

to go to bed immediately after tea for a week, once because she went to Mrs. Peachy's. Mrs. Carpenter called them 'little devils' and 'little bitches.' After the Orphanage enquiry one of the girls accused her of taking some money, and Mrs. Carpenter punished her by not allowing her to speak or play with the others for a week, and to have her meals by herself for a week. She had not taken any money, but it was 'all blamed on to her.' Witness made other allegations concerning the treatment of the inmates. They did not have potatoes for a month, but Mrs. Carpenter and Miss McArthur had them at the same table.

In reply to Mr. Harper, witness said she did not like being at the Orphanage, and had never said that Mrs. Carpenter had been kind to her. The first person she had complained to was Mrs. Peachy, who asked her questions.

In reply to Mr. Bishop, the girl said that she and her sister used to be sent to church in green dresses and bonnets trimmed with pink, and they did not like that. They had white dresses too.

SECOND DAY.

The following evidence was given at the sitting of the Commission on Thursday:—

Gladys Wilson (15) was called by Mr. Cassidy. She said that at present she was living at Ashburton, but at the beginning of last year she was in the Orphanage at Lyttelton for six weeks. She was very miserable there. Witness said she was put 'on silence' on the Sunday, because she told the other girls Mrs. Carpenter dare not put her 'on silence.' Two other girls were put 'on silence,' and witness said Mrs. Carpenter told her to 'Shy something at her head' if one of the girls 'on silence' spoke to her. Witness was also given dry bread for breakfast because she spoke to the others. She got up at 6.15, and had to make beds. The little boys and girls had to sit upstairs till eight o'clock in the morning, and there was nobody to look after them. Ellen Attwood used to work in the kitchen. They were kept at work until about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, scrubbing and cleaning. Ellen Attwood used to go without food at times, when 'she had long fits of misery.' She still continued to work during those periods, and nothing was done for her. Witness had heard the children being beaten. Frankie, a little boy with one leg, was taken upstairs by Mrs. Carpenter and beaten, because he had been told to stay downstairs and did not. They had bread and dripping for breakfast, and never milk with their porridge. They were never taught sewing, cooking, or anything of that kind. They had no amusements, or books, or pictures. The children were never brought together and given instruction. Being put 'on silence' was not being allowed to speak during the whole day or night. There was never any jam or fruit while she was there. If a child 'on silence' spoke to another, on going to bed Mrs. Carpenter would punish it by giving it dry bread for breakfast, or a dose of cod-liver oil. The two girls named Andrews were dressed in green and pink, which caused them to be laughed at.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper: Witness was never at Waltham. At the enquiry at the Orphanage she said Mrs. Carpenter had never ill-used her or sent her from the table hungry. She also said that there was no difference between the food given to the children and that taken by the staff. She was not satisfied with the bread and dripping. They had good dinners and always enough to eat. It was not very often that the children were punished by being put on silence. She made no complaints, except to her aunt. Mrs. Carpenter always treated her kindly. She heard no bad language, but other children complained to her about that.

May Burbury (15) was then called by Mr. Cassidy. She was at both Lyttelton and Waltham Orphanages, and left the latter place last November. Her brother took her away. Witness corroborated Gladys Wilson as to what constituted the silence punishment. She was put on it for a week at a time on three occasions. She was held down by Miss McArthur once, whilst Mrs. Carpenter thrashed her with a strap. In the morning she had been given dry bread for breakfast for talking; she did not eat it, and went to school hungry. She had dry bread for dinner also. She often had dry bread for punishment. She had heard Mrs. Carpenter use 'nasty words.' The matron was very unkind to the two little Andrews's, and used to call them 'little devils.' Witness got up at 6.30 and made the children's beds and swept and dusted. She was about twelve to thirteen when she was held down and strapped. Percy Whittle was beaten by Mrs. Carpenter with a stick in August; that was after he had been in the Hospital. Witness remembered going to Mrs. Peachy when she was not well. She had told Mrs. Carpenter before, but the matron would not believe her, and would not let her

stay at home. She had never been to Mrs. Peachy's before, and went because another girl advised her to, and showed the way. Mr. Norris took her back to the Orphanage, and she went to bed and stayed there several days, the doctor attending her. Shortly after her brother took her away. She was not happy at the Orphanage. Once Eva Bashford was put 'on silence' for a month, but left before the month was up. On another occasion Eva was put in the washhouse all day, and had nothing to eat until night, when she was given some bread and treacle. The girl had to sleep in a little room by herself that night.

To Mr. Harper: When she went to Mrs. Peachy's she was suffering from enlarged tonsils; Mrs. Carpenter knew about that. When she was held down and beaten, it was because she had not dressed Percy Whittle. Mrs. Carpenter was not kind to her, nor was Miss McArthur.

Wm. Thos. Burbury, brother of the previous witness and a warder at Sunnyside Mental Hospital, was called by Mr. Cassidy. Witness said he saw the Board and took the girl away from the Orphanage, because he thought she was not doing well there. He thought she wanted a change. She also complained of her treatment there, and he was forced to believe there was some truth in her statement. She had so improved since leaving, that she was now about half a stone heavier. She was now living at Rangiora.

Arthur George Mellish, called by Mr. Cassidy, said he had volunteered to teach Frankie Hammond the cane-chair business at his lodgings with Mrs. Peachy. The boy told him that he was beaten at the Orphanage with a piece of oilcloth until it was in shreds; the boy had only one leg. On one Saturday he went to the Orphanage and saw the boy Percy Whittle, who was lying on a couch in the farthest corner of the room, and between two windows. Whittle looked very poorly indeed, and witness formed the opinion that the boy's condition was due to neglect. Prior to that, he had seen Percy and found him a bright, healthy boy. When he returned home he told Mrs. Peachy the boy seemed 'all head and no body.' He had seen the two Andrews' girls in green and pink; the dress was more like a clown's get-up than anything else, and the hats like a jockey's in a circus. They would cause comment anywhere. When he took Hammond back to the Orphanage he heard somebody being thrashed. Hammond remarked: 'Oh, it's only Emma and Gertie getting a hiding.' Witness spoke to Mrs. Peachy about it, and to a friend, who referred him to Mrs. Wells, whom he saw. Frankie had told him at Mrs. Peachy's that he was hungry, and used to make 'remarkably good meals there.' He had heard Mrs. Carpenter call the children 'little devils' and liars. He had been told of the silence system by the children.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harper: He had only heard thrashing going on on the one occasion. Mrs. Carpenter said she was thrashing them because of the upsetting of a candle, and she was afraid of a second fire. From what he saw of the children generally, he thought they were a bright, healthy-looking lot.

Emma Andrews (12) said she was at the Orphanage at Lyttelton and also at Waltham. She and her sister had been put 'on silence.' Mrs. Carpenter used to call them nasty names and her sister 'Squeaky.' Mrs. Carpenter used to mock the priest in front of the other girls. If they broke silence when being punished, they were given dry bread for breakfast. The girls 'on silence' played by themselves, and were not allowed to speak. Ellen Attwood had something the matter with one of her eyes, and Mrs. Carpenter told the others to call her 'cockeye,' which they did. Ellen used to clean out the kitchen and the flues. She and her sister used to wear green and pink dresses on Sundays, and people used to laugh and call them 'guys.' She did not think Mrs. Carpenter knew they were laughed at.

To Mr. Harper: Mrs. Carpenter used to be good to her. She cried when taken away from the Orphanage because she did not like to leave May Burbury.

In reply to Mr. Lane witness said she had never made any complaints.

To Mr. Bishop: She and her sister had white dresses, which they wore in summer; they wore the green and pink dresses in winter.

Mrs. Elizabeth Holland stated that she took the Andrews children to the Mt. Magdala Orphanage. They were very glad to go. Mrs. Carpenter said she hoped there would be an enquiry, and she admitted she had ridiculed their religion. It was not true that the children cried bitterly when they were taken away.

THIRD DAY.

On the enquiry being resumed on Friday morning Mr. Cassidy asked that certain documents and papers which were in the custody, control, possession, or procurement of the Charitable Aid Board or its officials, should be produced for the information of the Commission.