



Offences Against the Person Act 1861

1861 CHAPTER 100

Child-stealing

56 **Child-stealing.**

Whosoever shall unlawfully, either by Force or Fraud, lead or take away, or decoy or entice away or detain, any Child under the Age of Fourteen Years, with Intent to deprive any Parent, Guardian, or other Person, having the lawful Care or Charge of such Child of the Possession of such Child, or with Intent to steal any Article upon or about the Person of such Child, to whomsoever such Article may belong, and whosoever shall, with any such Intent, receive or harbour any such Child, knowing the same to have been, by Force or Fraud, led, taken, decoyed, enticed away, or detained as in this Section before mentioned, shall be guilty of Felony, and being convicted thereof shall be liable, at the Discretion of the Court, to be kept in Penal Servitude for any Term not exceeding Seven Years and not less than Three Years,—or to be imprisoned for any Term not exceeding Two Years, with or without Hard Labour, and, if a Male under the Age of Sixteen Years, with or without Whipping: Provided that no Person who shall have claimed any Right to the Possession of such Child, or shall be the Mother or shall have claimed to be the Father of an illegitimate Child, shall be liable to be prosecuted by virtue hereof on account of the getting Possession or such Child, or taking such Child out of the Possession of any Person having the lawful Charge thereof.