

vided elsewhere than in prisons. It would perhaps be difficult to make suitable arrangements for this purpose at the police cells, though this might be done when the sentence is only for a day or two; but when the period is longer it may deserve consideration whether suitable provision and machinery might not be instituted in connection with the industrial schools, which would thus have a department for strictly punitive discipline for limited periods as distinguished from the ordinary class of cases in which the inmates are kept until the age of fifteen years.

With regard to the possibility of bringing home to parents a stronger sense of their responsibility in this matter, the question is one which requires very careful consideration, but we think something might be done. To impose a direct pecuniary penalty on the parent for an offence committed by his own child would seem, no doubt, a novelty in English law, but at least there would be no injustice in empowering the Bench to order that the parent should pay a certain sum to go towards the cost of maintenance of the young offender, who might be confined for a term under some such system as we have above suggested. Another plan which seems to deserve consideration is the disfranchisement—for whatever term might be deemed just—of parents who are shown by the misconduct of their children to have grossly neglected their parental duties. Whether such disfranchisement of the parent should take place by the judgment of the Court convicting the young offender, or by the act of some other tribunal or authority upon cause shown, or *ipso facto* upon the happening of certain facts, would be matters for consideration; but there seems to be nothing unsound in the principle that the exercise of the highest function of citizenship should not be permitted to those who habitually ignore its plainest duties.

We have been informed that the subject of juvenile crime is attracting the attention of the magistracy in other parts of the colony. We also learn, by communications received from Christchurch, that the institution of sea-going training-ships for boys is likely to be suggested to the Government. Such a suggestion deserves our warmest sympathy and support, as being one of the most useful measures which could be adopted; and we do not doubt that the Government would regard it with equal favour, if not prohibited from entertaining it by imperative considerations of expense.

We have the honour to be,

J. GILES, R.M., and thirty-five Justices.

2. THAMES.

SIR,—

The undersigned Justices of the Peace of the Borough and District of Thames have the honour to make the following recommendations upon the subject of dealing with juvenile crime, which are embodied in a short series of resolutions passed by them after giving the question a careful and extended consideration at several meetings held for the purpose:—

Resolved, 1. That it is desirable that the offences of male children now dealt with by fine and imprisonment only ought also to be punishable, at the discretion of the Court, by flogging up to the age of eighteen years. That for cases to which the above-named penalties are not suitable or are inadequate institutions might be established in each provincial district, of a self-supporting kind, for the reformatory discipline and instruction of disorderly youths, who should there be taught a knowledge of agriculture and other trades, industrial schools upon their present footing being unsuitable for the object in view. That the same end—viz., reformation and the acquisition of a calling—might be attained on board a training-ship, from which boys might be apprenticed to the Royal and mercantile marine—a system from which excellent results are said to be obtained where it is in force.

2. That it is certain that in many instances the faults of children are directly traceable to the neglect of their parents. These in such cases ought to be made legally responsible for such neglect by incurring the liability to a fine in all cases of conviction where it is shown that the offence of the child is the result of parental neglect; because it is plain that, as regards many parents, the sense of moral responsibility is not strong enough to induce them to exercise the care necessary to guide and restrain young people, or even to send them to school; accordingly, that in the case of such persons legal ought to take the place of moral liability.

3. That the compulsory clauses of the Education Act should be generally enforced, and, if necessary, that the Act be amended accordingly.

In respect of the third resolution Mr. Northcroft desires his dissent to be recorded, as do also Messrs. Carpenter and Douglas.

In addition to the above resolutions, a suggestion has been made for restraining the liberty of the street and the highway to young children after dark. The object is desirable from every point of view, and advantage would doubtless result from achieving it, but we feel unable to make a positive recommendation on the subject, because of the objections which the proposal would probably meet, and the consequent difficulty of carrying it into practice.

We have, &c.,

JAMES KILGOUR, J.P., Chairman.
H. C. LAWLOR, J.P.
CHARLES HASELDEN, J.P.
L. J. BAGNALL, J.P.
H. W. NORTHCROFT, J.P.
R. T. DOUGLAS, J.P.
LOUIS VON ROTTER, J.P.
ALBERT J. ALLOM, J.P.
WILLIAM CARPENTER, J.P.
ALEXANDER AITKEN, J.P.
E. F. TIZARD, J.P.

The Hon. the Minister of Justice, &c.