

attitude towards each other would have a good moral effect upon the girls. As to the girls, I must say that when I went there I was extremely surprised at their manner. They have excellent behaviour, and I have never heard a wrong expression from them during the time I have been working there, and I have never heard the attendants abuse them or say anything cross to them in any way. In fact, they seem rather pleased to see the attendants come round, to relieve the monotony I suppose, and they commence a little gentle chaff. I have never heard them discuss the Home in any way since I have been there, although they have been working round about me. When they speak to each other it is in modulated tones, and I came to the conclusion that they are exceedingly well trained, and, so far as education went, a credit to their school-mistress. When the Matron does come to them they seem to be in a flutter of delight, and ready to have a little chat with her, and presently perhaps chaff her. I have never heard them say a single word against the Matron. Miss Hunt's name has been brought up frequently, and I wish to relate an incident which came under my own notice. One of the little girls—I found out afterwards she was 15 years of age—seemed to want a job, and I asked her if she would like to paint the sashes in the conservatory. She said she would be delighted, and I advised her to see if she could get permission to do it. She did so, and worked very industriously, and seemed quite willing to learn all I could teach her, and she did the work remarkably well. One morning Miss Hunt came along and said "Oh, E——, you should be in getting ready for school. Besides, you should have your dress covered, as that is the dress you have to go to school in." The little girl was up the ladder, and Miss Hunt seemed rather concerned about her. The little girl got down, and, I suppose, forgot she had left her paint on the top step of the ladder. She commenced to move the ladder, with the result that the paint toppled over and covered her dress and also ran into her boots and over her stockings. All Miss Hunt said was "Now, E——, how will we get the paint out of that?" She took the matter in a very pleasant manner, and never scolded the girl in any way. I suggested remedies. The little girl told me next day she was not coming back to do any more painting because Miss Hunt thought it was better not to risk the same thing again. I thought if it was possible for an attendant to get angry with a child she would have done so under these conditions. When the girls escape from the Home they get into the lupins, which are very dense. I also have a patch of broom, which I have allowed to grow for firewood, and the escapees generally go through my place and out into the reserve, and usually the first notice we get of a runaway is when we see the other girls searching about my premises for her. On one occasion about twelve months ago several girls were about my cowshed, and two remained there. I asked them what they were looking for, and they said, "One of the girls has run away. We fancy we have tracked her through your place, and we are stopping here to see if she comes out." I asked them "What motive have you girls in running away? Are you not well treated?" to which they replied "Oh, yes, we could not be treated better than we are. The Matron and all the attendants are exceedingly kind to us. In fact, we have no reason to run away at all." I asked, "Then, why do these girls run away?" They said "Oh, well, we do not know, but there are always bad girls in the Home." I asked what would be done to them when they were caught. The girls replied, "They have the runaway dress put on them, so that they will be found, and they are to have their hair cut." I asked what was the motive in cutting the hair. "Oh, the girls are very proud of their hair, and if they know they will have it cut they will do nothing wrong. It has a deterrent effect." They also told me the girls would be put in the cells. I asked them if they would be punished in any other way. They replied "Well, they ought to be, but they are not always, and that is not fair." I pointed out that perhaps the girls ran away under different circumstances, and they said "Oh, yes. Some of the girls run away for bad purposes, and of course in that case if they try to lead other girls astray they are punished." I asked them if the punishment was severe, and they said "No, just the ordinary school-strap. We get plenty of it." I remarked that I supposed they would get that at every school, and they agreed. That was the end of the conversation. In regard to the question of corporal punishment, I would like to say that for some years I was Chairman of one of the State schools and also superintendent of a Sabbath-school. There were about a hundred children in each. Of course, the cane was used pretty frequently at the day-school, and at the Sabbath-school there was no punishment whatever. One boy in the first class of the Sabbath-school was perfectly uncontrollable. We used every means in our power to show him he was working in the wrong direction and setting a bad example to the whole of the scholars, but he would persist in upsetting the school. I saw the schoolmaster one day, and I asked him how did So-and-so behave in the day-school. He told me he was the best boy in the school. I said that was singular, because he was the worst in the Sabbath-school, and setting a very bad example to the rest. I could only come to the conclusion that the boy was afraid of physical punishment. Physically, he was a coward, and the knowledge that he could be punished in the day-school kept him good. Therefore, in extreme cases I certainly think it is beneficial the strap should be used.

JAMES SPEIGHT examined on oath.

1. *The Commissioner.*] What is your occupation?—At present I am farming a little at Shirley, but I am a retired schoolmaster.
2. You are a certificated teacher?—Yes. I worked under the North Canterbury Board for twenty-five years.
3. In large or small schools?—The last was St. Albans.
4. Then you have had considerable experience in teaching?—Yes. I was also a workhouse schoolmaster in the Old Country, so I have had experience with the same classes as you have at Te Oranga.
5. I understand you have no personal knowledge of Te Oranga?—I have very seldom been there. My evidence will be simply in regard to the behaviour of these girls during the last six or seven years at the Burwood Church. These girls go there every Sunday morning.