

to allow a child to leave the establishment to be licensed-out without preparing a warrant in due form for transmission to Wellington for signature, and I never omitted to transmit them. This disposes of matter No. 1.

Matter No. 2.—With regard to the six boys and nineteen girls having been adopted, I explain that, although the word “adopted” has been used, these children are precisely in the same category as those licensed, the same form of warrant having been used in these cases, and the same police surveillance used. In reference to the statement that some of the nineteen girls have been adopted by single men apparently, I state positively that such has not been the case in any one instance since I have been master of the institution, with the exception of Mary T—— to the Rev. Father Crowley, Roman Catholic priest. This girl was ten years of age when she was licensed-out, exactly two years ago.

Matter No. 3.—I have never “applied to a Resident Magistrate for permission to return certain children to their prostitute mother, and, notwithstanding the committing Magistrate’s indignant refusal, the children have been so returned.” In the case of the family, J——, who were received into the institution on 16th October, 1877, committed by the Resident Magistrate at Outram, the father, Louis J——, applied to me, on the 22nd October, 1877, for the release of his children from the school. I declined, and wrote to the committing Magistrate, who authorized me, in terms of his letter now produced, to license the infant child, twenty months old, to the father; and I did so. After the child was so licensed-out, the Magistrate, three months after, withdrew his permission, when I wrote to the Magistrate requesting him to instruct the police to rearrest and bring the child back to the school, which was never done. In the early part of July, 1878, I received a letter from the Magistrate’s wife, who wrote in her husband’s absence in the North Island, asking that the other children in my charge should be allowed to go home and see their mother, who was dying. I permitted them to go, and informed Mr. Fulton, the Magistrate, accordingly by letter. The mother died, and I subsequently received a letter from the Magistrate approving of my action, and permitting the children to be licensed to the father, the mother being dead.

Matter No. 4.—Answered under heading No. 3.

Matter No. 5.—I have frequently earnestly protested against the system referred to in this article, but, the Act giving the Magistrate no discretion, the system still prevails. In 1878 four infants died under my charge. I received no special instructions as to the farming-out of infants, but, at my suggestion, several have since been placed out with separate wet-nurses, quite a different thing from farming-out. Within the last twelve months four infants have been placed out, two of whom have died. I take every possible precautionary measure to insure every care being taken of the infants placed out. I, in company with the medical officer of the institution, frequently visit the children.

Matter No. 6.—I take every precaution to prevent the chance of fire, and I do not think the risk is greater in this institution than in any ordinary dwelling-house, perhaps not so great, as I have trained the boys to act as a fire brigade, and have also, with the assistance of the boys, provided an ample water supply. With regard to the question as to whether space could not be found in my quarters for the children referred to, I will leave that for the actual inspection of the gentlemen making the inquiry.

On the Hon. Captain Fraser visiting the institution prior to his going to Wellington he stated his intention of getting the police to make inquiries of the children placed out and report direct to the Government. I suggested that the continuance of the present system was preferable. At present I keep up a correspondence with the children, or the persons with whom they are placed, and with the police, and up to the present I have found the system work well.

*Robert Burns.*—I am a legally-qualified medical practitioner, and medical officer to Industrial School. Have been so since its establishment. I had on various occasions to report the inadvisability of having children under twelve months committed to the institution, as, without having a nurse to each child, it would be impossible to rear them, and my reports may have led to the system of having had children in a few cases placed out with wet-nurses, and this system I much prefer to having those very young children in the institution. My opinion is that having a large number of babies in the institution necessarily reared by hand would be practically instituting a baby-farm, a system so much condemned in Britain, and almost every other place. The children placed out by the institution were each given to a separate nurse. When requested I visit the children so placed out. I cannot say from memory the percentage of deaths among infants before any were placed out; but I have no hesitation in saying that the mortality of those placed out will be lower than if they were retained in the institution. I certainly am of opinion that the institution ought to have larger sleeping accommodation, but I cannot say as medical officer that the children’s health has suffered from this cause. There is one apartment which would be much better of having the roof raised, and a new entrance to it might be provided. The fact of three sleeping in a bed has had no detrimental effect. As to risk of fire, I think it less in the institution than in a private house built of wood. As medical officer I would not countenance the increasing of the sleeping accommodation at the expense of curtailing the master’s quarters. Generally, I would remark that, with the appliances at command, the institution is as complete as it could be, and, if more ample sleeping accommodation was provided, and a small detached building to be used as an hospital for the isolation when necessary of infectious diseases, I would pronounce the institution complete. As medical officer I have a very high opinion of the present master as being particularly suitable for the institution, as likewise is the matron, and I would say that the good health of the children is due to their unremitting care and attention.

*Henry Houghton.*—I am Honorary Inspector to the Industrial School, and have been so for about three years. I would call the attention of the gentlemen making the inquiry to numerous cases of commitment of children under twelve months, and the necessity of some prohibition being inserted in any future amendment of the law. As regards the religious teaching of the children, the order of the Magistrate has invariably been carried out in its integrity. The practice has been to allow the Roman Catholic priest attending the institution to have a separate room on one day in the week, at a special hour, for the instruction of the children of his faith. Until within the last three years the clergy