

72. Supposing that then the inmates assault the staff, as has been done before, and continue impudent, what are you going to do?—If a reformatory cannot deal with these girls, then the only possible thing to do is to send them a step further.

73. You agree in regard to girls of a certain class whose conduct has not been good that it would be a good thing to have the power, under certain restrictions, to make their sentence indeterminate?—I would say the same as I did in giving evidence before the Burnham Commission as to this detention after twenty-one years. My reply was this: When an inmate of the Home who was regarded by the Manager as unfit to be at large was nearing twenty-one, that his or her case should be brought before the Magistrate; and I would, in order to insure that inmate having an absolutely fair hearing, advocate that the Government should provide the inmate with counsel, so that his or her case might have the very fullest hearing. Then, if the Magistrate was satisfied that it was a case for further detention, he should have power to extend the period of detention under the original order to, say, twenty-five years of age. But I would provide that the Minister's powers of license during that period should remain as they are at present—that is to say, if during the four years' extension the inmate showed sufficient improvement to warrant being licensed out the Minister should have power to license him or her out as at present. If on coming near the twenty-five years of age there was still no improvement, I would repeat the process, always preserving the Minister's power to license out. I think that the indeterminate sentence savours too much of confirmed criminality; and in many cases it may not be that; it may simply be because of moral or mental weakness, and therefore I prefer the extension of the period of detention for some definite time.

74. Do you agree with the other witnesses that the result of the training of the girls at this Home has been a great improvement in them and has effected a great upward movement?—There can be no two opinions about it. It has really been wonderful.

75. Can you give us any idea as to how many girls have gone through this Home?—Since the Home was established in 1900 sixty-two girls have passed out of control—that is to say, they have passed out to service, and have done sufficiently well for their period of detention to be absolutely terminated. At the termination of the period of control thirty-two were of good character, thirteen would be classed as fair, eight as bad, three of them were missing at the time, three were weak-minded, and in three cases the period was terminated by death. Our system is that we do not claim a success until an inmate has been beyond the control of the school for three years. Well, there are only thirty-nine girls who have been beyond the control of Te Oranga Home for three years, and of these nineteen are known to be of good character, two are unknown, two are weak-minded, two of them remained on at Mount Magdala, and one has died since.

76. I think this number included girls who were rapidly drawing near twenty-one when they first came here?—Yes. At first we culled from the industrial schools the absolutely incorrigible cases. They were about the wildest team I have ever seen. When I first visited Te Oranga there were nine inmates, mostly young women, in a state verging on open rebellion, and I went away from the Home feeling we had a very tough row to hoe. These girls were almost hopeless at the beginning. I expect, seeing that we get the girls younger now, that we will in the next half-dozen years be able to put up a much better record.

77. These ten failures include the girls who came here first?—Yes.

78. Is it not true that, as you could only keep these girls until they were twenty-one, the Home had very little chance with them in the year or two before they attained their majority?—That is so.

79. Can you give us any figures at all showing how the girls have done who have been in the Home five or six years?—No; the period is not long enough yet.

80. But so far as you can see, although the three years have not gone by, are the girls who have been beyond the control of the Home for two years giving fair promise?—Decidedly.

81. You consider it is a good investment for the country to carry on this Home here?—I am absolutely certain of it.

82. And generally, from your experience, you can suggest nothing beyond the question of corporal punishment and the question of classification which would improve the management?—Of course, if we had considerably more staff we could give the girls a great deal more individual attention, but I would not advocate that. It would mean we would have a large number of women here with comparatively little to do.

83. Do the children suffer through this extra staff not being at the Home?—I do not think so. There is sufficient staff to carry on the work of the Home.

84. Including the moral part of it?—Yes. Of course, we have immense help from outside workers. There is Mr. Smail: the Department cannot thank him too much. We have also Mrs. Kaye, Mr. and Mrs. Inwood, and the Official Visitors: they are all doing really excellent work, and the Department is grateful to them for it.

85. *Mr. Salter.*] How many times a year do you visit Te Oranga?—Perhaps four or five times, on the average. Last year I was here less often than usual.

86. Do you ever make suggestions to the Matron in regard to matters in connection with the Home?—Constantly.

87. In writing or verbally?—Our procedure is this: I come here, and Mrs. Branting brings matters before me, or I bring them before her; and we discuss them, and then she writes officially to Wellington about them. I am then in possession of the facts, and in a position to advise the head of the Department.

88. With reference to communications from Mrs. Branting to Wellington, did you ever suggest to her that she should write direct to Sir Edward Gibbes, and mark her letters "Private and confidential"?—I never suggested she should mark any letters "Private." You are referring to the case of A—G—. Mrs. Branting had a talk to me about the girl, and she put the matter