

nately the case that the very class most urgently in need of free education is the very class often crowded out; and if taxpayers, many of whom pay largely to the education of other people's children, have a right to insist on *anything*, it is on this, that school accommodation be provided, first of all, for the class which most needs it, and that that class, which will otherwise become a pest to all good citizens—be *compelled* to take the benefit of it. It is earnestly to be hoped that school boards everywhere will, by prompt action, and the appointment of truant officers, do what they can to make the Act accomplish its intended purpose, and that all public-spirited and intelligent men and women, including the editors of our newspapers, will give their hearty co-operation to make it a success. But in no way can so much be done as by the kindly, persevering, judicious influence of Christian ladies, untiringly exerted in individual cases.

Something will have to be done, ere long, to follow up the Act, by providing means of coercion and beneficial punishment for children who shall prove refractory, even to the authority of their parents; or whose idle and vagrant habits have become so firmly fixed, that nothing but absolute coercion will break them. For such children, truant or industrial schools have been instituted in the United States and Great Britain, and with the most encouraging results. Such schools, in which the stigma of disgrace is of the mildest, and where teaching and training are the main objects, would be for the ordinary class of vagrant children or "child criminals," infinitely preferable to our Reformatories, where young criminals of all stages in crime must necessarily be thrown together, and where the more hardened naturally corrupt still further the beginners in evil. The truant schools are provided for either vagrant children or those whose parents plead

inability to compel them to attend school. Committal is usually for a long period—even four years—but on the child's improvement and good conduct he may receive a license permitting him to leave; which license, however, must be periodically renewed—an arrangement which gives the effect of a continued supervision of the child's conduct, since at any time the renewal of the license may be refused, and the child re-committed without further formality. In cases where the child's home-circumstances are such that it is not thought desirable for him to be returned to his home, provision is made for his being placed with suitable employers, as soon as he has reached a standard of education which relieves him of the obligation of attending school, though under the age limit. Many boys attain this standing in a wonderfully short time, shewing the good effect of placing them in circumstances where they are compelled to regular study and strongly incited to progress. This is the plan of procedure in Great Britain. In the United States it is somewhat different. The truant schools in the neighbourhood of New York are described fully, and in a most interesting manner, in a number of *Harper's Monthly* for last year. Our plan in establishing such schools might select from both methods that which seems most suitable to our own circumstances. Experience in both countries of such institutions fully shews that they produce the most beneficial effects.

Certainly, unless active means are employed to secure the efficiency of this most needed enactment, we shall soon have a large class, who fear not God, nor regard man, growing up to a debased and reckless maturity, with the natural consequences to the well-being of the community. It behoves all who love the true interests of their country and their fellow-man to join heartily in fulfilling the present duty of timely prevention.