

REPORT

OF THE

National Woman's Christian
Temperance Union



TWENTY-SECOND ANNUAL MEETING

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CHICAGO

WOMAN'S TEMPERANCE PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION

1895

PURITY DEPARTMENT.

The interest in the work of the Purity Department has not diminished during the past year, though some phases of it have been more emphasized than others. In the Reform section the reports are as usual that is, where homes of refuge are established they have done good service and women have been saved, some of them converted to Christ, and in one case the report is, "One woman saved from suicide." Where there are no places of shelter for fallen women the work is stagnated. The reports continue from year to year the same pathetic cry: "We can do nothing for these our erring sisters because we have no home to offer them if they leave the haunts of sin." The Florence Crittenton Missions are continuing their good work and have been made a department of the World's W. C. T. U. under the superintendency of Mrs. Charlton Edholm. This, in itself, promises success. Mrs. Edholm and "Mother" Prindle, matron of the mission in New York City, went to England, at the invitation of Lady Henry Somerset, to establish a mission in London.

In the legislative section of the department more has been done than ever before in one year. The W. C. T. U. has been busy in attempts to secure the raising of the Age of Consent in different states. B. O. Flower and Helen Gardener, with other prominent people, have been interested in the same matter and by their combined efforts very important legislative changes have been made as the following tabulated statement will show:

AGE OF CONSENT LAWS.

TABULATED STATEMENT.

Alabama.....	10 years	Michigan.....	14	16 in 1895
Arizona.....	14	Minnesota.....	14	16 in 1895
Arkansas.....	16	Missouri.....	14	16 in fact; 16 in name
California.....	14	Montana.....	15	16 in 1895
Colorado.....	10	Nebraska.....	15	16 in 1895
Connecticut.....	18	Nevada.....	14	16 in 1895
Dakota.....	14	New Hampshire.....	13	16 in 1895
Delaware.....	16	New Jersey.....	16	16 in 1895
District of Col.....	7	New Mexico.....	14	16 in 1895
Florida.....	16	New York.....	14	16 in 1895
Georgia.....	16	Ohio.....	14	16 in 1895
Idaho.....	14	Oklahoma.....	14	16 in 1895
Illinois.....	14	Territory.....	14	16 in 1895
Indiana.....	14	Pennsylvania.....	16	16 in 1895
Iowa.....	14	Rhode Island.....	16	16 in 1895
Kansas.....	18	Tennessee.....	16	16 in 1895
Kentucky.....	18	Texas.....	16	16 in 1895
Louisiana.....	12	Utah.....	13	16 in 1895
Maine.....	14	Vermont.....	14	16 in 1895
Maryland.....	14	Virginia.....	12	16 in 1895
Massachusetts.....	16	Washington.....	16	16 in 1895
		Wisconsin.....	12	16 in 1895
		Wyoming.....	18	16 in 1895

* North Dakota is stated to have raised the age from fourteen to sixteen but it is well to add that "this does not take effect until thirty days after the Governor has signed the law."

The Purity Department has been for the last two years making effort to obtain from each state superintendent a copy of the laws of her state in regard to offenses against morality, but so far has met with little success. Rev. Wilbur F. Crafts suggests that a committee be appointed to collect copies of such laws, codify them, and then, with a knowledge of what exists upon the statute books, a combined effort could be made to unify the laws of the entire country. We, who know our own resources, know that such a committee could not be appointed and paid by the W. C. T. U. But if each state superintendent would work faithfully as a committee of one to learn the laws of her state and report them we should have just the knowledge desired and with no expense of a committee. Mrs. Silena Moore Holman, state superintendent of Tennessee, has compiled such an excerpt of the laws of Tennessee. Mrs. Dora Webb, state superintendent of Ohio, compiled and printed such a report years ago and it has proven of incalculable value in conducting legislative campaigns.

In the Educational, or Preventive division of the department the interest has been constantly on the increase. The reports from White Shield Societies is not as full as could be desired but they are alive and accomplishing much good. Perhaps the most encouraging report comes from the society organized by the National Superintendent over two years ago in the Hartshorn Memorial School for colored girls in Richmond, Va. When we understand the moral conditions of colored people in the South, the fact that these girls are going out as missionaries to their own race, carrying with them the ideas of a noble womanhood as taught them in the White Shield obligations, makes the importance of this one society immeasurable. In the White Cross work great advance has been made. In the Reverend J. B. Welby, Presbyterian minister of Kansas City, Mo., has been found a man with the adaptability for the work, the interest in the work, and the consecration to the work which would insure a grand success but for one vital matter, and that is the lack of money to push into fields that are white for the harvest. Mr. Welby has compiled a very practical manual for the use of

and a proclamation that they have been compiled and printed which will not be earlier than October, 1895." This is the official statement.

† Reduced from eighteen to sixteen in 1895.

‡ It will be noticed that Delaware is reported to have raised the age of consent from fifteen to eighteen in 1895. This is done on the authority of the Secretary of State who writes: "Our last legislature amended it making eighteen the present limit. The penalty for using a female under the age of eighteen for the purpose of sexual intercourse is a fine of not more than one thousand dollars, or imprisonment for a term of not more than seven years, or both, at the discretion of the court." But as the law of Delaware concerning rape still remains seven years we are obliged to quote that as really the age of consent in that state, with death as the penalty.

§ Florida, like some other states claims sixteen as the age of consent, but ten is the age in the law concerning rape.

¶ In Missouri the age remains in fact fourteen years in spite of apparent legislation in 1895.