situation; and is it not strong presumptive evidence that the contract between the parties was something very different? They prove that on the following morning, having had a quarrel with her husband, she offers her daughter for a place, the proposal of which had the previous evening excited her fierce indignation. The witnesses have further proved that on Derby Day Mrs. Broughton received at least a sovereign from Rebecca Jarrett, although Mrs. Broughton had no claim upon the latter, all indebtedness having been discharged by a payment made by the Charity Organisation Society in the previous year, and they have proved that Jarrett stated that she gave Mrs. Broughton the money for the trouble she had taken. They have also proved that no questions were asked about wages, that the girl was dressed in new clothes from head to foot without exciting a remark, that no working clothes were given to her, that no address was asked as to where the girl was going, and, according to Mrs. Broughton, not even the name of the woman was asked when she took the child away. They have also proved from her own mouth that Mrs. Armstrong, who on the afternoon of Derby Day was without a sixpence, had received sufficient money from Jarrett to buy a comb for Eliza and a pair of socks for the baby, and that she then had sufficient left to get so unusually intoxicated as to be locked up that night as drunk and disorderly. All that was known was that the woman was taking the child to Albany Street, a notorious quarter, for Mrs. Armstrong's statement that Jarrett said she lived at Croydon is flatly contradicted by Mrs. Broughton and Jane Farrer. It is also admitted by two witnesses that Jarrett said that if the girl did not suit she would bring her back the same as she went, the exact phrase that would be employed in case a girl, said to have been pure, was discovered to have been tampered with and returned as not suitable for the purpose for which she was procured. Nor is that all that the witnesses for the prosecution have proved. They have shown that the girl was taken from a single room in a Marylebone slum, where eight



persons lived and slept, and from which she was most anxious to go, and placed in a situation in a comfortable middle-class family where she was well cared for, well fed, and very happy. They have proved that Jarrett was kind and considerate to the girl, and that before she left Paris she told her that Mrs. Broughton had never given her up to be a servant, but to be something worse. Mrs. Armstrong swears that her daughter went for domestic service, that she received not a farthing—I should say, that she only received a shilling; but she also swears that when the neighbours read to her the story of a girl who had been bought for immoral purposes for £5, whose mother had received £1 of the sum, she at once recognised it as her Eliza. The name in the newspaper was Lily, that of her own child was Eliza, but in spite of this she swears she recognised Lily as her child. Was it not because in every point her memory was true to the events of that Derby Day, and in the story in the "Pall Mall" she saw with terror and dismay a revelation of her own wrongdoing to the whole world? While attempting to make out that The Salvation Army conspired to keep the child away from her mother against her consent, they have proved by the evidence of the mother herself, and on that of Inspector Borner, that Mr. Bramwell Booth declared his readiness to give the child up if the parents decided to demand it. They have further proved that although the mother left the office of The Salvation Army on August 1 to consult with her husband about Mr. Booth's offer, she never told her husband of that offer, and never sent any reply to The Salvation Army until twelve days later, and then despatched a vaguely-worded letter which was never received by those to whom it is said to have been addressed. They have further admitted that although the alarm of the Armstrongs was roused by an article in the "Pall Mall Gazette," no intimation whatever was made to the "Pall Mall Gazette" either by the Armstrongs themselves or by the police, and that the very day on which the editor of the "Pall Mall Gazette" was even indirectly informed that the mother really wanted her child, he took immediate steps for restoring her. Further, they have shown that Mr. Booth on August 7 relied upon the police to give him information as to what should be done for the child's welfare; but that no intimation was given him, and that, although they knew that he was ready to give her up on the application of the parents, no application was made to him even when the police were sending the father to the south of France for a girl who had already been brought within ten hours of London in order that she might be given up at call. All these admissions, although they do not prove that the girl was sold by Mrs. Broughton and Mrs. Armstrong, go far to confirm the statement made by my agent Jarrett, whose mouth is closed, that she did buy the child for immoral purposes. Everything admitted with regard to the engagement harmonises much more with the story of the sale than the story of service. But accepting their story as they have told it, it entirely demolishes all the counts in the indictment against us. The drug was not administered, the girl made no protest against the examination, and she was not taken away from home without the express sanction of her mother. That sanction was given, she alleges, in order

that the girl might go to a situation, and our answer is that even if that be so we placed her in a situation, and in a better situation than they ever profess to have covenanted for.

#### No Abduction because Consent.

The case before your worship is not whether any or all of the incidents in the Lily story are true or false, but whether I and those whom I induced to assist me in this particular transaction are or are not guilty of certain specified offences. I submit that there is no case to submit to a jury, for according to the evidence of the witnesses for the prosecution these offences were never committed. There can be no abduction where there is consent, and the consent of the mother was admittedly given for the departure of the child. Even if she did not, as she says, consent to her going with Jarrett for an immoral purpose, that is beside the question, for the child was not taken away for an immoral purpose. If, as they say she was engaged as a servant, I fulfilled my contract. The period of the alleged abduction was probably the happiest period in the existence of the child—one upon which she will look back with regret in the midst of the surroundings into which she has been plunged.

#### The Facilities for Crime.

It may be said that my method of dealing with the child was very extraordinary, but the circumstances were extraordinary, and nothing short of some such demonstration would have convinced a sceptical public of the ease and impunity with which crimes of the nature I have endeavoured to expose could be perpetrated. Even if Jarrett did deceive me, she only took upon her own shoulders the crime of procuring a child for a brothel. The child was procured for me, to my order, for cash down; whether the procurer was Jarrett or Mrs. Broughton is a mere matter of detail. If a woman like Jarrett could do that, when all her surroundings tended to keep her straight, what could she not do when in the midst of her old felonious companions? And there are hundreds of women at this hour in London whose daily bread is gained by supplying to their customers whatever human dainty the jaded lust of the voluptuary may fancy. If I, a novice, with but £5, could have Eliza Armstrong brought to any brothel I cared to select, what could not be done by an experienced debauchee like the Minotaur of London, with the thousands per annum which he dedicates to the service of his foul and unnatural lust?

#### Who Have Really injured the Child.

Anxious as I was to secure the passing of the Bill, I would not have made this demonstration if I had foreseen that unworthy motives would ever have made Eliza Armstrong cognizant of the part she played unconsciously. I never would have sullied her mind with a whisper of the tale which in their zeal our enemies have forced upon her in all its worst suggestiveness. But for the anxiety of some to injure the "Pall Mall Gazette," and of others to attack The Salvation Army, Eliza Armstrong would at this moment have been leading an innocent and industrious life in the midst of happy surroundings, not knowing anything of the fate which

enabled us to use her so as to remodel an Act of Parliament, and strengthen the safeguards which the law provides for the protection of the honour and purity of English girls.

#### The Guiding Brain and Directing Hand.

I am aware of the risks of my proceeding. I have exasperated all those to whose lusts London brothel-keepers administer. That class is highly placed. It has representatives in the Court, in the legislature, in the press, and I know not where. Had so many influential people not been permeated with this corruption there would have been no need for the tremendous experi-

ment of arousing the consciences of the masses of the people by the report of our Secret Commission. But that experiment was our only resource. If any of my agents did not execute my instructions that of course is another matter. But if it be that in execution of my instructions they have transgressed unwittingly the law which we were seeking to strengthen, I would pray that the sole punishment might fall upon me. But if your worship considers that you must commit the case for trial, I beg of you to remember that mine was the guiding brain and this the directing hand which alone is responsible for what was done.

### SPEECH OF S. D. WADDY, ESQ., Q.C.

I appear, Sir, as you know, on behalf of Mr. Bramwell Booth and Madame Coombe, and the case with regard to them is obviously of a very different character to that which is attempted to be made against the other defendants. Of course, if Mr. Stead is right, if he has done nothing wrong, if he cannot be brought within the purview of the law, then *a fortiori* this is true of my clients.

Mr. Bramwell Booth had no share in the earlier transactions into which you have been enquiring—he came much later into the case, and no evidence whatever has been given to show that he was a party to these matters which have provoked so much publicity here and elsewhere.

I offer no opinion at all about the conduct of Mr. Stead and of those connected with him. It is not my business to do so; it is not my right to do so. Mr. Stead not only admits all that has been attempted to be proved, or nearly so, but he claims credit for and glories in that which he has done; in his opinion he was justified in the course that he adopted, and if I, in the observations that I am making, assume for a moment that he is liable to be committed, you, I am sure, and Mr. Stead, will understand that I am not, in point of fact, giving any opinion upon the subject. I am indeed forced to assume in my argument that you will commit Mr. Stead, for, as I have already said, if you do not, then of course I need say nothing further, as no one else can be indicted if Mr. Stead goes free, for he is admittedly and proclaims himself to be the chief mover in the whole of this transaction.

I wish to say at the very outset, that neither Mr. Booth nor Madame Combe has done anything of which they are morally ashamed, or which they would desire now to disown. Even if they have brought themselves technically within danger of the law, they have done so unwittingly and with views and objects which they have no necessity to repudiate.

With regard to Madame Combe, it will not be necessary for me to say much, because she acted all the way through under the direction of Mr. Bramwell Booth, and knew even less of the circumstances of the case than Mr. Booth did. But I must at this point ask your attention to the precise charge which is made against my clients. Some, at all events, of the allegations I think I can afford to pass by almost

without notice. For instance, there is the charge of being concerned in the indecent assault; not only is there no evidence of this, but the evidence clearly disproves it. At the time that the examination took place Mr. Booth was not present, nor had he any connection with the transaction before that time.

You indicated just now to my friend Mr. Overend that there was no evidence that Madame Mourez had been at all concerned in the alleged abduction of the child; and this relieves me from discussing that question at length with regard to my clients, for they do not appear upon the scene even so early as Madame Mourez does.

Whatever part Mr. Booth and Madame Combe may have taken with regard to the child at a subsequent period, it is clear that they had nothing whatever to do with the removal of the child from the house of her parents.

Under one section of the Act, they are charged with the actual taking of the child away; that as I have said is disproved—under another section of the act two charges are made. It is alleged on the one hand that they took the child by force and fraud, and against the will of her parents; and on the other hand that they harboured the child after she had been taken. With regard to the first of these two charges, it is sufficient to say—first, that the evidence disproves that they were in any degree connected with the child being taken at all; and most certainly they were not parties to any force or fraud. It is equally certain they were not made aware of any objection upon the part of the parents, even if any such objection was made.

The real charge made against us and the only one upon which any evidence has really been offered is with regard to the harbouring of the child after she had been taken from her parents' home. As to this I desire to call your attention to the words of the Statute. I know perfectly well that the motive with which the thing was done, if it were done at all, is no excuse, and no legal answer to the charge. But though motive is irrelevant, knowledge is vital. The section requires that the child should have been removed by force or by fraud. If you are of opinion that the parents consented to the child being removed, the whole charge of course comes to an end at once—but even if there had been fraud, and

Mrs. Jarrett had deceived Mr. Stead, or supposing that Mr. Stead had knowingly or ignorantly deceived Mr. Booth, in either case the charge once more falls to the ground—for the Statute is imperative that the harbourings must be with a knowledge that the child had been taken away by force or fraud, and this is in fact the very gist of the offence. To harbour in your house any youth, boy or girl, is of course no offence—the offence is the doing it with the knowledge of the previous wrong committed upon the parents. This then is the one thing which I submit to you ought to be distinctly proved. Without it all the evidence of the journey to France is immaterial. Of this there is no proof and indeed all the probabilities of the case are in the other direction.

It is the one point on which Mr. Booth bases his whole defence. He has never made any concealment about what he has done. He proclaims it publicly now. At the request of Mr. Stead he did take charge of Eliza Armstrong—he did try to rescue her—he had no motive but the good of the child—he took care that she should be wisely and kindly used and trained, and he did so under the firm conviction that she was abandoned by her parents—that they had willingly sold her and that they were parties to her leaving her home.

Nobody has been called to say that either directly or indirectly Mr. Booth had any information except such as he received from Mr. Stead—and no evidence has been given except from the mouth of Mr. Stead himself as to what that information was; Mr. Stead may have told Mr. Booth at a later period all that we now know, but that is immaterial; you cannot ratify a crime, and the important question is, what was the state of Mr. Booth's knowledge at the time he took possession of the child, and what were the objects and intentions with which he did so. Mr. Stead has told you in open court how Mr. Booth was imported into the case. I will read you the words—they are these, "In order to secure that the girl should be well placed in good hands at a distance from home I applied to Mr. Bramwell Booth to help me in this matter. Mr. Bramwell Booth responded to my request with the readiness which the chiefs of The Salvation Army have ever shown when an opportunity was offered them of doing anything, however slight, to seek and save the fallen and the lost."

Now, Sir, at that time Mr. Booth believed Mr. Stead, as he believes him now. He believed him then, as he believes him now, to be a man of honour and truth. Mr. Stead informed him that the child had been sold for an awful purpose by its own mother, and he believed him. Mr. Stead had been so told by Jarrett, and he believed her. Of course he would and did repeat this statement to Mr. Booth. It was the one inducement to Mr. Booth to lead him to take charge of the child, and so far from ever suspecting that the child had been taken by force or by fraud, he was convinced, rightly or wrongly, that the parents had wickedly abandoned their care of the child and their interest in her. Whether that belief was well founded or not is quite immaterial for the purpose of to-day. And surely, Sir, a moment's thought would indicate that this must have been the state of Mr. Booth's mind. What object had he to serve by taking charge of this poor child? Why should he spend his time, his money, and his care upon a

girl of whom he had never previously heard, and in whom he was in no way interested, except as his heart was touched by feelings of Christian sympathy and kindness towards one whose drunken parents had abandoned her to the world. He took the child with a perfectly innocent mind and intention—he had been no party to any outrage, he had never made any concealment, he told the parents and the police without hesitation where she was, he offered with equal readiness to have her brought back to this country. It is true that he dissuaded the parents from claiming the child again, and a great deal had been made of that before you; but is not this unfair. Of course he tried to persuade the parents to leave the child where she was, he at that time believed them to be drunken and dissolute; he knew that the child was being well trained and well cared for, was happy and had better prospects than she ever had before, or than she could have if she returned to so dangerous a home; and the same Christian spirit which prompted him to charge himself with her welfare in the first instance, of course urged him to continue the advantage to her if possible. But he never defied their authority or denied their right, and the best proof of the character of his language to the parents is found in the fact that the mother admits that she went away contented, and undertaking to consult her husband whether the child should or should not be allowed permanently to remain.

#### Madame Combe's Case.

As for Madame Combe's conduct in the matter, I think everybody who has heard it described and who has heard the letters which passed will be of opinion that it was kindly and Christian throughout. I wish that every English woman could have said of her that which could fairly be said of this French lady; and I cannot but think that it was an unnecessary proceeding upon the part of the prosecution to have put this lady to the annoyance and humiliation of being included as a defendant in this action. I regret, likewise, that it should have been thought necessary to have connected Mr. Booth with this charge of alleged indecent assault. This has not been done I am happy to say with regard to Madame Combe. The prosecution must have known the evidence which that child would give; they must have known that she would tell them distinctly that Mr. Bramwell Booth was no party to the alleged assault upon her, and yet upon the faith of a conversation reported by the policeman, they have called upon Mr. Booth to answer to this odious charge.

Considering Mr. Booth's character, position in the world, and the public life that he leads I must say that this was not only unnecessary but cruel, and whatever may be your decision upon the other parts of the case I do most earnestly and confidently trust that you will not allow Mr. Booth to remain for a day longer under the stigma of this charge.

Of course Mr. Booth and Madame Combe would regret doing anything which should be even technically a breach of the law; if they have broken the law they have broken it unwittingly and unintentionally, but on their behalf I desire to allege that they have not, either of them done anything which is in any way whatever opposed to the law of our country or of good morals.

Mr. Booth may have been mistaken with regard to the circumstances under which the child had left her home—he may have been mistaken therefore in the course that he took. But he supposed that he was justified in doing what he did for a child in danger of ruin. He believed that she had no friends on earth, that she had been saved almost by a miracle from the most awful fate to which she had been consigned by her own parents, that if now returned to them, a similar horrible bargain would be made with some other person who would not

be restrained by those feelings of honour which had restrained Mr. Stead; whatever may be the result of this action Mr. Booth will always look back with the approval of his conscience upon the course which he has taken. Whatever it may cost him he will feel grateful that he has been enabled to do anything to save this child, and would fearlessly adopt the same course to-morrow if by doing so he could save from the streets of this city, one single friendless girl to be snatched from ruin in this world, and in the world to come.

#### SPEECH OF C. RUSSELL, ESQ., Q.C.

Mr. Charles Russell, Q.C., said: I do not intend at this stage of the matter to trouble you, sir, at any length, though the defendants, one of whom is my client, have the right to submit reasons why they should not be returned for trial. I do not propose to exercise that right with regard to my client; neither do I stop to make an observation which must have occurred to you, sir, frequently during the course of this case, that *whether or not upon the state of the evidence as it now stands a technical breach of the law may or may not have been committed, it is at least obvious that no one in any way concerned in this matter was actuated by any unworthy motive.* Nay, more so; far from that, it was obvious that they were acting, as they thought under impulses of a perfectly worthy and high-minded character. That is assuming that the evidence remains as it now appears before the Court. At some future stage it will probably be necessary on the part of the defendant I represent to trouble another tribunal

much more in detail than the statement I am now making, and with evidence at some length. However high-minded and worthy the motives which actuated the defendants, of course it is quite consistent that there may have been a technical breach of the law. I do not desire to dwell on the topic nor to make an observation which will have to be hereafter made as to the conduct of the parents of the girl on this occasion, or of the other person who took a prominent part, Mrs. Broughton. *It must be painfully obvious to all that while they deny they were parties to dealing with this child for an improper purpose, it must be plain on their own statement that they showed the most utter indifference to all the other feelings that they should have had in relation to this child.* I will content myself with making the observations I have done, reserving till a later period and before another tribunal the defence which will then be made to the Court.

#### CHIEF-OF-STAFF'S LETTER.

MY DEAR COMRADES,

I feel it in my heart to say a few things to you in this hour of trial.

First, I want to thank you for the great sympathy which you feel with me in this attack, which, through me I have every reason to believe is made upon our dear Army; and in the attempt which I cannot question is being put forth with so much strength and ability to discredit the terrible revelations of vice and crime and cruelty which have been recently made, and to discourage our friends from helping us to persevere in the Christ-like work of delivering the young girls who are in danger of falling and those who have already left the path of virtue and are living lives of sorrow and shame.

It is impossible for me to answer all the affectionate letters I have received. I take this method of doing so, and, thanking you more than all, for your earnest prayers.

Second, I feel that I must also, in a few words, describe to you exactly what my action has been in the matter for which I stand committed for trial at the criminal bar of the Old Bailey.

My mouth is closed against any comments upon the character of the examination before the magistrate, or upon the bearing and observations of the magistrate himself, and I am also prevented asking some questions as to the conduct of those who have brought about this prosecution, which some day will have to be asked, and which sooner or later *will have to be answered.*

But there cannot be any objection to my saying—not because you ask for it, for I know that you believe me incapable of the offence laid at my door—that my connection with the matter is as follows:—

- (a) I knew absolutely nothing of this child—where she had come from, or what had been done with her—until I was asked to provide a home for a homeless girl on the evening before the day that she was received into the care of The Army.
- (b) I took her because I was informed and believed that she had been abandoned by her mother to destruction of the most frightful kind. Just in the same way as I gladly consented to take

another girl, aged fourteen, who had been enticed into the same house to which Mr. Stead took Eliza, and had there been drugged and violated by a vile wretch who so far as I know is still walking about seeking other innocent children.

Third. The idea of changing the religious opinions of the child never entered into my mind. Indeed, from what I had heard I should not have imagined that either the child or her parents professed any religious opinions at all.

Fourth. When the cry was raised on behalf of the child, I certainly was very reluctant—in consequence of my belief of the destruction that awaited her—to allow her to go back to it. Still, had I received from the mother a definite request for this I should have felt legally bound to deliver her up, and should have unquestionably done so. When Mrs. Armstrong called upon me she was undecided, and I sent her to consult her husband, and she agreed to let me know their decision through the police.

I did not mention £100, or request the payment by her of a shilling that the child might have cost. Indeed, the child was no expense to The Army, as whatever was paid on her account had been guaranteed by others when I agreed that she should be taken charge of.

Fifth. From the first moment I saw the police I considered I was working in harmony with their wishes. This I think is shown by my letter to Scotland Yard in which I asked the police if they had heard from the mother, and told them that I was relying upon them to let me know what the mother really did wish, by my offer to give her up to the proprietor of "Lloyd's Newspaper," and by my production of her the very first time that I knew the parents really wanted her.

Sixth. If there was any technical breach of the law before I undertook the protection of the girl, I was ignorant of it; and if my retaining her was a breach of the law, or even contrary to the wishes of the authorities, I was ignorant of that also. I simply took Eliza

Armstrong with a view to rescue her from an evil life, intending to have her watched over and brought up for a life of virtue and religion, and what I did was done in total ignorance that any persons having legal control over the child were likely to make any objection to that course.

For months past I have been overwhelmed with the burden of shame and sorrow which the diabolical crimes against the children of the poor, recently brought to light, have laid upon me. For many weeks I was as one living in a dream of Hell, the cries of outraged children and the smothered sobs of those imprisoned in living tombs were continually in my ears. I could not sleep, I could not take my food. At times I could not pray; and it was during the agonies of that time that I resolved that no matter what the consequences might be, I would do all I could do to stop these abominations, to arouse public opinion, to agitate for the improvement of the law, to bring to justice these adulterers and murderers, and to rescue the poor victims of lust. Now that consequences which I little anticipated have come upon me, I shall not flinch. I am aware that those who expose the doings of immoral men must expect to be attacked in return, and that those who snatch the prey from the destroyer must suffer as well as their Lord and Master.

And so to-day though I am sorrowful I am rejoicing, amidst slander and hatred and misunderstanding—nay, I will rejoice, even if bonds and imprisonment await me, conscious that all I have done has been done for the rescue and deliverance of the poor and the oppressed and those who were ready to perish, for the glory of God and the good of the people.

Pray for me and for Madame Combe, whose noble and disinterested efforts to save the lost are known to many. *Above all, go on rescuing the girls and children.*

Your affectionate Chief,

W. BRAMWELL BOOTH.

London, 29th September, 1885.

### MRS. BOOTH'S LETTER.

My dear Friend,

I think ere now you will have gathered from the evidence already produced the information you desire, and will have arrived at your own conclusion as to the character of the principal witnesses, but it seems to me that the real issues of this so-called trial will be entirely independent of the decision of the Courts, whatever that may be. Everybody who knows anything about the question knows (the prosecutors included) that these crimes were extensively perpetrated; the evidence which has lain before the House of Lords for nearly four years is conclusive on this point, as well as the cases which are thrusting themselves into the papers daily. Whether Eliza Armstrong can be proved to have been sold or not, which I fully believe

she was, does not alter the fact that numbers of other children are thus sold, though, of course, mothers who sell their children are not likely to give receipts, or allow witnesses to their infamy, if they can help it. The fact, however, remains, that hundreds of children are thus consigned to destruction without any choice of their own, and it is the fact that stings.

Almost all right-minded people regard the trial as an attempt on the part of the Government to crush those who have exposed these crimes, with the necessary consequence of shielding the criminals. This is unmistakably the feeling of the middle and better working classes, and as soon as the trial is over we shall again appeal to the nation, and have no doubt as to the response. The adverse aspect of the crowd

outside the court is no criterion whatever of the attitude of the people, for our agents in disguise mingled freely amongst them, and found that they were low, drunken characters, and largely connected with the interests of brotheldom. The heart and conscience of the larger proportion of the people are sound on this question, and when Mr. Stead brings out his facts which the prosecution compels him to do, all the good and true forces of the nation will be compelled to coalesce in demanding justice for the criminals, yea, and I hope of the whole world, for we know that these crimes are being perpetrated in India and other nations by Europeans without even the covert of secrecy.

It seems to me the reason why God has allowed this blindness to fall on the Government is that He saw we were in danger of allowing the hurt to be healed too slightly—that having got the Act, the moral part of the people were settling down too well satisfied, without realising their individual responsibility for carrying it out, or for confronting the awful immorality and sin everywhere rampant. This fresh manifestation of the virulence of the disease, and of the power and influence of the enemy in high places, in courts, police-forces, press, and even more sacred places, will so astound and alarm the good and the true, that they will not be put off with hampered and inoperative legislation, but will rise *en masse* to demand something adequate to the emergency, in order to save our nation, and to redeem us in the estimation of the other nations of the earth.

God grant that this may be the result, for alas! the half of our corruption and degradation has not been told, and unless we rise up in the power of holy resolve and utter self-abandonment, we are lost and the regeneration of our country will be lost with us. So far as we of The Salvation Army are concerned, don't think that all this misrepresentation, abuse, ribaldry, and scorn, will fright us from the fray; oh, no! It is just the difference between mere human heroism and that which is divinely inspired, that while the former burns itself out and dies under defeat, the latter rises again after every Calvary, energised with almighty strength, and clothed with super-human glory.

Oh, yes! be assured we are going on to turn the enemy's weapons on himself. For every

thrust that he has given us he shall receive at least double; and, by the power of the Spirit of our God, we will pursue him by day and by night, known and unknown, in open fight and by secret stratagem, until he and his emissaries shall cry, "The God of Israel, He is the God."

Pray for us. Pray for our precious Bramwell. You know how all his soul and life since he was sixteen has been filled with and spent in seeking the lost, and if the Lord now gives him to suffer for the same cause, though the flesh will shrink, he will rejoice to be counted worthy, and especially in so holy a cause as delivering those helpless children, whose cries and tears had so long gone up in secret, and whose young lives and souls were drawn unto death, without even their own knowledge.

Pray also for Mr. Stead, whose motives, I am persuaded, were as pure as our own. Of course he had to learn how to do this work by doing it; he had to approach brotheldom from without, and he had also to do it sharp in order to rouse the nation to action before the end of the Session, and to use such agents as he could. But the great point is, he got into the citadel, and though he only dragged out a few of its ghastly secrets, by that means he secured the passing of the "Criminal Law Amendment Bill," which is already bearing good fruit in the better protection of English children, and the punishment of their destroyers.

Will the English people forsake him because of the prosecution which the Government has thought fit to institute on account of some technical flaws in his mode of operation?

We shall see!!

At any rate, there is one woman in England who will not, but who will never cease to lift her voice on his behalf, so long as necessity exists.

The cry of conspiracy is too ridiculous. Who ever heard of a conspirator going and telling some of the highest representatives of Church and State what he was going to do.

You will be glad to hear that we have indications from far and near of a deep and earnest sympathy and prayer. We must wait in faith.

Your companion in tribulation,

CATHERINE BOOTH.