

then truly we may find that it is not an idealistic dream to hope that there will be a better fate for our sons and grandsons than would be otherwise possible."

PUNISHMENT OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS.

A very sensible letter appears in a recent issue of the *Solicitors' Journal* on the subject of "Juvenile Crime and Birching." The writer is, we are told, a magistrate of long experience and a very competent authority. In these days of foolish sentimentalism it is refreshing to have such common-sense talk in the line of the boiled-down pronouncement of the wisest of men, who affirm, and it may be said to have divine approval: "Spare the rod and spoil the child." We commend this letter to the attention of those in authority in the premises:—

"My knowledge of the subject was gained by observing the results of a practice we adopted as magistrates of a provincial borough, and which was suggested to us by the recorder of that borough, who set us an example by his mode of dealing with a juvenile delinquent at the borough quarter sessions.

"There are many occasions in which the result of allowing juvenile crime to go unpunished is merely to encourage the boy to repeat the offence, and to boast of the result of his experience before the magistrates. To send him to prison, however, would, we felt, be no punishment. To a certain class of boys a term of imprisonment is something to be proud of, and the boy comes out of gaol regarded as a kind of hero by his fellows. We could not, of course, order a boy of this class to be birched, but we sent for his parents and told them we should be bound to send the boy to gaol unless we were satisfied that he had been properly birched. If he were so dealt with we would inflict no further punishment, but we must be satisfied that a real punishment had been inflicted. The result almost invariably was that the father elected that the boy should be birched, and the boy and his father adjourned to the police-station, where the father requested the constable, as his deputy and in his presence, to administer the whipping—four, six, or eight strokes with a birch, according