

me round the place as she would the Commissioner. In the same way, in all her dealings with the girls she seemed to me to come down to their level, and to treat them in the most humane and kindly way. Therefore, I have always looked upon Mrs. Branting as a most valuable public servant. Mrs. Branting, in all her dealings with the girls so far as I have seen, has treated them in the most kind and motherly manner. I do not know any of the girls' names but one. The Matron never exposed the girls to me in any way.

13. Have you noticed that the girls get more refined and decent as time goes on?—Speaking of the girls as I remember them, they certainly have improved.

MARY LESLIE examined on oath.

1. *Mr. Russell.*] I believe you are the wife of David Leslie, and live near here?—Yes.
 2. I think you want to give some evidence as to what you know of this place?—Yes.
 3. Will you state to the Commissioner what you know?—I know a good deal about the Home. Mrs. Branting showed me over the place two years ago and all the girls' belongings, and I thought it was a great credit to the Home and to Mrs. Branting to see everything in such beautiful order. It surprised me to know how she could manage it. When I had fruit in the season I asked the Matron if she would allow the girls to come over and pick it for themselves. Miss Hunt brought some ten or thirteen over, and I was surprised to see the turn-out. They looked so nice and clean, and all appeared so happy. They picked all the pears they could reach, and then they cut down the tree for me as I did not want it any longer and got the rest of the pears.

4. Did they make a good job of it?—They did it as nicely as a man could, and they were not very long in doing it. They were all so happy, and I never heard Miss Hunt say an angry word to them. I thought it so nice to see her controlling all these girls without an angry word.

5. Were they well behaved?—Yes, and quiet and respectful to Miss Hunt when she spoke to them, and they spoke nicely to one another. It just reminded me of a teacher from a boarding-school out with her scholars for an airing. On other occasions the girls came over, and they used to beg to be allowed to stay half an hour longer when the attendant said it was time to go home. They said they loved climbing trees, and that the only things they really enjoyed were climbing trees and chopping wood.

ELLEN THERESA BRANTING examined on oath.

1. *Mr. Russell.*] You are manager of this Home?—Yes.
 2. You have been here how many years?—Seven years and three-quarters.
 3. Prior to your taking up any duties outside your own home, I think you were living in Hawke's Bay?—Yes. My people all live in Dannevirke.
 4. And you married the late Dr. Branting, and some years ago he died?—Yes.
 5. You then took up nursing?—I went Home to my mother, and then I came to Christchurch and took up nursing.
 6. You were first Sub-matron of the Samaritan Home and then Matron?—Yes.
 7. For how long?—I was Matron about six months.
 8. When this institution started you accepted the appointment offered by the Government?—Yes.

9. You are not dependent on your salary. You have means of your own?—Yes.
 10. But you really have a love for this kind of work?—Yes.
 11. May I say it is as much love of the work as the salary that keeps you here?—The salary does not worry me.

12. How long has the Home been started?—I took up my duties on the 1st July, 1900.
 13. And at the present time you have how many girls to look after, including those in residence and those out?—Eighty-six girls.

14. Of that number some fifty-four are residing in the Home now?—Yes.
 15. Apparently you get bad classes of girls here?—Yes.
 16. And the object of the Home is to reform them?—I believe so.
 17. What influence do you bring to bear on the girls for that purpose—moral suasion?—Yes, as much as possible.

18. Do you take an opportunity of speaking to the girls privately, and of encouraging them to get out of their bad ways?—I think I am doing it all day long.

19. With regard to punishments, may I ask are they resorted to after every other expedient has failed?—As a last resort.

20. How many assistants have you in this Home?—Four attendants, a teacher, Sub-matron, and gardener at the present time. I am one short just now, since Miss Howden left.

21. What do you rear on the place outside?—We keep poultry and cows, we grow our own vegetables, and produce our own honey and firewood.

22. Do you find the Department are willing to give you everything in reason for running the Home?—They have been goodness itself so far as assisting us in every way is concerned.

23. The Department, in its efforts to reform these girls, has not stinted you in any way?—No.

24. Does the Department, through Mr. Pope and the other heads, take a keen interest in the work?—Yes.

25. They appear to take a personal interest in every girl, judging by the correspondence?—Yes. At one time I think Mr. Pope knew every girl by name.

26. Does the Department follow in detail the affairs of every girl here?—Yes.

27. Do you judge from that that the Department takes a keen individual interest in each girl's career?—Yes.

28. What offences do you find are the most prevalent here?—I think impudence is the most prevalent.