

institution. She threatened another with a spade. She was extremely unmanageable, and I think the Matron had very grave provocation, and she did on that occasion hit the girl on the plait in the back of the head. The girl complained to me, and I listened to what she said, and she told me she was quite deaf. I had not my instruments with me for testing her hearing because I knew nothing about this ear trouble. I tested the girl as well as I could without instruments, and I was perfectly satisfied her hearing was not in the least bit impaired, nor was there any symptom of injury. I whispered to the girl to shut the door, and she did so at once.

38. *The Commissioner.*] She did not complain to you on any subsequent occasion?—Not at all. I then told Miss Hunt, the Matron being out, that I thought it very unwise, and I hoped it would not be repeated.

39. I suppose I may assume you take a real live interest in the institution as a reforming agency, apart from your position as Medical Officer?—I do.

40. We will take the case of girls anywhere from eighteen to twenty years of age—some of them almost immediately prior to discharge as being of the statutory age—what is your opinion of corporal punishment on young women?—I do not approve of it.

41. Personally, I may say at once I have not been able to bring my mind to see any possible benefit from it. Have you in your mind thought of any possible benefit that could result to any young woman, either in her thoughts or mode of living, after receiving corporal punishment—that is, apart altogether from the Matron, who is simply carrying out a system approved of by the Department?—I think some of these girls' characters are so depraved that it is impossible to appeal to their feelings by reasoning or by any kind of advice. I think in some cases physical pain is the only way to make them feel. Personally, I strongly disapprove of any corporal punishment, and I think it is a great pity it should be used.

42. And it might be extremely brutalising without having any corresponding advantage?—Yes. But in some cases it seems impossible to deal otherwise with their natures. As a matter of principle, I think it is a great mistake, and I think it is a dreadful thing it has to be done.

43. It is something that does not appeal to one's mind as being the correct thing?—Not at all.

44. There is another matter which has probably been the moving cause of this public feeling—this hair-cutting: have you any opinion about that?—I think it is a very good thing. If it keeps them from running away, and saves them from all the other punishments that accrue, it does not matter. It will grow very quickly.

45. You do not suggest any other effect it may have on a girl's disposition or mind?—No. I had my hair cut off when I was a girl, and I thought it very nice. It saved a lot of trouble.

46. Yours was not cut off as a punishment?—No, it was not.

47. It does not suggest itself to your mind as having any bad effect on the girls?—No, I do not think so.

48. A great deal has been said during the course of the inquiry about the examination in this reception-room: I suppose any qualified nurse makes an examination of that nature in certain cases?—It is only an external examination such as a nurse would make, and then, if everything is not quite right, it is reported to me.

49. I am really here to try and improve the system if it is capable of improvement: would you suggest that it might be more desirable that that examination should be made by you, and that you should be sent for for the purpose?—I think in the majority of the cases the girls would greatly prefer the Matron, if they know her.

50. At any rate, it does not suggest itself to your mind as an improper or undesirable process?—No at all.

51. Has the Matron shown to you, apart from her duties, that she has a keen idea of nursing and the care of young people?—She certainly has. She has had a good deal of experience, being a doctor's widow. But, of course, this is no place for nursing, and when anybody is ill they are removed to the Hospital.

52. Is there much masturbation amongst the girls?—A great deal.

53. That would necessitate very constant and strict and almost excessive supervision?—It does, both day and night, and plenty of open-air exercise—actual physical exercise to tire them out during the day. I advise it strongly.

54. Between what ages do you find that vice mainly obtains?—I should think, amongst girls over fifteen here.

55. Has that habit been contracted mainly before admission here or during residence here?—Before admission.

56. Something has been said about certain of the staff repeatedly calling out to the girls if they turned over in bed: do you think, if there is any suspicion of anything improper as the result of a girl turning over in bed, it would be necessary to frequently supervise the beds?—Yes, it must be done.

57. It is a secret vice, and must be dealt with in a special way?—Yes.

58. One matter particularly remitted to me by my Commission is the question of classification, and you touched on that just now. Would you kindly give me in detail the lines on which you think the improvement in classification should go?—I really have not thought about it to give it to you to-day.

59. Could you give it to me at any time later on?—Yes, if you would allow me to draw it up.

60. To my mind, it goes to the very root of the treatment. If you have not facilities for effective classification you cannot have a perfect system?—I think it is such a pity that the girls who are moral should have to mix with the girls who are thieves and who have other vices. It is impossible to separate them here in the classes.

61. We know these vices are very easily communicated?—Very easily.

62. After all, it is only a matter of expense?—Yes.