

Mr. Pearce.
15th Aug., 1878.

494. Do you think that a school would be of any benefit to women of apparently hopeless character?—Unquestionably.

495. Is there any schoolmaster within the gaol?—No; there are convicts capable of teaching.

496. You are dependent upon the chance of educated prisoners?—Yes; but there always have been sufficient educated prisoners.

497. And is there not a sufficiently-educated woman on the other side?—No; I do not think so.

498. *Mr. Seymour.*] Is there no recompense or advantage given to the person who does this teaching?—No, I think there is not; but he is spared the meaner and manual labour.

499. Then you think it advisable that something should be done to provide for teaching the women as well as the men?—Unquestionably.

500. I presume, as a rule, the women who are convicted are more ignorant than the men, and that educated women are more rarely committed than educated men?—I never knew an instance in Wellington of an educated woman being convicted.

501. But sufficiently educated to teach the women to read and write?

502. *Mr. Wakefield.*] I suppose the women who get into gaol are generally the most abandoned class—common street-walkers—and the most ignorant?—As a rule. There have been two cases of concealment of birth in which the women were comparatively educated.

503. I suppose the women take to sewing?—They mend the men's clothes.

504. Do you think that sewing-machines might be introduced with advantage?—If they were employed in making the prisoners' clothes but they are now partly employed in picking oakum.

505. *The Chairman.*] The women?—Yes; women are so employed.

506. We were told that the whole time of the women is occupied with washing?—They do washing, but they also pick oakum.

507. I asked the Gaoler, and he said they did not wash for other institutions. I doubt whether the washing of the gaol would occupy their whole time?—Until very recently their spare time was occupied with picking oakum, and they have had a great deal of that spare time.

508. I understand that oakum is a difficult thing to get now?—I do not know.

The witness was thanked for his attendance and withdrew.

Major PAUL, examined.

Major Paul.
15th Aug., 1878.

509. *The Chairman.*] We wish to ask you a few questions as a Visiting Justice of the gaol here, and especially as to whether you have any suggestions to make as to the discipline or construction of the gaol?—There should be some alteration with regard to the construction. I have not been up there so often for the last couple of months; but formerly I visited the gaol very frequently. Whenever Read wanted me I went, as I had less to do than the other gentlemen.

510. Do you believe the gaol could be improved by the proper classification of prisoners?—Not as it is at present.

511. Do you think it advisable that long-sentence and penal-servitude prisoners should be in the same gaol with first-sentence prisoners?—I think they should be separated.

512. Do you think they should be in the same gaol?—I do not see any objection to their being in the same gaol if they can be separated.

513. Do you think all penal-servitude prisoners in the different local gaols should be kept separate in the different gaols of the colony?—They should be kept separate, unless there were some central place for them.

514. Would you prefer that?—I would prefer that.

515. That there should be a central penal establishment?—I would prefer that.

516. If all the long-sentence prisoners were drafted out of the gaol in Wellington, would there be sufficient room for classifying the ordinary prisoners?—I think there would be. From my experience in the military gaols at Home, where the long-sentence prisoners are sent to Plymouth and Aldershot, and other places; I think that. I was Inspector of Military Prisons at Home from the time when I arrived in England from the colony in 1866. I was appointed as an Inspector, being a field officer. My plan was that where men were guilty of serious offences they should be sent away to the large establishments to undergo long sentences.

517. In your opinion, is the discipline in this gaol good?—I think it is good.

518. Has the Gaoler sufficient means for enforcing discipline properly?—Well, I think he has; though there have been cases of harshness reported once or twice. The warders have been accused of harshness, and when I have investigated the cases I did not find any grounds.

519. When prisoners come out of gaol, is there any provision for their receiving some assistance to enable them to start in life?—Yes; I asked that question of the Gaoler, and he told me that there is some means. There is always a few shillings given to a man on leaving.

520. How is it given?—Generally by the warders. I do not know how it is obtained.

521. Is it at the Gaoler's discretion entirely?—Yes.

522. Not given under any rule?—Yes; there was some rule, but I have forgotten what it was.

523. Do the prisoners find a difficulty in obtaining employment when they come out of gaol?—I asked that question of Mr. Read, and he told me that there was a difficulty in their getting employment.

524. Have you any suggestion you wish to make?—No; I have no particular suggestion.

The witness was thanked for his attendance, and withdrew.

FRIDAY, 16TH AUGUST, 1878.

Mr. Dransfield.

16th Aug., 1878.

Mr. J. DRANSFIELD, examined.

525. *The Chairman.*] We should like to get your evidence on the question of gaols, Mr. Dransfield. We want chiefly to hear any suggestions you have to make which may be gained from your