

coming from Caversham, or to take a girl to the Hospital or to and from a situation, and that when the staff had their holidays I should be called upon to help and relieve.

5. But your principal work was to be in the office?—Yes.

6. When you got to Te Oranga to begin your duties, did you find that Mrs. Branting expected you to act really as an attendant?—After she had engaged me she said, “Probably you would like to relieve Miss Hunt every other week, and that will enable you to have a long lie-in the following week.” I said I might like it, but after thinking it over when I went there I said to the Matron I would not care about doing it, because I should not be able to stand it in the cold, and that I would rather get up at the usual time every morning and go into the office. Mrs. Branting said she could not possibly do that, because she had made the arrangement with Miss Hunt, and she asked me not to say anything about what I would do or would not do. She said I would find the work very light indeed, and asked me to go on and see.

7. That was when you first went down?—Yes, on the 21st July.

8. But she did not tell you that when she engaged you?—She talked about it, but I did not trouble much because it was optional.

9. And when you got there you found she expected it, and that there was no option about it?—Yes, it was put upon me as part of my duty.

10. And you objected?—I really did not object. I was practically pushed into it, and, as I was to be relieved of it at the end of six months, I continued doing it.

11. You were in the Home about six months?—Yes.

12. I believe in last September you were taken ill with influenza?—Yes. The Matron had gone up country that morning, and did not know I was ill until she got back that night. In the meantime the staff and Miss Harrison thought I should have a doctor, and Dr. Mickle was called in.

13. You did not get up that day at all?—No, I could not.

14. What did the Matron say when she knew about it?—She laughed at the idea of having a doctor because I had influenza.

15. Did Dr. Mickle ever see the other attendants about your case?—Yes; Miss Hunt generally attended to me, and he gave her instructions about medicines, and so on.

16. Who attended you and gave you this medicine?—Miss Hunt at first, and then she sent one of the inmates named E—— B——. She was the girl on my room.

17. On the 21st I believe you were much worse?—Yes. The doctor thought I was very ill. He said I should have to have a nurse, and he had some difficulty in getting one, but eventually Nurse Page was sent down.

18. Do you know whether he spoke to the Matron about having an attendant nurse you that night?—Yes. He told her I was very ill, and must have some one with me during the night. He told me the Matron said, of course, none of the staff could attend to me as they had their duties to perform. Really, I did not expect them to, because they have to work very hard.

19. Do you know where the Matron and Miss Hunt went that night you were so ill?—They went to the theatre.

20. On the 22nd you were taken to a private hospital?—Yes, where I was laid up for a fortnight.

21. Were you better on the 22nd?—Yes, very much.

22. Dr. Mickle was asked the other day whether you were able to dress yourself and walk down the passage: were you able to do these things for yourself?—No, I was assisted.

23. And the nurse and doctor both went with you to the hospital?—Yes.

24. What happened between you and the Matron when you returned home after your illness?—She was just going out, but she said she would wait for another tram. She said, “Well, Miss Howden, I like you very much, and I like your work, but if you are a delicate person this institution is no place for you, and it would be better for you to give it up now than later on, when probably it will be more inconvenient for me.”

25. What reply did you make to that?—I replied I was not the only one who had had influenza, and that I was not delicate.

26. Ordinarily you felt quite equal to the work?—Yes, I was quite equal to the work I was engaged for, but not for standing out in the morning doing cow work.

27. Did Mrs. Branting make any remark about your salary whilst you were ill?—Yes; she said the Department would deduct from my salary the time I was away ill, but they did not.

28. Did she say this matter had been mentioned to Mr. Walker?—Yes; that Mr. Walker said I would have to look upon the time I was away as part of my holiday at the end of the year. Mr. Walker visited the Home later on, and I asked him about it, and he denied it, and said the Matron had never spoken to him about it, and that that was the first time he knew I had been ill, and that as a matter of fact it did not come under his department.

29. Some few days after you returned to the Home, was anything said about other duties?—Yes. The Matron spoke of putting me on to do attendant's work every afternoon. She said the girls were very troublesome, and needed a great deal of supervision. She talked about it at the table, and, as we walked up the passage after dinner, I mentioned it again and said, “Well, but when am I going to do my office-work?” She remarked, “Blow office-work. It can go. The girls are more important.”

30. You were present at meal-times with the staff?—Yes.

31. What used to happen then?—The subject of conversation was not agreeable.

32. What was it about?—It was all appertaining to the morals of the girls and their mode of living, and the condition of their health.

33. The Matron was present?—Yes.

34. Did you object to her?—I did on one occasion, and she agreed with me it was very disagreeable.