

232. How did you know, then, whether they took water or not?—When I came out of the scullery G—— J—— started a fuss about taking water over, and Miss Mills said No, they could take a drink before they went.

233. Is this girl telling the truth when she said there were only two days on which water was not taken?—I was not working there then.

234. But she was one of the lupin-diggers the whole time: how many days were you there that you can remember when water was refused?—A can of water was taken over twice, and then one of the girls asked, before she left the kitchen, if she could take a can of water over, and Miss Mills said they did not want any, and G—— said she was not going to go there to work without water, and she was put in the cell for it.

235. What was the other occasion?—I asked on another occasion if I could take water myself, and Miss Mills said No.

236. Was there any other occasion?—Yes.

237. This girl said you were allowed to take water on every occasion except twice?—We were not.

238. Did not the girls drink excessive quantities of water over there in the heat?—No.

239. Did they come out in spots?—I never saw them.

240. Do you remember the Matron making them put oatmeal with the water?—Yes, once.

241. You do not know some of the girls came out in spots owing to the water?—No.

242. Do you know of a plot among the girls at any time to abscond when cutting the lupins?—There were two girls.

243. And you knew about it?—No, not until it was told.

244. Do you know they were going to use the excuse of going away for water as a means of getting away?—No, they were not going to ask for water at all. B—— W—— had taken fancy work there, and she was going to take it round the corner and go.

245. After you absconded from B——'s you went to Kaiapoi?—Yes.

246. Did you tell the Home people where you were?—No.

247. Did you go to Kaiapoi the same day you left B——'s?—Yes. I left Kaiapoi, and I walked on the train-line, and I saw a man, and I asked him for a lift.

248. What induced you to go to Kaiapoi?—I just took it in my head to go.

249. Had you any money?—I had 3d.

250. No clothes?—Yes.

251. Where did you go at Kaiapoi?—To B——'s boardinghouse.

252. Was there a daughter there?—Yes.

253. Did you go with her to the Exhibition?—No; I never spoke of the Exhibition to S—— B——.

254. Did you tell anybody that you had been down to the Exhibition with Miss B——?—No, I never mentioned I went to the Exhibition before I ran away from B——'s.

255. Did you ever tell any one that you had been to the Exhibition very frequently with Miss B——?—No.

256. Did you tell Miss Mills?—Yes; she asked me questions to know what I did.

257. Was that true?—No; they tried to pump me, and I told them what I thought.

258. What made you tell her that?—Because she asked me, and I was not going to give her information.

259. You simply told her anything that came into your head, whether true or not?—Yes.

260. How long were you at work at the lupins before Christmas—two days?—I do not know.

261. You say the girls are not allowed to speak—as a matter of fact, do they not speak pretty freely?—Not unless the staff is out of the room, and they get a chance to talk.

262. And at dinner-time a book is read?—Yes.

263. So it would be very inconvenient for you all to be talking?—Yes.

264. At breakfast and tea also a book is read?—Yes, but not every morning.

265. You said you could not get all the food you wanted so far as quantity was concerned?—No; last winter we were pretty hungry. Six or seven girls made a fuss about it.

266. When was that?—Last winter.

267. What time?—I do not know the time exactly.

268. Do you mean at breakfast, or dinner, or tea?—At midday dinner.

269. What do you generally get for dinner at midday in the winter?—Vegetables and a little bit of meat and a few potatoes, and sometimes rice and a piece of bread.

270. In what were you short? Did you not get enough meat?—We did not get enough. There was no second helping.

271. At tea do you get plenty of bread and butter?—No; we get two slices of it, and they are cut in half and called four pieces.

272. And jam and dripping?—Jam and dripping and sometimes butter, but very seldom butter.

273. Have you ever complained to the Matron that you do not get enough to eat?—No, but girls have complained.

274. Have you ever complained?—I do not think so.

275. People come here officially visiting?—Yes.

276. You are allowed to see these people in private?—No.

277. Have you ever complained to any of these people that you had not had enough to eat?—I never had the chance.

278. Why?—They just come into the room and walk out again.

279. Have you ever complained to any person?—No; because it is no use to complain.

280. That was only in the winter time last year?—Yes.