

PROSPECTUS

OF THE

SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION

OF CHILDREN

FROM CRUELTY AND IMMORALITY

OF

BALTIMORE CITY.

BALTIMORE:
EDWARD J. WELCH & Co., Book and Job Printers,
53 LEXINGTON STREET
1878.

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OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY.

PRESIDENT:

ANDREW REID,
9 Rialto Building, Second Street.

VICE PRESIDENTS:

G. S. GRIFFITH,
91 W. Baltimore St.,

ENOCH PRATT,
29 S. Charles St.

WM. M. BOONE,
56 Mulberry St.,

JOHN A. ARMSTRONG, 19 Cathedral St.

E. M. GREENWAY, JR.
St. Paul & Saratoga Sts.,

REV. H. E. JOHNSON,
130 Pine St.

J. HENRY STICKNEY,
11 S. Gay St.

SECRETARY: WM. R. BARRY, 32 Second St.

TREASURER: JOSHUA LEVERING, 2 Commerce St.,

ATTORNEY: SAMUEL D. SCHMUCKER, 43 Lexington St.

MANAGERS:

WM. A. GAULT,
432 W. Pratt St.,

R. J. HOLLINGSWORTH,
36 & 38 S. Charles St.,

S. W. T. HOPPER,
4 S. Holliday St.,

JOSEPH MERREFIELD,
25 N. Charles St.,

JOHN MORRIS, M. D.,
5 Franklin St.,

WM. C. PALMER,
72 N. Calvert Street,

ROBERT A. TAYLOR,
3 Exchange Place.

WM. H. PERKINS,
22 N. Charles St.,

PIERRE C. DUGAN,
43 Lexington St.,

WM. A. WISONG,
Safe Deposit Co.,

JAMES McMILLAN,
151 North St.,

C. L. OUDESLUYS,
67 Exchange Place,

REV. J. B. SHONTZ,
Courtland & Mulberry,

W. H. WHITTY,
39 Mt. Vernon Place.

AN ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC.

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During the past few years, societies for the prevention of cruelty to children have been organized in many American cities. These societies have passed the period of trial and experiment and are now in successful operation, and are by universal consent recognised as entitled to a prominent place among the noblest charities of the land. Their operations have resulted not only in relieving hundreds of victims of cruelty, destitution and crime, but have revealed to public observation a state of wretchedness and degradation among the neglected waifs of the darker corners of our cities, that is truly appalling.

Encouraged by the usefulness and success of these enterprises, a society has been organized, and is now in process of incorporation for the purpose of offering the hand of succor and protection to the neglected, abused and degraded children of Baltimore. The official name of the organization is, "THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM CRUELTY AND IMMORALITY, OF BALTIMORE CITY,"—and its purposes are the prevention by all lawful means of cruelty to children, and the protection of children from such influences as tend to corrupt their morals. Any citizen of good moral character may become a member of the Society by subscribing, to its by-laws, and contributing not less than three dollars to its treasury, and a similar annual contribution is required, to maintain the membership. The names of the present officers and managers of the Society appear upon the first page of this pamphlet.

The Society recognises from the start, that cruelty is inflicted upon children in more ways than by blows, exposure and starvation. The revelations of physical cruelty and neglect found among the outcast and fatherless little ones of our great cities are saddening enough, but are bright compared with the spectacle of the moral contamination to which the children of the pauper and

criminal classes are hourly exposed. Therefore the Society seeks to rescue these suffering ones, as well from immorality as from bodily harm; to lift them out of the darkness and danger of their present resorts, and transfer them to safe homes and elevating influences; to protect them from the pitfalls that lie in their paths, and to aid in inflicting the penalties of the law upon those who prey like harpies upon both bodies and souls of unfortunate and neglected children. For the practical accomplishment of its purposes, the society will adopt plans similar to those which have proven so successful in other cities.

It will in due time provide an office at which information of cases of cruelty to children may be left with the assurance that the cases so mentioned will receive prompt and suitable relief. It hopes also, in time to employ an agent who will make it his exclusive business to search out cases requiring the aid of the Society. In the mean time information left with any of the officers or managers of the Society, of cases requiring its aid will receive proper attention.

Shall this society have the sympathy, the co-operation and the support of the community?

One of the most efficient means of protecting children from immoral influences will be found in the proper enforcement of an Act passed at the recent Legislature of our State. But no law will ever be efficiently put in operation until public sentiment demands its enforcement, and therefore, for the two-fold purpose of making public the contents of the law, and of securing the co-operation of all good citizens in procuring its enforcement, we here insert certain sections of it.

“SECTION 930.—No minor if a girl under the age of sixteen years, and if a boy under the age of fourteen years, shall be admitted to, or permitted to remain in any saloon, place of entertainment or amusement known as dance houses, concert saloon, theatre or varieties, where immoral, indecent obscene or vulgar language display or performance is permitted, allowed or carried on, or where any spirituous liquors, wines, intoxicating or malt liquors are sold, exchanged or given away unless accompanied by parent or guardian, any proprietor, keeper or manager of

any such place, who shall admit such minor to, or permit him or her to remain in such place unless accompanied by parent or guardian, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall upon conviction by any court of competent jurisdiction be fined ten dollars and costs for each and every offence.

SECTION 931.—Every person having the custody of any girl under the age of sixteen years, and of any boy under the age of fourteen years, shall restrain such child from habitually begging, whether actually begging or under the pretence of peddling, any person offending under this section, shall be considered and deemed as incapable of taking care of, and providing for such child, and such child shall by reason thereof be deemed as coming within the conditions of section nine hundred and thirty-two of this Act.

SECTION 932.—Any girl apparently under the age of sixteen years, and any boy apparently under the age of fourteen years, that comes within any of the following descriptions named, that is known to be habitually begging, or receiving or gathering alms, whether actually begging or under the pretence of peddling or offering for sale anything, or being in any street, road or public place for the purpose of so begging, gathering or receiving alms, that is found wandering, and not having any home or settled place of abode or proper guardianship or visible means of subsistence, that is found destitute, either being an orphan or having a vicious parent, who is undergoing penal servitude or imprisonment, that frequents the company of reputed thieves or prostitutes or houses of assignation or prostitution, or dance houses, concert saloons, varieties or places specified in section nine hundred and thirty of this act, without parent or guardian, shall be arrested and brought before a Court or Magistrate; when upon examination before a Court or Magistrate, it shall appear that any such child, has been engaged in any of the aforesaid acts, or comes within any of the aforesaid descriptions, said Court or Magistrate when it shall deem it expedient for the welfare of the child, shall commit such child to an Orphan Asylum, charitable or other institution or make such other disposition thereof as now is, or

may hereafter be provided by law in case of vagrants, truant, disorderly, pauper or destitute children, provided however that none of the provisions of this act shall be construed so as to prevent children from selling or offering for sale newspapers.

SECTION 933.—Any person or persons representing himself, herself or themselves to be, or passing himself, herself or themselves off, as the parent or guardian of a child or children referred to in any of the aforesaid sections of this Act, and it shall appear that such person is not either the parent or guardian of said child, such person or persons shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction by any Court of competent jurisdiction, shall be fined not more than twenty dollars and costs for each and every offence."

This Act, the passage of which was accomplished through the efforts of some of our best citizens, including Marshall Gray of the Police force, aims at the destruction of certain practices which are fast corrupting many boys and some girls in our city, and are sowing seeds of vice which must inevitably bear much bitter fruit. It is a well known fact, that for some time past, many boys, especially of the more neglected classes, have almost nightly frequented the low concert saloons and variety theatres which defile the central and more crowded portions of the city.

The character of these resorts is so well known and their evil associations are so utterly destructive of the morals of the young who are brought under their influence that the effort to redeem our youth from their contaminating touch admits of no delay. These boys will soon be men and to their keeping must be entrusted the safety of our country and the welfare of society itself. To corrupt the rising generation is to fill the future almshouses and jails with paupers and criminals, to save the rising generation is to secure to us and to them in the future all of the blessings of civil safety and domestic peace. But apart from all considerations of public welfare, whose heart does not bleed to see these neglected ones falling so rapidly into the toils of dissipation and ruin, and who would refuse a helping hand to the effort now being made

to save them? Another prolific school of vice is the practice of begging on the streets now followed by so many children of both sexes. True, many in these distressing times are forced by stern poverty to beg; but too often the begging child supports thriftless parents; and in any case it is best to shield the child and let the parents beg if beg they must.

It will be seen that the provisions of the above bill reach this evil; but it will require an effort on the part of good citizens to make it practically and thoroughly effective. If every good citizen will make up his mind to personally assist in compelling the enforcement of this Act of the Legislature, great good will be accomplished and a strong blow will be struck toward the suppression and prevention of juvenile immorality.

THE FOLLOWING, WHICH WAS SIGNED "CONVICT," IS ONE, OF MANY LETTERS RECEIVED WHICH TESTIFY OF THE EVIL THAT IS BEING DONE TO THE YOUTH OF OUR CITY.

To G. S. GRIFFITH, Esq.,

President of Prisoners' Aid Association.

Dear Sir:

For God's sake try and have that Hell hole, the Odeon closed, or at least try and have our young boys of this City kept out of there by a special law if you cannot succeed in closing it.

It has been the ruin of more young men and boys than all the other Theatres in our State. I myself became a convict by associating with the people who resort there, I was a hard working youth when I first began frequenting that place, but my wages not sufficient for the nightly debauches held there, I was led by some of the thieves who nightly frequent the place to obtain by unfair means that which I could not obtain by fair. The result was that being a novice in the art of stealing, I soon found myself in jail for larceny, and not being able to cover up my tracts as successfully as the older hands. I was tried, convicted and sent to prison.

If you think that the above is an exaggeration, then you can be convinced to the contrary, by questioning any of your policemen, the inmates of the House of Refuge,

or, the Jail and Penitentiary. I know at least one hundred boys and young men who went there first without a stain upon their characters. They are now inmates of the Jail, House of Refuge and Penitentiary. If the City Council were made acquainted with the going on there, I am sure it would be changed for the better, if not entirely closed. But if they only prevented minors alone, from going there, crime would eventually decrease in the City. Remember I am a victim, and know whereof I speak.

