

719. The Gaoler had to account for them?—Yes.

720. Who checked him?—Mr Logan or some one under him. Of course a great deal must depend on the gaoler, and there was the utmost confidence in Mr. Caldwell.

721. But it is a bad plan to be dependent upon the character of any one?—But he was liable to have an account taken at any time. The store was kept very regularly.

722. Have you any further suggestion to make to the Committee?—No. I do not think it would be advisable just now to go to a large expenditure in erecting and maintaining a central gaol, but if the colony could afford it the case would be different. I think there should be a qualified inspector.

723. If 150 to 200 long-sentence men were drafted out of the gaols of the colony, do you think the present gaol accommodation would give an opportunity of classifying the ordinary prisoners that remained?—I do not know. I should scarcely think the removal of 150 would be sufficient. Some gaols are much more crowded than Dunedin Gaol; for instance, Auckland.

724. Well, if you took that number out of such gaols as Auckland, it would be an immense relief?—Yes; but there are many other gaols.

725. Yes; but the small gaols have not so many long-sentence prisoners in them?—Possibly 150 might be enough. I suppose Dunedin could send 30 or 40; then there is Christchurch, Wellington, Auckland, Nelson, West Coast. There are so many, that I doubt whether accommodation for 150 would be enough.

726. It was calculated that the long-sentence prisoners would number from 150 to 200?—Yes. I do not know that Soames' Island, of which I spoke just now, would be a good place, in consequence of the difficulty of finding employment.

727. You are aware that the Commission of 1868 mentioned several places, but difficulties arose with regard to one and another of all of them?—Yes; I have heard that, in addition to Taranaki, Greymouth, or Buller, on the West Coast, are places where they might be employed on harbour works.

728. *Hon. Mr. Gisborne.*] Do you know of any objection to Taranaki?—No; my own impression is that any part of the colony that would take them should be welcome to them.

729. *The Chairman.*] Supposing there was a central penal establishment, ought the prisoners, after serving their sentences, to be re-delivered, so to speak, at the place at which they were convicted?—I do not know that that would be to the prisoners' interest, because they would be better known there than elsewhere. I expect they would prefer to be released at some place where they were not known.

730. *Hon. Mr. Gisborne.*] Supposing their families were in a different place to that at which they were released?—They would manage to get their families to them.

731. *The Chairman.*] Then it is difficult to know what would be more just to the colony. It is a question whether it would not be more just to re-deliver them at the place from whence they were taken, instead of leaving them to congregate in the part of the country where the gaol was situated?—No doubt it would be a stigma against the place in which the gaol was situated, the same way as it was against Tasmania and New South Wales.

732. It is slightly different, because of course there must be a place in every colony for a gaol.

733. *Hon. Mr. Gisborne.*] Do you not think it would be advisable to establish a penal establishment at some place like Taranaki, where there are large public works on which the men could be employed?—I do not see any objection, provided the colony authorized the outlay and the Taranaki people are prepared to take them. I think it must be demoralizing to the people of a district to have these prisoners in their midst.

734. It is not demoralizing to the people of Dunedin to have a gaol in their midst?—That is limited.

735. The central prison would not be larger?—I cannot agree with you that it would not be larger in time.

736. How many prisoners have you in Dunedin?—I should say about 170.

737. It is proposed to put about 150 to 200 in the central prison?—Yes; but as the colony enlarges I expect the number would soon increase from 150 to 1,500.

WEDNESDAY, 21ST AUGUST, 1878.

Mr. D. M. LUCKIE examined.

*Mr. Luckie.*

21st Aug., 1878.

738. *The Chairman.*] You are a Visiting Justice at the Auckland Gaol?—Yes.

739. What do you think of the position and construction of the gaol at Auckland?—It is by no means what it ought to be. It is too confined; there is no possibility of proper classification, especially in the women's department; the passages between the rows of cells are so very narrow that, in the event of a fire breaking out, there would be great difficulty in removing the prisoners from the building; although matters have been improved in this regard of late, owing to a good supply of water having been carried into the gaol, and hose-pipes fixed up in various parts of the building. The stairways are too narrow, and there is no division between the debtors' prison and that part of the gaol devoted to the accommodation of criminals. I mean the persons in prison under judgment summons, when I speak of debtors. In the women's department the condition of affairs is really very bad. The officers' quarters, too, are also unsatisfactory.

740. On the women's side there is no classification whatever?—None. In rainy weather the whole of the women are placed in a small department. Speaking from memory, I should say there are about fifty of them; and the fetid atmosphere in that room on such occasions is something really oppressive.

741. There are no means of keeping first offenders separate?—None at all.

742. Is the gaol in your opinion healthy?—Yes, I think it is; at least, the male department is very excellently kept, and the yard is tolerably large; but its healthiness is due rather to the fact that it is exceedingly well kept than to any advantage which arises from its construction. The truth is,