

seen him several times since, and he has not complained of being ill-treated. The officers told me that they knocked him down twice.

*Mr. Read.*

13th Aug., 1878.

262. *Hon. Mr. Fox.*] That is under inquiry, is it not?—Yes; that is under inquiry.

263. Have you any ground outside the gaol which belongs to it?—There is a piece called the Gaol Reserve.

264. Is it utilized for the gaol?—No; it is simply fenced in by neighbours' fences.

265. It lies further back, I suppose?—Yes; it is simply a piece of Town Belt, about two chains wide and ten chains in length. Possibly it is about two acres. Then there is a piece of land, measuring an acre and a half, leased from the Maoris by the Government, which is very useful. There is a stream of water running from it.

266. Could the prison labour be utilized for the purpose of cultivating the grounds of the Gaol?—I think that we gain more by sending the prisoners out to work, and buying rations at a cheap rate.

267. I mean as a general rule?—I do not think it would pay if other employment could be found for the prisoners. I think brick-making the most remunerative labour that the prisoners have been put to yet. The Government may have the bricks made at very small expense.

268. Who are they making the bricks for?—At the present time for the trustees of the hospital. The building is nearly finished now.

269. Looking at it in a pecuniary point of view as regards the Government of the colony, would it be possible for these reserves to be utilized for the purpose of supplying food to the gaols?—No; I do not think so.

270. Is there any special payment for the making of these bricks?—No; the hospital trustees do not pay the warders; they only pay one man, and that is the overseer who directs the labour. There is nothing to prevent the Government manufacturing bricks in this way for public purposes, though they could easily send them down by railway for other purposes.

271. *Hon. Mr. Fox.*] Then I understand you to say that there is no payment for the hard labour?—No; there is none.

272. *The Chairman.*] Now, Mr. Read, have you any suggestion of your own to make as to the necessities and possibilities of reform in the gaol system, or as to discipline, or accommodation?—The only suggestion I could make about accommodation would be to provide some means of keeping the different classes as separate as possible, and dividing the prisoners into separate cells.

273. Do you consider it necessary to keep long-sentenced penal-servitude men in a separate establishment?—I think it would be better to do so; they would pay better. If a man is kept under thorough discipline he becomes better, and if we could keep a large body together it would not require so many officers or so much supervision.

274. *Hon. Mr. Gisborne.*] Do the prisoners leave with any money in their pockets?—Not as a rule; but most of them have friends outside to go to. They generally improve very much in health while in gaol, and gain flesh.

275. But if the prisoners leave utterly destitute, without getting any money, it appears to me that for them crime would be almost irresistible?—In such cases I would call the attention of the Visiting Justices to the fact, and they would give the prisoner a small sum, as they are empowered under the Prisons Act. The Chairman asked me the other day whether the gaol officials had anything to complain of with reference to the Prison Regulations, and there was one thing I forgot to mention. They find it very oppressing going to work so early in the summer. The prisoners go at seven, and the officers have to be up about a quarter before five, and, as they remain on duty until about five o'clock in the afternoon, they find it hard work. They grumble very much about the early hour of the morning at which they have to start, as the ordinary labours of the day commence here at eight.

276. *Hon. Major Atkinson.*] What is the reason of their starting so early?—The Gaol Regulations say they shall.

277. There must be some reason?—It was considered advisable that the prisoners should work long hours.

278. I would like to know whether you would get more work done in nine hours than in eight?—You would get more work out of a man in that time.

279. Do you think you could get more?—Yes; there is no doubt about it. The two hours a day for each body of men makes a wonderful difference, especially when you have forty or fifty men employed in the work.

280. Have you actually measured that?—Yes, in so far as the number of bricks which are made. They would make perhaps four thousand bricks more in summer than in winter.

281. But that is hardly a criterion. It is not a question of summer and winter?—It is a matter of longer hours. They work longer hours in summer than in winter.

282. I want to know whether a man does more on a summer's day than on a day in winter when he does not work so many hours?—They are obliged to work the whole time, and cannot help themselves. The barrows are constantly going, and they must keep pace with them. It may make a man more tired, but he must work the whole time.

283. *The Chairman.*] I suppose the prisoner who wants to work may work just as much in eight hours as in nine?—They must work, as each keeps the other going, and so there is a check on the whole of them.

284. Regarding the grievance of the warders, would it be obviated by adding another man?—One man would not affect it at all.

285. Would it not enable them to make shifts?—One man would not enable fresh shifts to be made.

286. If you had an additional officer would that give more time?—If six men go out with gangs in the morning, I do not see how that would relieve them.

287. One day a man would be longer off, and another day another man would be longer off?—They would only get relief on one day in six. I made the observation because you asked me if there was anything further. That is the only thing the warders complained of,