

Alleged Rape on the Reserve.**PECULIAR REVELATIONS.****DEFENDANT ACQUITTED.**

There was considerable excitement at the Police Court yesterday in connection with the remanded case in which a young railway employee named George Francis Wright stood charged with having committed a rape on a servant girl named Sarah Alice Phoebe Godson, on the previous Friday night. Several hundreds of persons assembled around the court, but eventually the case was again heard with closed doors.

Mr. Baker prosecuted; Mr. Gorriek appearing for the defence.

The following additional evidence was taken:—

Sergeant Finnoghan deposed that on Saturday afternoon, accompanied by Inspector Thorpe, and the prosecutrix, he visited the public Recreation Reserve; produced a sketch of the spot at which the offence was alleged to have been committed, as pointed out by the prosecutrix.

The prosecutrix was at this stage examined at some length as to the accuracy of the plan produced.

Cross-examined by Mr. Gorriek: Told constable Larsen all about it as soon as she saw him; did have a little conversation with him before she complained about prisoner's conduct; said "You constables are never where you're wanted;" admitted having been out late at nights to plays, etc., with her brother-in-law, and once with John Darling, "General" of the Skelton Army, within the last six months; had never been out late with a man named Plunkett; did not know him; had walked home with a man named Frazer about 9 p.m., but only once; knew a young man named Holbrook, a lieutenant in the Salvation Army, but was never out late with him; had never told anyone that this man Holbrook had given her jewellery; admitted having said to her brother-in-law, Mr. Bracey, that Holbrook had given her some jewellery on one occasion; had often accompanied him (Holbrook) to his residence late at night, at 11 p.m., but only to get "War Cr." from "Captain" Briggs' house; believed that Holbrook was a married man; had been out with him several times late; had been

out several times late after 11 o'clock absent from her employer's residence; had stayed out on one occasion until 1 o'clock in the morning; declined to say where she got the money to purchase large quantities of fruit at Thompson's shop; had never told anyone that her employer had given her a watch and chain; had frequently overdrawn her wages, and was now overdrawn £2; she only spent her wages; did not tell Mrs. Bracey, nor anyone else, on Saturday morning that she was only going to summons prisoner for insulting her; told Mr. Bracey (her brother-in-law) to go to the devil; he had often remonstrated with both herself and her sister for stopping out late at nights.

To Mr. Baker: Mr. and Mrs. Greenway were fully satisfied with her as a servant,

and had never been complained of; they were aware of the present case, but had not threatened to dismiss her; had walked with various persons about town at night, but only when they were going in her own direction.

This closed the case for the prosecution.

The Police Magistrate remarked that, without giving any statement as to his individual opinion of the case, he was perfectly satisfied that no jury would convict on such evidence; and therefore he should not commit prisoner for trial. The admission of prosecutrix had been, that prisoner was five minutes committing the offence, and there had been no evidence forthcoming that she screamed or called for assistance. Again, she had sworn that he pressed his wrist down on her mouth to gag her, and used violence, but not the slightest mark was visible; and furthermore there was the admission that she had walked arm-in-arm back from the Reserve down the main streets, and yet made no complaint until nearly midnight. The whole evidence was of far too doubtful a character to convict; prisoner must therefore be discharged.

Mr. Gorriek: It is a charity to the girl that it is so, your Worship; for had the case gone on, I should have produced such evidence as would undoubtedly have resulted in her committal for perjury.