

CAN NO ONE STOP THE WHEEL?

Not long since I was passing along the Westminster road, in an omnibus, and I looked out and saw a sad sight. A little girl, with no father's or mother's hand to guide her, no elder brother or sister to protect her, was wandering in the streets, and as she was trying to cross, she was knocked down by a cart. There she lay, with outstretched arms, between the hoof of the horse and the wheel of the cart. It was but an instant of time, but it seemed an age, as I saw that wheel remorselessly passing on to crush those tender limbs. Could no one stop that wheel? Could no one save that little one from peril? It was impossible; all shuddered as they looked, and there was no one but would have risked his personal safety to rescue the poor child. But what shall we say of thousands of children in London and elsewhere, exposed to far greater perils every day? The wheel of ruin—physical, moral, and spiritual ruin—is rolling over them; hunger and nakedness is crushing them; early bad example is crushing them; fearful ignorance is crushing them; infernal training of human vice is crushing them; most degrading and abominable juvenile amusements are crushing them; There they lie, poor little things, in the dirt in the kennel, Shall we condemn them? Shall we scorn them? Should we be better than they, had we been in their circumstances, —cradled in corruption, schooled in sin? May they not become better than we are? Rough, lustreless, mud-be-grimed, your diamond is capable of being cut and polished, so that it may yet glisten in the crown of the Great King. Drooping, dying, they are yet flowers; lilies, roses, capable, by your cultivation, and by the genial influences of the Spirit of God, of putting forth a beauty and a fragrance meet for angels, meet for heaven. Every one of them has an immortal soul, more valuable than all those jewels reported as captured at Lucknow; more valuable than the great Indian Empire, for the preservation of which we are lavishing so much treasure and so much blood; more precious than the great globe itself. Those little ones, since Christ created them, since He redeemed them, and invites them to Himself, we need not hesitate to say are Christ's little ones. We seem to hear Him say, "These are mine; preserve them for me; take these children, nurse them, train them for me." There comes the ponderous wheel of the devil's car rolling on, rolling on, crushing them down, down, down body and soul to hell!