

14. But, surely there is an age below which a girl is not fitted to go out?—They come to me at fourteen, and I generally keep them a year or a year and a half before sending them out for training and discipline.

15. What else do you consider when the time comes?—I say to that girl, “You are improving. I see you are trying to do your best, and I am very pleased to see it. Now, if you go on like that a little bit longer I shall have no excuse for keeping you in the institution. I am proud to see you getting on so well.” I said that to a girl to-day. I tell them to try and not go with the bad girls, but to keep to themselves. Then she goes out to service.

16. For what period, as a rule, is the license made out?—If I see a mistress will not give a high wage, or the wage I think the girl deserves, I make the license out for six months, and then renew it.

17. How do you find places for the girls?—People are constantly writing. I have more applications than I have girls to fill.

18. You simply use your own discretion in discriminating between the places for different girls?—Yes.

19. In regard to the payment of girls for services inside the Home, just describe what is done?—There are six paid positions in the Home—in the kitchen, scullery, sitting-room, sewing-room, laundry, and the milking-girl, and sometimes I give the poultry-girl 2s. The wages of these girls average from 5s. to 8s. per month, according to how they prove themselves industrious and willing to learn and be useful.

20. Do you occasionally have cases in which you think that a girl might with advantage be subjected to discipline other than that of Te Oranga, such as in the case of A—— G——?—Not very often. Sometimes we have to transfer girls to Wellington and Caversham.

21. Have you any at Mount Magdala at present?—Yes, seven.

22. What are they there for?—They made such a disturbance here that it was advisable to separate them from the other girls. They were all Roman Catholic girls.

23. *Mr. Salter.*] In regard to the money subscribed by the public for the benefit of the inmates at Christmas, what record is kept of it?—The money is banked.

24. What is it subscribed for?—For the benefit and recreation of the inmates, not specially for Christmas.

25. Do you use any part of it for any special meal for the inmates?—Yes, I buy a good many things at Christmas in the shape of lollies and fruit. But Mr. Smail is always so good in helping me out with Christmas goods. Every girl has a substantial Christmas gift, and if I can do without spending the money I consider that is sufficient, and then it goes to the recreation fund. From this recreation fund I have bought a piano, erected a gymnasium, and laid down a tennis-court, and I am very keen now on getting the girls a swimming-bath. I think if I can save money for such a purpose it is more beneficial than buying the girls something to eat when they have plenty already. The girls have something special for the whole of Christmas week—as much as they can get through. The Official Visitors collect most of the money, and they are quite aware of what I do with it, and are in sympathy with my objects.

26. How much is there to the credit of that fund now?—£94. I have to get £150, because the swimming-baths will cost £300. I will then get a Government subsidy of £1 for £1. I may say the girls are just as keen about it as I am.

27. *Mr. Russell.*] When the girl L—— R——, in giving her evidence, said you cautioned her, and told her to lock her door, as Mr. A—— might come in and sleep with her, was there any truth in that?—None whatever. I was amazed to hear her make such a statement, and I thought it a great shame that such a thing should be said about any man's character. I may say I always give the girls who go to service a general caution.

28. You want to deny on oath that you made this particular statement?—Yes, I wish to totally deny it.

MISS HOWDEN'S APPOINTMENT.

During the progress of the inquiry Miss E. Howden submitted the following questions to the officers named in reference to the terms and conditions of her appointment to the staff at Te Oranga Home, and the Commissioner directed that the questions and answers received thereto should be added to the evidence.

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED BY MRS. SCALE.

1. Did you recommend Miss Howden for appointment at Te Oranga?—The Matron asked if I knew of a suitable clerk-attendant, and I mentioned Miss Howden favourably.

2. Had you confidence in her suitability for the position?—Yes.

3. In your opinion, was Miss Howden straightforward and truthful?—I had no reason to doubt her in these respects.

4. Do you remember telling Miss Howden at the station that Mrs. Branting would give her £60 per annum to commence with as salary?—My words were, “I understand that a suitable clerk-attendant will be paid £60 a year.”

5. Did you understand that her position at the Home was to be that of clerk only?—No; as the position was that of clerk-attendant, and not clerk only, I thought probably other duties might be expected.

6. Were you aware later on that Miss Howden had to do cow work?—I was subsequently made aware that Miss Howden had the supervision of the girls when they milked the cows kept for the use of the school.

7. Whose authority had you for naming the salary—viz., £60?—The Matron mentioned this sum as the salary of clerk-attendant prior to her business interview with Miss Howden.

C. F. SCALE,

Visiting Officer, Industrial Schools