

877. First offenders, not being boys, would not be kept separate then?—No.

878. Have you had any complaints made to you by men who have been imprisoned for first offences as to their being compelled to be associated with the others?—No; I think none. Generally speaking, when men come out, they do not care to talk about the gaol. They generally come to me to ask a helping hand, to enable them to get along in the world after they come out.

879. Is there any difficulty in prisoners getting employment after their release?—I do not think so. A man can easily lose his identity, either by going to Melbourne, or even going along the coast to some other town.

880. Do you think men generally go away from Wellington after serving a sentence in Wellington Gaol?—As a rule, I think not. I know many prisoners who have remained.

881. You think they go to work after leaving the gaol?—Yes.

882. Could you say, roughly, what proportion of prisoners attend your services?—All except the Roman Catholics. They are asked when they go into gaol to what religion they profess, and Mr. Read does not let them change their religion. If they are Protestants, they come to our service, both men and women—the one sex being separated from the other; and I think they are very glad to come, as a relief to the monotony. There is a good deal of singing in the service, in which they join heartily, and also in the responses.

883. Do you know what other clergymen besides yourself attend the gaol?—Practically none. When I first came, an arrangement was made by which all denominations should do the work in turns; but I was the only clergyman who kept to the arrangement. During the last five years Mr. Morpeth has been holding a class on Sunday afternoons, having received permission from the Visiting Justices so to do.

884. The Roman Catholic clergyman?—Of course, he attends. They were attending before I came, and have continued to do so until now. Father Kearney was very attentive for a long while; but he has now left. I do not know who has taken his place.

885. Do you know anything of any secular teaching going on in the gaol?—I do not think there is any.

886. The Gaoler gave us evidence that there was some teaching as to reading and writing?—Well, I know there is no Government teacher. I am not an appointed chaplain, and therefore can only give odds and ends of my time there.

887. Have you observed what effect the present system of punishment has upon prisoners generally? Is it deterrent?—Well, I believe that no punishment except capital punishment is deterrent. I believe a man intending to commit crime never takes punishment into consideration.

888. Do you think it is not or might not be made deterrent in the case of first offenders?—No; I do not believe they care about the punishment. I believe capital punishment is deterrent; and I have formed that opinion mainly from an incident which occurred in Wellington some time ago. A man in one of the regiments stationed here shot an officer. He was tried, and sentenced to death. Conversing with me one day he said, "Well, Mr. Stock, if I am not executed there will be another officer in that regiment shot." I knew perfectly well whom he meant—an officer who was exceedingly unpopular. This man was a very intelligent fellow, and he said he spoke with sure knowledge; and I believed him. I am inclined to think that in sentencing boys it would be far better if a short term of imprisonment were always given, accompanied with flogging. I have noticed that boys, when they get in gaol, are very uncomfortable for a few days, but in a short time get accustomed to their position, and take it as a matter of course. If a boy were given a short sentence, accompanied by a few cuts with the whip, he would remember it.

889. You think that would have a deterrent effect?—Yes.

890. Do you not think that a short, sharp sentence might have something of the same effect upon all first offenders?—Yes.

891. Do you not think it is a great mistake to mix up first offenders with all other prisoners?—Yes; but even if it were done you must have solitary confinement if you are to get the full benefit of the system. Because, if you put a number of short-sentence men together they get talking and telling one another the plans they used when outside.

892. Still, first offenders ought to be kept separate?—Yes.

893. Have you had any complaints from prisoners as to the treatment they receive?—Yes; but so trifling that they are not worth attending to.

894. You do not think the men have any real grievances?—I am sure they have not. I think the gaol is very well conducted indeed.

895. What indulgences are they allowed? Do you know if they are allowed any for good conduct?—Tobacco is one.

896. Is it given as an indulgence?—I think so. Originally there was no smoking, but I think Mr. Fox introduced it.

897. Do you know anything of the rule under which the prisoners see their friends?—My idea is, that they are allowed to see them on Sunday, under certain regulations.

898. Do you know whether they are anxious, generally, to see their friends, or do they shun them?—I do not know. They are allowed to write once a quarter. Of course letters are sent through the Gaoler, and are seen by him. There is a very good library in the gaol.

899. What kind of books do the prisoners read?—All kinds—religious, and every sort.

900. Do you think penal-servitude prisoners ought to be kept in the same gaol as other prisoners?—It would tend very greatly to simplify matters if long-sentence men were in a gaol by themselves.

901. Do you think any classification possible without that?—It is very difficult now to know what to do with them. They must be put to the same kind of work as other men.

902. With regard to the inspection of gaols. You know, I suppose, how the Visiting Justices inspect the gaols?—Yes.

903. Do you think it is within their power to check wrong proceedings if any happened to be going on in the gaol—I mean under ordinary circumstances?—I should think so. If anything were