

THURSDAY, 5TH MARCH, 1908.

A—Z—M— examined on oath.

1. *Mr. Salter.*] You are at present in service with Mrs. McK——?—Yes.
2. How long were you in the Home?—A little over two years, and at odd times.
3. Where did you come from to the Home?—The Convent in Wellington.
4. How long were you in the Home before you went out to service?—A little over two years.
5. Have you been back at all since you went to service?—Yes.
6. How often?—I went to Mrs. C——'s first, and only stayed with her six weeks, and then returned to the Home. I then went to Miss S——'s, and stayed with her from the 24th July until nearly the end of November, 1906.
7. Your work here was the same as that of the other girls?—Yes, cutting down trees, and cross-cutting, hauling, and digging up the stumps.
8. And amongst the lupins?—No.
9. Whilst you were here, supposing a girl had her breakfast placed before her and did not eat it, what happened?—She got it for the next meal, and if they did not eat it then they were generally smacked.
10. *The Commissioner.*] What do you mean by smacked?—Boxed over the ears or hit over the shoulders.
11. By whom?—By the Matron.
12. *Mr. Salter.*] Supposing a girl spoke to another one at meals?—She would be sent out without finishing her meal, and if it was before the meal started she would generally be sent out without it, but I have known a girl to be sent from two meals running for speaking at the next meal.
13. Do you mean to say a girl did not get any food at all?—Yes, if she spoke before the meal began.
14. And she had to wait until the next meal for something to eat?—Yes.
15. Has that happened to you at all?—It happened in the middle of my meal.
16. Was the Matron at meals with you here?—She took meals on Sunday—at dinner-hour—unless she was ill, or had taken the girls to church.
17. Who was present at meals?—Each attendant had a meal to take a day.
18. Did you ever complain to the Matron about the attendants sending you out without a meal?—Miss Mills sent me out unjustly, and I told the Matron, and she said I could take that for some time when I deserved it.
19. Have you ever been with Miss Hunt?—Yes, I was under Miss Hunt within the last three months. I was back from Miss S——'s at the end of November, and then I went up country, and I did not like it, and I came down again and stayed in the Home for a while, and I went to Mrs. McK—— on the 28th December last.
20. How did you find Miss Hunt treat you?—I felt Miss Hunt hard with the work. She made the girls work very hard.
21. Did she not let you rest?—She did not like to see us stand up, even when dragging great trunks of trees.
22. Was it the Matron's practice to tell you of your faults at all?—She told them in public generally, and very seldom in private, if ever she did.
23. Sometimes privately?—Very seldom, if ever she did.
24. At what time?—Prayer-time at night.
25. Have you ever been strapped?—Yes; but more than two years ago.
26. You said the Matron had boxed your ears?—Yes; over two years ago.
27. Have you seen her boxing other girls' ears within the last two years?—Yes; in December, when I was back, I saw her box a girl's ears, and shove her down the passage.
28. What is the girl's name?—D—— D——. She is a little girl.
29. When girls run away, what happens?—If they are out at service they generally forfeit all the money they have saved, and if they run away whilst in the Home they are strapped over the bed.
30. Does the Matron ever make any remarks to you whilst the girls are away?—Yes, she tells us what they have done while they are away.
31. What sort of remarks does she make about them?—She tells us if they have done any evil, and if they have been in any place of ill-fame.
32. Have you or other girls you know of ever been charged with offences you were not guilty of?—Yes.
33. Just tell us some?—If we turn over in bed at night we were charged with immoral actions.
34. And if you deny, what happens then?—The Matron generally sided with the staff, and told us again we could take that blame for something we had done and had not been charged with.
35. Have you been charged with these offences?—Yes.
36. I understand there are certain utensils in the kitchen the girls object to?—Yes; bedroom articles.
37. What are they used for?—For holding jam and sugar and milk and butter-milk.
38. *The Commissioner.*] You mean chambers?—Yes.
39. *Mr. Salter.*] Are there many of them?—There used to be a good many when I was there—perhaps thirty.
40. Did you see them when you were here last December?—Yes.
41. Do you know whether the girls ever objected to them?—If they objected to them they were told they never had better in their own homes.
42. *The Commissioner.*] Who told them this?—The Matron.