

WHOSE IS THE BLAME?

Two little girls, hardly in their teens, but put to work for low wages in the tedium of a cheap shop in Philadelphia, had a half holiday the other day.

The neighbors say they were good girls but flighty—and wouldn't you be flighty, too, if you had to stand all day and toil in a hot, stuffy room at an age when children ought to be at play?

As they came out of their workplace for the week-end rest, an automobile with two young men sped by—a vision of ease and luxury to the tired kids with feet aching from overstrain. That auto seemed like poetry, romance; its occupants like fairy princes.

As it passed the girls looked up and smiled, the innocent smile of youth for one of the fancies that youth has.

The auto swerved, turned and drew near; a honeyed voice invited the tired shop girls to enter for a pleasant ride home. It would have tempted wiser folk. They entered, just for a ride home.

And here the cunning of the men appeared. They took the girls home and at each home told the mother that the other mother had consented to let her daughter go with the other daughter's friends for a longer ride into the country. So to the country the two couples went, each mother supposing that the other mother knew the young men and all was well; and each daughter thinking that, since mother sanctioned, it must be all right.

What need to tell the sequel you have already guessed? A sequel of shame and bitter tears, of mothers almost insane, of virgin innocence despoiled, of the public at last knowing all.

The law is on its way to punish those young men, one of them married. The law, however, does little, can do little, to prevent such sacrifices—at most it can do little while greed throws on the streets from stuffy workshops thousands of underpaid, overtired, joy-starved little women to yearn in unprotected innocence for cankerous pleasures seductively dangled before them by human hyenas.

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DIARY OF FATHER TIME

The modern conditions of morality, white slavery, politics in big cities, love of luxury, the unbounded wealth of some and the dire poverty of many, remind me of the conditions that prevailed in Rome about 150 B. C.

The riches that poured to that nation permitted Rome to carry out a series of magnificent public improvements. Italy was welded together by numerous military roads, so finely built that they remain to this day. The Tiber was spanned by excellent bridges of stone, the city was sewered and the streets paved. Of the two new aqueducts, the Marcian, built B. C. 144, cost more than \$10,000,000.

Thus gorgeous benefits accrued to Rome through her far-reaching conquests; but it cannot be doubted that even greater evils resulted. The brilliant culture was crimsoned with impurity. The rugged virtues of Rome were corrupted; the strength collapsed before slabby degeneracy; marriage was openly scoffed at, and even the old Roman faith lost its hold upon the people.

The political system of Rome grew to be as rotten as that of the worst-governed city of modern times. Bribery was open and the slave trade was intended to meet the demands of the rich planters for all purposes. The doom of the mightiest city the world ever knew was plainly written.