

of shielding themselves they should have gone into the box and have perjured themselves as they had. George Standfield, of Northsea, the owner of the premises, had been summoned under a like number of informations for being a party to the house being kept as a brothel. Mr. Kilby (Southampton) appeared for the defendants, but on the cases being called Mr. King intimated that he had withdrawn the whole of them.

BROTHEL KEEPING AT PORTSMOUTH.

HEAVY PENALTY.

On Tuesday, at the Portsmouth Police-court, before the Mayor (Sir W. Pitt) and G. Curtis and A. S. Elliot, Esqs., Albert Deek was charged under informations for having on the 15th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, and 25th of September kept the house 7 and 8, Laika Charles-street, Langport, as a brothel, and Mary Ann Deek, his wife, was charged with assisting in the brothel.

Mr. G. H. King prosecuted, and Mr. Hobbs (Hitch and Hoob) represented the defendants.

Formal evidence having been given by Mr. Kent, a rate collector, as to the premises in question being in the occupation of the male defendant,

P. S. Palmer stated that he visited the house on Sunday, the 15th ult., and saw there three women, who were known as prostitutes.—Mr. King: Are they living there?—Witness: Yes, there are six living there. Witness continued by stating that earlier the same evening he had visited the house, when, by permission, search was made for a man for whose apprehension they said a warrant. The female defendant on that occasion told them that she had nobody living in No. 8, but that she had five women living in No. 7. Witness saw two men go to the house about twelve o'clock that night.

—Mr. Hobbs: How do you know these women to be prostitutes?—Witness: They told me so themselves, and one of them said she had been "on the town" for years. Witness also said that he had on three dates seen men and women go to the house.

Chief Inspector Ridgwood stated that he was with the previous witness on the 15th, and as the door he at first saw two little girls. When they were allowed to go over the house one of the women (Sherratt) admitted to him that she obtained her living by prostitution. Later, after he had seen a man enter the house, he saw the male defendant, who refused them permission to go over No. 8, adding: "You have been here once before to get a warrant. You can go over No. 7, but not over No. 8 without a warrant." Witness afterwards heard the door shut, and the lights were put out, so that they were prevented from seeing any part of the premises.

P. O. Phillips stated that he watched the house between eleven and twelve on the night of the 15th ult., and he saw one prostitute go there.

Mr. Hobbs remarked that Mrs. Deek had let her house to lodgers, and if every lodging-house was to be watched in the borough as this had been by the police it would entail great hardship.

Mrs. Deek, the female defendant, after being sworn, said that the woman Sherratt never had lived in the house. One of the women was dirty to look after her (witness's) children, and another occupied a room. She let No. 7 out in rooms, and on Sundays the doors were closed at ten o'clock, and on other nights at eleven. Men never visited the house.—By Mr. King: She had taken in a young woman named Stone as a friend, because her father had turned her out of doors. On the 15th there were four women in the house. One of them was the wife of a merchant seaman. Stone slept away where, sometimes on the sofa.—But why on the sofa, when there are plenty of beds in the house?—She slept with the children very often. She denied that Inspector Ridgwood had asked any of the women how they obtained their livings, or that any of them had said that they lived by prostitution.

The male defendant also wholly denied the police evidence.

Curtain Wellard, who lived in the house, said she had seen nothing wrong since she had lived there. She was a married woman.—Mr. King: How long since you were married?—About six years.—What date?—I don't remember.—Where were you married?—At Elythe, in Kent. Witness admitted that she was separated from her husband, and saw in it with another man, who was kinder to her than her husband. On being sworn, however, she said it was possible that on the 17th and 18th a soldier had gone home with her, as she had quite sometimes from disfigurement of her husband.

After some discussion, Mr. Hobbs at length requested that the whole of the cases should be taken together, and P. S. Palmer stated that on the 15th and other days he had seen Wellard and other women go to the house with men, including soldiers and sailors. He also spoke of having seen suspiciously in the house on looking through the window. Witness continued by saying that the house was one of the worst places in the town. He had seen prostitutes go to both houses, where there were two children, from ten to twelve years of age. The defendants had also quarrelled and had used disgusting language.

Frederick Honeyfield, a neighbour, said it was of daily occurrence that women and men were going in and out of the premises.

After retiring for consideration, the Mayor said the Magistrates felt that there was not a shadow of doubt that the defendants knew that prostitution was carried on in the house. They dismissed the first case, but on that relating to the 15th they fined each defendant 25, including the costs, or in default one month's imprisonment each. On the six remaining cases they fined the defendants 10s. in each, or seven days' imprisonment in each, in all the fine was 210s, and in default the imprisonment would run concurrently.

Mr. Hobbs said the fine was rather heavy, and he asked for time on the part of the defendants. The Bench reluctantly granted until Friday to pay, but said that the proceedings had been greatly aggravated by the conduct of the defendants, it being to them a horrible thing that for the purpose