

to pay for all the children sent there who are not criminal, a great outcry is made about taxation without representation. They want to keep the children in their own hands, so as to control the expenditure directly. The police and the Magistrates have been instructed not to commit children to the industrial schools without consulting the Charitable Aid Boards. There has thus grown up in an irregular, unsystematic way—*i.e.*, so far as one general plan is concerned—a boarding-out system, managed by each Board for itself. After having visited in their homes all the children boarded out in the chief centres, except Auckland, I have come to the conclusion that, while there is no doubt that the boarding-out system is the best, yet it ought not to be left to the local Boards to manage. It is absolutely necessary that a comprehensive system of supervision should be established, and in our present circumstances I believe this can be done effectually only by the Education Department, whose existing machinery ought to be developed and strengthened to deal with this work. As things are at present, I fear that the parsimony of the Boards is being allowed to affect disastrously the children. For fear of the outcry made by the Boards, the police and Magistrates hesitate to commit, and the consequence is that there is a considerable increase of children, who are left without any proper care for either body or mind; and those who are taken charge of are boarded out very often with persons who are in receipt of charitable aid themselves, and in squalid and miserable homes in the poorest and most crowded parts of our cities, whereas they ought, whenever possible, be sent to the country.

I am convinced that it is mistaken economy to deal in this way with the young. Be as hard as you like with the adult sturdy beggar; but it will save a great deal of future expense in our gaols, hospitals, and asylums if we deal generously with the children.

I have, &c.,

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Inspector of Asylums and Hospitals.

The Hon. the Native Minister.