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NEW ZEALAND.

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## EDUCATION:

### CHILD WELFARE, STATE CARE OF CHILDREN, SPECIAL SCHOOLS, AND INFANT-LIFE PROTECTION.

[In continuation of E.—4, 1926.]

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*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.*

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#### NO. 1.—EXTRACT FROM THE FIFTIETH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

##### CHILD WELFARE.

##### FUNCTIONS OF CHILD WELFARE BRANCH.

The passing of the Child Welfare Act during 1925 marked an important stage in the progress of child-welfare work as carried out by the State. The Act provided for the creation of the Child Welfare Branch, whose function it is to maintain and train destitute, neglected, and delinquent children and young offenders. In addition to these functions the Branch provides for (1) the training of all afflicted children (deaf and feeble-minded) who cannot remain in their own homes and attend the special day classes for such cases; (2) investigations by Child Welfare officers regarding the conduct, family history, and home conditions of all children brought under the notice of Children's Courts, or young persons charged with offences; (3) investigation of all applications for the adoption of children; (4) preliminary inquiry regarding the suitability and *bona fides* of applicants for widows' pensions; (5) supervision by experienced female officers of all infants and young children under the age of six years who are maintained apart from their parents or guardians; (6) the oversight of all young offenders who are placed under supervision by the Children's Courts; (7) for the supervision of all illegitimate births, to ensure that these infants are properly placed and properly cared for (at the same time the Child Welfare officers carrying out this work endeavour to assist the single mother, where possible, to re-establish herself in the community); (8) carrying out preventive work—that is, the investigation and necessary social readjustment in the early stages of any cases brought under notice. The aim of this Branch is to check dependency and delinquency by studying the causes, and by effectively remedying them where possible.

Briefly, the functions of the Child Welfare Branch are to prevent wastage in child-life, to provide for social readjustment wherever necessary in the interests of children, and to ensure that the physically and mentally handicapped are educated, trained, and, where possible, suitably placed in industry.