

761. Is tobacco allowed?—No. A man is punished for smoking or for having tobacco in his possession; and any person giving tobacco to a prisoner, or planting it so that an out-door prisoner may get it, is fined if discovered. Mr. Luckie.
21st Aug., 1878.

762. Is there any religious or other instruction given in the gaol?—Yes; the Roman Catholic priest attends occasionally at stated times, and other clergymen go; and there is a kind of city missionary who visits the prison and endeavours to reclaim people from a life of vice. He is rather a favourite in the gaol, I think. His name is Mr. Brackenrigg.

763. Have the prisoners who cannot read or write any regular school?—There is a class, I think. There also used to be a class at Nelson. There have been some very good teachers among the prisoners in Auckland Gaol, men who did a great deal of good to their fellow-prisoners, and taught them in some cases higher mathematics.

764. In your opinion, if long-sentenced prisoners were drafted out of the gaol, would there be plenty of room to allow of classification as to the others?—That is a question I could not answer without having the statistics of the gaol before me.

765. You think the prisoners could be profitably employed in building or adding to the gaol?—Yes. The best evidence of that is to be found in the magnificent wall that now surrounds the gaol. It is an excellent piece of work, about 18 feet high, and was all done by prison labour, under supervision of course.

766. I suppose the prisoners have some opportunity of knowing whether they get the proper rations or not?—Yes. Every man may have his bread weighed; and, from what I have observed in inspections of the food, full weight is scrupulously given.

767. All stores are in the hands of the Gaoler. Could you tell us what check there is upon the Gaoler?—No. I do not know what the system of check is, so far as food is concerned at any rate. As to clothes, so many blankets, trousers, or cloth to make them, or whatever it may be, are given to the gaoler, and he has to account at stated intervals for what he receives, and what surplus remains.

WEDNESDAY, 21ST AUGUST, 1878.

Rev. Father Kerrigan examined.

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768. *The Chairman.*] You have been in the habit of visiting the gaol here?—Yes; but I have only been visiting the Wellington Gaol since the 21st of April last. I was in Napier some time. 21st Aug., 1878.

769. We wish to ask you a few questions about the treatment of the prisoners, so far as you have observed, and especially as to whether they are receiving secular education, and also as to religious education. Is there any obstruction put in your way? Have you any difficulty in seeing the prisoners?—Oh, no; the officials give every facility for seeing the prisoners on Sundays.

770. Do the prisoners make many complaints to you?—No; I do not recollect any. I have very little intercourse with the prisoners except on spiritual matters. I merely give them religious instruction. I have not heard any complaint that I remember.

771. Had you any long experience at Napier?—Two years.

772. Were there any prisoners in the gaol there whom you had known out of gaol?—Yes.

773. Were they habitual offenders—men who had been in gaol before?—Some had been in once or twice, and others had not been in at all.

774. Was there any separation between the two classes of prisoners?—I did not notice that there was. I find here in Wellington certainly there is a separation between the prisoners.

775. Have you heard of men for the first time in gaol complaining of being put in with these men?—No.

776. Do you know anything about the prisoners being taught to read and write in the gaol?—I believe they are taught. I have seen them reading and writing as I passed along to see the cells in the evening; but I have not taken much notice. I merely passed along.

777. Have you had any opportunity of judging what effect punishment has upon the different classes of prisoners?—No; I do not know anything about that at all.

778. Do you know whether released prisoners find any difficulty in getting employment?—Yes; I know they sometimes find the greatest difficulty, and many of them go back to gaol because they cannot get employment. I know that, because men have called on me and told me they could not get employment.

779. Here in Wellington?—Yes. They are cast out of the gaol without a penny, and I do not know what they can do under such circumstances. I have several times been called upon by prisoners who have come out without a penny in their pockets, and were unable to get employment.

780. *Mr. Tole.*] Do you happen to know whether they were tradesmen?—No.

781. There is no kind of Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society in Wellington?—No; I do not know of anything of the kind.

782. *The Chairman.*] Is there any suggestion you can make for the improvement of the prisoners in the gaols?—I have not had sufficient experience to answer that question. I might remark that in Wellington there is little or no accommodation for the celebration of Divine Worship, and almost the same condition of things exists in Napier. Every denomination goes into the same place—in Wellington, a small passage—a few prayers are read, and that is all. There is never any sacrifice of the mass, although the men may wish it sometimes, because there is no accommodation. It is necessary there should be some place where no one but the priest could go—an altar or a permanent place where the sacrifice might be offered.

783. I understand you to mean that in no case can mass be celebrated within the gaol walls?—Oh, yes; it could be celebrated. We can celebrate mass at any place; but we do not wish to celebrate it in such a place in such circumstances.

784. Practically mass is not said in the gaol?—No. Then, again, if it were, as things are at present here, the female prisoners could not attend without their being brought into contact with the male prisoners.