

fits, such as long coats for short boys and the opposite. A great number seemed to have patch-work coats made of brown corduroy. I had never seen such a collection of oddly dressed youngsters before or since. There were several with the fronts of their shirts open, and we could see their flesh, and that they had no undershirts on. Whether they were warm enough I could not say, but they looked ill-clad. While we were there Messrs. Rout and Piper came down. I knew what they had been looking for, and they were looking round the outside of the building. They spotted a room with some bars in, and, after a conversation with a Brother there, we went upstairs. The Brother said the room was kept for photographic purposes. We all went up to look with Brother Augustine. There were various articles in the room, and I was satisfied that at that time it was being used for photographic purposes. After seeing the downstairs cell, I was satisfied that it could also be used, and was probably made, for a cell. The attempt to find the boys so far had failed. When we got back into the passage the Brother was asked where the boys Maher and James were. He said they were locked up. We wanted to know where, and, after some hesitation, he said, "In there," pointing to the room opposite where we were standing. We asked to see the boys, and were told that Brother Loetus had the keys away. There was a great deal of conversation, the details of which I cannot remember. Annoyance at not being able to see the boys was expressed, and Brother Augustine was told that we would come again next day. We went downstairs into the room where all the boys were dining. There were one or two Brothers apparently looking after them. I walked up and down between the tables. I did not speak to any of them. I saw that they all had a plate of meat and potatoes. There was a good deal of potato, and not a large quantity of meat; the potatoes were very bad in colour. If they had been peeled and boiled properly they should have been of a better colour. The stuff was a dark-brown or dirty-white. It was mashed and sloppy. There seemed a good deal of it. I did not like the look of it, and should not like to eat it. The meat looked like ordinary boiled meat. The boys did not seem to be eating it very freely. We started then to go away, but had not proceeded far when we saw Brother Loetus coming up the road, and we turned back. The Chairman spoke to Brother Loetus, who took us upstairs after saying it was a private room, and making a few other remarks. He opened the door, which led into a storeroom containing principally boots. There was a door at the end opposite from us, and this led to another room, in the north-west corner of which there was a built-in cell like a big box. There was a door at the east end, with a bolt and padlock. Brother Loetus unlocked the padlock and opened the door, and called or brought the boy Maher out. Before we went in there, Brother Augustine said that both boys were in there (pointing to the door of the store-room). There was only one boy in that cell. I went into the cell myself and had the door shut. I do not remember seeing anything in the cell except the tin bowl. The cell was about the size described. When the door was shut I could see when near the opening. It was there to admit air and light, no doubt. The opening was about 5 ft. from the ground, and about 18 in. by 1 ft. in size. It had about three horizontal bars across it, about 2 in. or 2½ in. apart. The bars were such as might have been the legs of an iron bedstead. Stuck between two of the bars was a piece of bread. It was a clean cut off the end of a tinued loaf, and was about an inch thick. One one side of it it had something spread very thinly indeed. The boy said he had been there since the previous Wednesday. The bread was two or three days old. When I went out of the cell the boy was being questioned. He said he had been left there since the previous Wednesday; that he had been caned four times; that he had been there alone for eight days, and never let out, day or night. I do not remember him saying he went to mass. Brother Loetus interjected that it was the practice to confine the boys in cells as long as they were absent from the school after absconding. One of our party said, "The boy Skilton was in here four months, was he not?" Brother Loetus said, "Not so long as that; not more than two."

*Mr. Wardell*] Did he say when that was?—He did not. I understood recently. I think locking the boy (Maher) up for a week, and bringing him out to be thrashed every other morning, was very wrong, and I said so. I said it would have been better to give him a thrashing and have done with it. I have been accused by Brother Loetus in the papers of advocating flogging; but I did not do so. I did not think the boy should be brought out daily to be thrashed. The dinner was brought up to the boy while I was there. It was like that seen in the dining-room. I was told the mattress was put in at night.

SATURDAY, 29TH JULY, 1900.

CHARLES JOHN HARLEY resumed his evidence.

*The Witness*: After leaving the upper floor we went downstairs towards the cell. Brother Loetus was slightly in front, and as he approached the door he said to one of the Brothers, "Open the door." This Brother had a key and opened the door. Mr. Rout went into the cell, and I walked just inside the door, and the boy was examined. This cell was quite different from the other one. It is part of the original building, and I should say it was this cell [indicating a cell on a plan produced], and I should say was intended for a cupboard or something. It was on the west side of the building, and the door leading into it was on the east side and towards the south end. The cell was about the same width, but longer than the other one. I should think it is about 12 ft. long. The height appeared to be the same as that of the other room. I do not suppose it was built originally for a cell, but it was useful for putting boys in. There was no ordinary window. There was an opening on the west side of the wall in front of the building, perhaps 2 ft. by 1 ft. I could not say whether there was glass behind; I suppose there was. The boy was examined by Mr. Rout. He said he had been there a week—since the previous Wednesday. He