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THE TRAFFIC IN GIRLS

**Official Demonstration of a Slave Trade in Vice More Infamous Than Africa Ever Knew—Outrages Such as the Sultan of Turkey Never Paralleled
Going on Under the American Flag**

From
Woman's World.

BY EDWIN W. SIMS, UNITED STATES DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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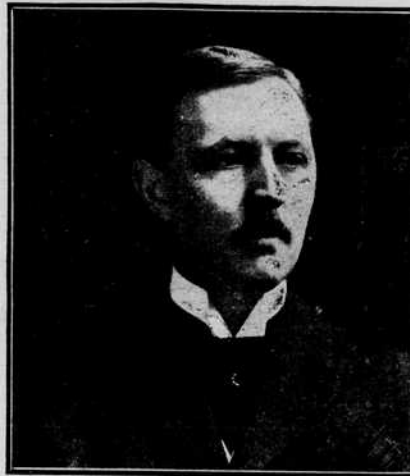
EDITOR'S NOTE:—Readers of "The National Prohibitionist" probably remember that four years ago the platform of the Prohibition party made the first mention which appears in the political history of the United States of the "traffic in girls." At that time there were those who were disposed to think that no such traffic existed and to attribute the shocking stories which were to be heard to the hysteria and hallucination of mission workers. The four years that have passed have demonstrated the reality of the infamy. "The National Prohibitionist" publishes the article which appears here as indisputable evidence, from high official source, of the existence of an organized traffic more infamous than the old slave trade against which the great navies of the world were mustered; more infamous than the butcheries and outrages in Bulgaria and Armenia, carried on in the midst of our boasted civilization, numbering its victims by the scores of thousands every year. There are many features of the case that are not touched upon by Mr. Sims, nor does he in any way indicate the relation of this accursed traffic to the liquor traffic or to party politics, factors in the case which must not be overlooked. On the editorial pages of this paper these phases of the question are discussed.

There are some things so far removed from the lives of normal, decent people as to be simply unbelievable by them. The white slave trade of today is one of these incredible things. The calmest, simplest statements of its facts are almost beyond the comprehension or belief of men and women who are mercifully spared from contact with the dark and hideous secrets of "the under world" of the big cities.

You would hardly credit the statement, for example, that things are being done every day in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and other large cities of this country in the white slave traffic which would, by contrast, make the Congo slave traders of the old days appear like Good Samaritans. Yet this figure is almost a literal truth. The man of the stone age who clubbed the woman of his desire into insensibility or submission was little short of a high-minded gentleman when contrasted with the men who fatten upon the white slave traffic in this day of social settlements, of forward movements, of Y. M. C. A. and Christian Endeavor activities, of airships and wireless telegraphy.

Naturally, wisely, every parent who reads this statement will at once raise the question: "What excuse is there for the open discussion of such a revolting condition of things in the pages of a household magazine? What good is there to be served by flaunting so dark and disgusting a subject before the family circle?"

Only one—and that is a reason and not an excuse! The recent examination of more than two hundred white slaves by the office of the United States district attorney at Chicago has brought to light the fact that literally thousands of innocent girls from the country districts are every year entrapped into a life of hopeless slavery and degradation because parents in the country do not understand conditions as they exist and how to protect their daughters from the white slave traders who have reduced the art of ruining young girls to a national and international system. I sincerely believe that nine-tenths of the parents of these thousands of girls who are every year snatched from lives of decency and comparative peace and dragged under the slime of an existence in the white slave world have no idea that there is really a trade in the ruin of girls as much as there is a trade in cattle or sheep or the other products of the farm. If these parents had known the real conditions, had believed that there is actually a syndicate which does as regular, as steady and persistent a "business" in the ruination



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of girls as the great packing houses do in the sale of meats, it is wholly probable that their daughters would not now be in dens of vice and almost utterly without hope of release excepting by the hand of death.

Is this, then, reason enough for a little plain speech to parents?

The evidence obtained from questioning some 250 girls taken within the last four weeks in Chicago houses of ill repute leads me to believe that not fewer than fifteen thousand girls have been imported into this country in the last year as white slaves. Of course this is only a guess—an approximate—it could be nothing else—but my own personal belief is that it is a conservative guess and well within the facts as to numbers. Then please remember that the girls imported are certainly but a mere fraction of the number recruited for the army of prostitution from home fields, from the cities, the towns, the villages of our own country. There is no possible escape from this conclusion.

Another significant fact brought out by the examination of these girls is that practically every one who admitted having parents begged that her real name be withheld from the public because of the sorrow and shame it would bring her parents. One said: "My mother thinks I'm studying in a stenographic school;" another stated, "My parents in the country think I have a good position in a department store—as I did have for a time—and I've sent them a little money from time to time; I don't

care what happens so long as they don't know the truth about me." In a word, the one concern of nearly all those examined who have homes in this country was that their parents—and in particular their mothers—might discover, through the prosecution of the white slavers, that they were leading lives of shame instead of working at the honorable callings which they had left their homes and come to the city to pursue. There are, to put it mildly, hundreds—yes, thousands—of trusting mothers in the smaller cities, the towns, the villages and farming communities of the United States who believe that their daughters are "getting on fine" in the city and too busy to come home for a visit or "to write much," while the fact is that these daughters have been swept into the gulf of white slavery—the worst doom that can befall a woman. The mother who has allowed her girl to go to the big city and work should find out what kind of life that girl is living—and find out from some other source than the girl herself. No matter how good and fine a girl she has been at home and how complete the confidence she has always inspired, find out how she is living, what kind

TO ALL WORKERS

"The National Prohibitionist" points with pride to the conclusive test of its value to the party offered in the case of the state of New York. In probably no state of the Union were conditions so adverse to the success of the Prohibition party. In no state of the Union does the party score a more brilliant success. The methods adopted in New York differ in one vital particular from those adopted in any other state, in that the state committee made it its business to see that every known Prohibitionist in the whole state regularly received "The National Prohibitionist" for a number of consecutive weeks before the election.

We feel that the result gives us the right to urge the extension of the circulation of this paper as a matter of party work, more energetically than ever before. We believe that the Prohibitionist who keeps his own subscription paid up, who seeks new subscribers, who makes it his business to see that every Prohibitionist in his neighborhood reads the paper, is doing the best work that can be done.

We again invite the attention of all subscribers whose subscriptions expire with this month, to the desirability of prompt renewal. We urge all workers to note with care the subscription-getting plans which are detailed elsewhere and to align themselves with us as promptly as possible for the carrying out of the work that must at once be done.

THE PUBLISHERS.