

- (iii) They were naturally most concerned about the irregularities themselves and about the blot on Barnardo's good name. It was fair to say that Barnardo's had long and expert knowledge of dealing with boys' institutions and took every possible precaution to safeguard moral welfare. But they were not infallible and, moreover, practices of the kind which had come to light were, by their very nature, very difficult to discover.
- (iv) The visitors were worried about the ban placed on the entry of children into Barnardo's homes by Mr. Downer in the sense that while they themselves did not intend to allow more boys to enter until they were satisfied that "all was well", an official ban affected their status as a Society permitted to solicit contributions from the public. They asked that the official ban might be lifted.
- (v) They wished to emphasise that the offences had taken place not in Picton but after the boys concerned had left. This, however, though it removed a possible stigma from boys at the home, meant that the question of after-care must be looked at again, and very carefully. This they were doing.

5. When the visitors came to this Office on the same morning (24th July) they saw me first and then the Acting High Commissioner. Let me say at once that they all struck us as being, as one might expect, most forthright and deeply concerned about what had happened. In the course of the interview all the points described in paragraph 4 above were made by the visitors. In addition the following points were brought out:-

- (i) The party had spent some time in Sydney looking into the matter.
- (ii) The fact that the malpractices had not taken place among boys at the Picton home, or anywhere else, was reiterated (indeed this is an important point). They had, however, already taken action to strengthen some lines of policy in an unobtrusive way as additional safeguards for the future. More especially they intended to review their after-care system because it was disturbing that boys could be selected for employment by employers apparently addicted to the malpractices in question.