

Some time after he had returned to school his mother came to me and said, 'Judge, I never quite understood why my boy is such a splendid little fellow. You know he used to steal and lie, and it was impossible for me to keep him in school. I said to him the other day, 'Harry, how is it you were so good for the judge and you wouldn't be good for me?' He looked up into my face and said smilingly, 'Well, Ma, you see it is this way: If I gits bad again, the judge, he will lose his job, and you see he is my friend, and I've got to stay with him because he stays with me, and I ain't going to steal no more.' It is fairly certain that this boy would have been a criminal and, no doubt, some day an inmate of a penitentiary, a disgrace to himself, and a sorrow to a broken-hearted mother.

But to some, when they read this narrative of Judge Lindsay, there will arise the shadow of Mrs. Grundy, a lady who was ever fearsome of witnessing a violation of the proprieties. Staid minds may be amazed upon reading that a judge—a real judge—has had correspondence with a boy whose boyhood years were smirched with criminality, and they will look for the wound inflicted upon the judicial proprieties. But we can afford to allow the judicial proprieties to blush if we save the boy. The argument may be advanced that Canada's population is not yet large enough, and that in its cities there does not exist those conditions which would justify a new departure of this kind. I quite recognise the inadvisability of establishing juvenile courts in small places, but a number of such localities could be grouped. There is much work, however, for such tribunals in the larger cities. It is now recognised that had this new method of dealing with juvenile offenders been introduced into the United States a few generations earlier, many whose lives were spent behind prison bars would have been wont to take part in the honourable business activities of the nation. It is none too soon for Canada to make a beginning.

There is, hon. gentlemen, another condition of our present day life which has much to do with the success or failure of the Children's Court, to which I wish to direct your attention. I have read much about the effects of environment at home, evil companions on the street, heredity, poverty, drunken and criminal parents, temptation, want of proper training in the school room and parental neglect. These are all large factors in the making

Hon. Mr. COFFEY.

of the lawless element of society, and each should receive fullest consideration from those to whom is assigned the task of reform of the erring. There is another contributing cause, however, and one which supplies a goodly quota, which seldom receives that study which its importance warrants. It is full time we began to study to what extent the product of the printing press should be held accountable for that criminality which appears to be on the increase chiefly in centres of population because of the indifference of those whose duty it is to ferret out and punish the criminals. The excuse is sometimes advanced that no one has laid a charge. But the average man on the street is loth to assume the role of prosecutor. The initiative should be taken by the King's army of officials whose vocation it is to keep stragglers on the statutory thoroughfare.

Just here let me say that it is far from my thoughts to suggest any interference with the legitimate freedom of the press, but I hold that those who abuse that freedom should be called to strict account. Boards of health are most active in safeguarding our people from contagious diseases. When an outbreak of small pox is reported vigilant eyes are upon the locality affected and every effort made to stamp out the pest. But what are we doing to stop the importation of that literature which has a most disastrous effect on the morals chiefly of our youth? We have laws, it is true, to punish those who import immoral literature. The Post Office Department will not handle it, but it comes to our country nevertheless in abundant quantity in some other way. The provision of the Criminal Code regarding immoral publications is practically a dead letter.

It would be well worth the attention of the authorities to ascertain to what degree the Criminal Code is violated by newsdealers, who sell publications, particularly to the young, which are clearly of immoral tendency. These serials are not to be found on the counters of the news stalls, but they are on sale nevertheless. They are kept in secret places, and are readily handed out to the boy whose ideals are on the down grade. I am quite sure of my ground, because I have in my possession some of this literature which I doubt not is a consider-