

the girl, and had seen nothing to lead her to think there was any immorality whatever. I asked why the girl had been committed? Was it for immoral reasons? She said, "No; for theft."

28. Did Nurse Early always speak well of the girl?—Yes. It was really my husband who first thought of the girl, and then we asked Miss Early.

29. *The Commissioner.*] You heard Miss Early's evidence?—Yes, and it was quite true.

30. *Mr. Russell.*] It was in June you wanted a servant first?—Yes.

31. So your action was not so much with a view of helping this girl as to get a domestic?—In the first instance, it was to get a domestic.

32. And you did not get her until the 9th November, that being the date on which Mrs. Branting writes, "I am instructed to license A—— G—— to you"?—That was after I had all the bother.

33. So you were looking for a servant from June until November?—No; I dropped her on Mrs. Branting's first report.

34. Had you a servant at the time when you first interested yourself in the girl at the Samaritan Home?—In June my old servant got married.

35. About September you began to think, from what you had been told, that Mrs. Branting was wrong?—I had another girl, but I was not satisfied with her, and I thought I would be wanting a girl. Miss Early insisted she was right in regard to A—— and I decided I would take her.

36. Then you came into contest with Mrs. Branting?—No; I saw Mr. Pope.

37. You knew Mrs. Branting was behind, advising the girl should not be sent?—I do not know, but I inferred it.

38. You knew on the 23rd October, from a letter the Department wrote you, that Mrs. Branting was the person behind the refusal?—Yes.

39. Then, instead of looking for another girl, you were determined to have this girl, by hook or by crook?—Not by hook or by crook. I was interested in the girl herself, and I said I would go on with it.

40. You knew Mrs. Branting had said the girl should go to Te Oranga, and you were determined the girl should not?—Quite so; but before this I had written to the Minister in the girl's own interest.

41. I may take it that from the 23rd October you were determined the girl should not go to Te Oranga Home?—I determined then the girl should get justice.

42. From that date it became a conflict between you and Mrs. Branting, not directly, but through the Department?—Yes.

43. You put letters in motion to override Mrs. Branting?—Yes.

44. Are you satisfied that Mrs. Branting, in acting as she did, did what was right in the circumstances?—No, I think she was prejudiced against the girl.

45. You do not know what Mrs. Branting knows about the girl?—I cannot very well.

46. Did you ever ask Mrs. Branting to give you a full account of what she knew?—I asked her in the first instance. It was no good going back after what she told me.

47. Did she tell you anything about Quail Island?—No, she never mentioned it. A—— has told me about it.

48. Rightly or wrongly, if Mrs. Branting was of opinion that the girl was the ringleader in what took place at Quail Island, in consequence of which the girls had to be brought back, could you blame her for not wanting the girl to go out?—I do not think anything of Mrs. Branting's opinion about that, because I was convinced she was wrong right through.

49. Do you mean that the facts as to what happened at Quail Island did not exist?—I know nothing about what happened there.

50. Do you know that assignments were made by this and other girls with men on that occasion?—I would not believe it of A—— G——. I know nothing about the other girls.

51. Does this girl speak well or ill now of Te Oranga Home?—She is divided by her experiences there. Before she went to the Samaritan Home and to the Mental Hospital her experiences were harrowing. For the fortnight she was back, and they knew I was communicating with Wellington, her treatment was absolutely different, and if she had only been treated with the same kindness in the first instance, I do not think she would ever have given any trouble.

52. She had been in the Samaritan Home, and was well behaved then. The discipline was less severe?—Yes, and it suited her very well.

53. One opinion Mrs. Branting held was that yours was a very hard place for this girl, who is not strong physically. Is yours a hard place?—I do not think so. You had better ask the girl.

54. I will read this from a letter written on the 27th November from your place: "DEAR MATRON,—I have a very hard place, but I like my mistress and master very much"?—That is about a week or a fortnight after she came.

55. I will read another dated the 9th December: "DEAR MATRON,—Your letter came to hand last Thursday. I was very pleased to hear from you and Maple. I was going to write straight away, but I have been too busy. Dear Matron, I am glad to say I am feeling much better and stronger, and I feel more able to do the work, although I have plenty of work to do, and I am hardly ever finished. You see, Matron, I was not very well when I came here, and I was so very depressed and miserable I used to go to bed tired and get up in the morning just as tired—in fact, more tired. Night after night I never closed my eyes in sleep. Dear Matron, I am very sorry I shall not be able to meet you in town this week, for I am getting the whole day on Wednesday, and I am going home for the day. I had my sister in to see me to-day, and she said she would not like the washing and the ironing I have got to do here. I have been going since 5 this morning, and it is now 8, and I have just finished, and I have a hot supper to get ready for Miss Seddon, who is coming to-night. We are having a great day next Sunday week here." The girl evidently seems to think her place hard?—When the girl came to me she was in bad health.