

52. But a girl might go into the cell at 8 in the morning, after breakfast, and remain there until dinner-time: that would be four hours?—Usually I used to go out just after the girls went into school; that is about 9.30, and then at noon again.

53. That would be over two hours?—Two hours and a half.

54. You said the relations existing between the Matron and the staff were good?—Yes.

55. Are there no exceptions to that?—Not that I know of.

56. Have you ever heard some members of the staff speak of the Matron in not very flattering terms?—I really cannot say I have.

57. Is the Matron in the habit of discussing one member of the staff with another, pointing out her faults?—No; she does not, so far as I know.

58. I believe you are dressmaker here?—Yes.

59. Do you make dresses for the members of the staff?—No.

60. Have you made a dress for the Matron?—No.

61. In the general work which should legitimately be done by the dressmaker in the establishment?—I have never made a dress for Matron. I have made a blouse for her.

62. As part of your work here?—Yes.

63. And in your own time?—No.

64. Have you heard the girls speak of the bread and jam and bread and dripping as bread and scrape?—Yes.

65. Have they any reason for speaking like that?—Sometimes it is very much thinner than others; then they may have reason perhaps.

66. Honestly, do you not think the dripping and jam on the bread is sometimes scantily put on?—Yes; I would like more myself sometimes; but not always.

67. Do you yourself know anything about the Matron boxing girls' ears?—I have never seen her do so.

68. Have you heard the Matron speak to the girls roughly, calling them "beasts," "great hulking hulls," and that kind of thing?—No; I have not heard that kind of expression from the Matron to the girls.

69. Have you heard expressions equally objectionable?—I cannot call them to mind.

70. Do you know whether talking is absolutely prohibited during work-time?—In the work-room I used to try and keep silence, because, of course, the girls could not attend to their work properly, but unless I put aside my work and took out a piece of paper and pencil I did not get it.

71. Would you advocate girls sitting in a workroom and working in total silence?—Yes.

72. It would be pretty hard on the girls, would it not?—I have had to do it myself.

73. *The Commissioner.*] I may take it you are satisfied with your position?—Yes.

74. My Commission directs me to inquire as to the duties of the staff, and whether or not such duties, and the conditions under which they are performed, entail any undue hardship: do you know any case amongst the staff in which you think the duties are unbecoming or extra hard?—No.

75. You cannot suggest anything?—No.

76. Can you suggest any weakness in the institution owing to the lack of proper accommodation, or anything of that sort?—We certainly have not sufficient accommodation.

77. In what direction do you think that is particularly needed?—I have not thought about it.

78. Are the attendants properly housed in the matter of bedroom and sitting-room accommodation?—Yes, very comfortably.

79. Have you had your attention drawn to the fact that bedroom chambers are used as receptacles for food?—Yes.

80. How long has that obtained here?—It was done when I came here.

81. And it has simply been carried on since?—Yes.

82. Does it strike you as a proper sort of thing?—It struck me as being rather extraordinary.

83. And scarcely proper. Do you think it unbecoming?—Well, I suppose it really is.

84. You certainly would not identify these vessels as being at all cognate to food?—No.

85. Has it been the subject of remark, within your hearing, amongst the staff?—I think we have all got so accustomed to it that no remark is made now.

Alice Moorhouse examined on oath.

1. *Mr. Russell.*] You are a duly qualified medical practitioner, of Christchurch?—Yes.

2. I think you are Medical Officer for this Home?—Yes.

3. How long have you been such?—I think, about two years.

4. A good deal has been said about wood-chopping not being a proper employment for girls, and we have had a lot of evidence that the girls like it: do you say there is anything wrong in that for these girls?—Not done judiciously, as I think it is here. I spoke to the Matron about it, and she assured me the girls were not overworked in any way, and that there was a man to see that they did not lift heavy weights. I think it is very good for them.

5. Have you found their health improving after they come here?—Decidedly.

6. Do you know whether they gain in weight, as a rule?—I should say they did from appearances. I have not weighed them.

7. Are you satisfied from their general appearance that the girls are in good health?—I say their health is good, except in some cases, for diseases contracted before they come here.

8. But apart from that?—Yes, decidedly good.

9. So you have not considered it necessary to stop any work because it injured the girls?—No.

10. On the contrary, you have found a decided improvement in them?—Decidedly.