

147. Do you know of any other attendants who made an opportunity to come?—Yes, Miss Mills did so.

148. Did she get satisfaction, do you know?—I do not know about satisfaction. Miss Mills told me about the interview. The Matron told Miss Mills it was not she who had appointed Miss Hunt, or given her the position of Sub-matron, but the Department. Mr. Pope told Miss Mills these matters were entirely arranged by the Matron. So it was not very satisfactory.

149. You do not know that of your own knowledge?—I only know what Miss Mills told me.

150. You know you could have made an opportunity to see me?—I suppose I could have.

151. In regard to the girls being visited in the cells, is it not a fact that your window overlooks the detention-yard, and that if the girl wanted to attract your attention she could have done so at once?—Yes; but what would she want to attract my attention for if she was put in the cell?

152. Practically speaking, while there the girl was under your supervision?—She was not. I could not see the girl when working in my office.

153. But every time you looked up you could see the girl?—The door was locked.

154. Did a girl ever make a noise?—Yes. J—— L—— did when she was put in and forgotten.

155. And you attended to her?—I did not. The attendant who put her in did so. The girl was left there, and not visited, and had no dinner. I do not know whether she took that as part of the punishment. Now, as Mrs. Branting has made all these statements, I think I should go a little further. I may say that Mrs. Branting does not always speak the truth about things, and I think I can prove this. The money that she spends during the month is not always recorded to the Department as it is spent, and it is sometimes questioned by the Auditor, and then she does not speak the truth about it. She gave the postman 5s. for a Christmas box and charged it up as dinners. When the dinners are questioned she says it is "a number of service girls going to town to shop, and, of course, they must have dinner." Of course, right through, from the evidence, you will see that Mrs. Branting does not speak the truth about things. She told Mrs. Aitken her girl was not twenty-one, and made me make a license out for her. I know all through my dealings at Te Oranga there has been a big undercurrent. There has always been an endeavour to try and get rid of me because, I suppose, I saw through things, to speak plainly. The girls are charged 3d. for a reel of brilliant cotton that costs 2½d.

156. I gathered from what you say you think the Matron had other grounds than those mentioned in the girls' statements for thinking you unsuitable?—She never told me I was unsuitable. She complimented me on my work, and when I complained I could not pay more attention to my work she said, "It pleases me. I have never complained about your work."

157. You protested to the Department about your position at Te Oranga?—Yes. I wish to refer to another injustice to the girls. Twopence is deducted from every girl's mark-money at the end of the month for church. The Catholic girls give 1d. only. That amounts to about 8s. or 9s. per month. One penny would be quite sufficient, because there is a balance of about half always. They only give 1s. each Sunday they go to church. Where is the balance? I know on one occasion Mrs. Branting gave 5s. to a send-off to Mr. Seaton and a welcome to Mr. Inwood, and she told me to take it out of the balance of the mark-money. She said she did not see why she should pay it out of her own pocket.

158. *Mr. Salter.*] With regard to these statements, I suppose they were made by these girls in Mrs. Branting's room?—I do not know where they were made. It was done in my absence.

159. Do you remember Mrs. Branting, when discussing this matter, making some remark about knowing which side her bread was buttered?—Yes. She said she would never have objected to Mrs. Bean having the girl if the late Premier had been alive, because she knew on which side her bread was buttered. She always told me she knew how to act, because Mr. Pope had told her to write to Sir Edward Gibbes, and make her letter private and confidential.

160. *Mr. Russell.*] What about?—About Mrs. Bean getting the girl.

161. *Mr. Salter.*] Do you know her object in writing private and confidential?—Yes, she said she knew she could go one better than Mrs. Bean.

162. Have you seen the girls strapped there?—I saw one strapped by the Matron.

163. How many cuts did she receive on that occasion?—I think six. The girl was G—— J——.

164. Pretty hard?—I thought they were very severe.

165. *The Commissioner.*] There is nothing you wish to add?—No.

166. If you think of anything you wish to say before the Commission closes I shall call you again?—Very well.

WEDNESDAY, 11TH MARCH, 1908.

M—— B—— examined on oath.

1. *Mr. Russell.*] You are a domestic servant, living near Timaru?—Yes.

2. What is your age?—Close on twenty-two.

3. Then you are away from the jurisdiction of the Home?—Yes.

4. How long have you been away from the Home?—A year last Christmas.

5. How long were you living here before you went away?—About two years and a half.

6. When you were here were you called upon to do any wood-chopping or tree-felling?—Yes.

7. Did you object to that work in any way?—No.

8. Did you prefer it to the indoor work?—Yes.

9. Did you find it very hard?—Not hard. We had spells.