

35. It continued, or did it end?—It still continued.

36. Did you give any information to the Rev. Mr. Fendall or to any one else about the Home?—No; I have never given anybody any information. I do not know Mr. Fendall, and have never seen him. I know I am accused of the whole trouble in reference to this inquiry into Te Oranga; but I never knew anything about the inquiry until some days after I left. I did not even know of any trouble about the visit to E—— S—— in the Hospital.

37. Did you yourself write any anonymous letters, or cause any to be written, about that girl?—No, I have never written any anonymous letter or been a party to one.

38. Was it the Matron's practice to box the girls' ears whilst you were at the Home?—I have seen her do so. She came into the workroom one day when, I think, A—— C—— was there. I know it was one of the bigger girls. I took particular notice, because I had never seen any-one using both hands before.

39. *The Commissioner.*] You mean in boxing both ears?—Yes, first one hand and then the other.

40. *Mr. Salter.*] Was that the Matron?—Yes. I did not know anything had happened until presently I heard a noise, and then I walked out of the room.

41. Was it a matter of notoriety amongst the staff that the Matron was in the habit of boxing the girls' ears?—I think the staff all know it.

42. Was the Matron in the habit of discussing some members of the staff with other members?—Yes; she does discuss one staff with another unfavourably.

43. Can you mention any particular instance?—She has discussed Miss Mills with me when I was only a few weeks in the Home. She said if she could replace her she would get rid of her, as Miss Mills was not truthful, and did not speak the truth about the girls.

44. Can you say anything about any injustice to the girls as practised by the Matron?—Of course, I thought it was unjust to punish girls when she knew Miss Mills did not speak the truth about them, or to allow Miss Mills to punish them.

45. Is it the practice at the Home for members of the staff to put girls in the cell and otherwise punish them without reference to the Matron?—They generally do it.

46. Do you know whether the girls are visited periodically, according to the regulations, when in the cell?—They are not visited according to the regulation. I do know on one occasion Miss Mills put a girl in the cell at 10 in the morning and forgot all about her until the girl attracted our attention by knocking on the wall. That would be when we were having tea at about a quarter to 6. Miss Mills admitted she had forgotten her. The girl had no dinner.

47. Then she was in the cell from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. without being visited?—Yes; she had been forgotten.

48. Did the Matron pass any remark about your kindness to the girls?—Yes; she said I was too kind to the girls; that they did not appreciate it, and only treated kindness as a weakness.

49. You know E—— S——?—Yes, she was brought back from Timaru whilst I was at the Home.

50. Did you see her the day she returned?—No. She came back on the 7th. On the evening of the 8th she was strapped, and on the 9th her cell-door, opposite my office-window, was open. I did not see her until then.

51. Did the Matron tell you what state of health she was in?—The Matron said she was very ill, and had been practically starved for a fortnight.

52. Although that was her opinion, she strapped her?—Yes.

53. You remember a girl known as L—— R——?—Yes.

54. Do you remember when this girl was struck off your books?—Yes, on the 1st of last September. The Matron did want to keep her on a little longer, as she thought it might be better for her sake, and she spoke about it to Mr. Pope, who immediately said she must be written off the books.

55. Was that when the girl came of age?—Yes.

56. Did you tell L—— R—— she was twenty-one?—No, I did not. The Matron did not want her to know. Her sister wrote and told her. I met L—— in town one day, and asked if she had been to the Home to-day. She said No, that she was very angry with the Matron, and after a while she told me she had had a letter from her sister saying she was twenty-one.

57. Why did not the Matron want her to know?—She thought it would be better for her not to know for a little while longer, to keep her under her control.

58. Are you aware that she had been licensed out since she came of age?—Yes, I made out a license for her to Mrs. Aitken.

59. *Mr. Russell.*] When you came to the Home you practically say you were under a false belief as to your duties—that whereas you were engaged as a clerk, you were turned into an attendant?—I was engaged as a clerk, yes.

60. And instead of doing clerical work you were compelled to do attendants' work?—Yes, I relieved occasionally.

61. Had you much clerking work to do?—I had all the clerking that had to be done.

62. Was it enough to keep you going?—I always found it enough.

63. And you objected from the start to being turned into an attendant?—No; I agreed to do it for six months.

64. But under protest, as it were?—No; I agreed willingly to relieve occasionally for six months.

65. Did you like that part of the work?—Yes, it was very interesting. I did not like the cow work in the morning, and it was not my duty.

66. I think soon after you came to the Home you had to go to Timaru?—Yes. I was away for a fortnight.