

179. *Mr. Taylor.*] Is the estate in the Public Trustee's hands?—No; the family, by signing letters of administration for the brother to manage it, kept it out of the Public Trustee's hands.

180. Do the letters set out the method by which the property is to be realised ultimately?—I cannot say.

181. Any deed signed?—I cannot tell you that.

ROBERT DENTON was examined on oath.

182. *The Chairman.*] What is your occupation?—I am a mechanical engineer.

183. Where do you reside?—At 35, Ghuznee Street, Wellington.

184. *Mr. Taylor.*] Do you remember, in 1893, the proprietors of the *Prohibitionist* asking the Wellington Prohibition League to collect information that would go to show whether the Sunday-trading clause of the Licensing Act was being observed in Wellington?—Yes.

185. Do you remember that it was distinctly stated at the time the request was made that the information would not be used for the purpose of instituting prosecutions?—Yes.

186. But that it was from a public standpoint, to ascertain whether the law was being enforced or ignored?—It was being continually stated in the papers that there was no sly-grog selling on Sunday, and we wished to prove that there was.

187. There had been a controversy on for a long time as to whether or not the law was being obeyed?—Yes.

188. On that question a number of the members of the league undertook to collect what information they possibly could?—Yes.

189. Did you act as secretary for those who were working?—I was appointed secretary.

190. And you received information from the different members of the league as to their observations?—Yes.

191. And you tabulated it?—Yes.

192. I propose to ask Mr. Denton to read to the Commission the result of his investigation, and then to call witnesses in support of the different details in it. What is the first hotel on that list in 1893?—The Albert Hotel, Willis Street.

193. Are the witnesses present who collected that evidence?—I collected it myself.

194. As a matter of fact, similar observations were made in 1894?—Yes.

195. In 1893 you ascertained by your own observation how many people entered the Albert Hotel in Willis Street. What was the result of your observations?—201.

196. What date was it?—Sunday, 7th May, 1893.

197. Between what hours?—The hours of 7.30 a.m. and 7.30 p.m.—twelve hours.

198. Of course you do not know for what purpose the people went in?—No; except by observing what took place outside.

199. Tell the Commission what took place outside that you think would indicate what the purpose of their visit had been?—This was a memorandum made by me at the time: "A man who had been seen in the neighbourhood of this hotel during some previous months sometimes acting as watcher on Sunday, and who had come out of the hotel about 8 a.m., and had not left the premises all day, was violently thrown out of the door."

199A. What time was that?—He re-entered about 3 o'clock to get refreshment of some sort, and had been in about three-quarters of an hour, when he was thrown violently out of the door on his head. He lay there for some minutes, and a crowd gathered round, and then he went to the doctor's. He came back later on with his head plastered up, and two policemen appeared, and one went inside; but nothing came of it—not even a paragraph appeared in the local papers.

200. Did you watch for a prosecution?—Yes; to see if anything came of the incident. He was there next Sunday on duty, so far as I could see.

201. Do you know his name?—No.

202. You say one policeman went into the house?—Yes.

203. How long after the man was thrown out?—Half an hour, so far as I could say.

204. Was he in uniform?—Yes; of course I would not know him if he were not.

205. No other incidents?—At 12.30 two lads about seventeen years old went in; they came out shortly afterwards, when one was so drunk that he could hardly stand. I know a respectable business-man in town who saw them go in, and tried to stare the owner of the hotel out of countenance. I saw this myself, and the man was rather disgusted at the age of the boys.

206. *The Chairman.*] Do you know the names of these lads or their ages?—No. I should reckon them to be somewhere near seventeen. I also saw one of five men come out drunk.

207. You do not know how long they had been in?—No.

208. Were these young lads?—No; men.

209. *Mr. Taylor.*] Do you know how long that group had been in?—No.

210. Are these all the observations you made in connection with that hotel?—Five came out unmistakeably drunk. This number included the man and boy I have already referred to.

211. Did you see the police about the premises during the day with the exception of that one instance?—I cannot say; if they were on beat they could not help passing up and down there.

212. *The Chairman.*] Did you say the policeman saw this man whose head was injured?—The man applied to the policeman himself, so far as I could see.

213. *Mr. Taylor.*] What made you think the man applied to the police?—I think I saw him speaking to the policeman. He came back to the hotel with a friend, and the policeman passed shortly afterwards, and he spoke to him. The policeman sent them off, went off himself, and came back with another policeman, and one of them went inside.

214. Have you any more?—Yes, in regard to the Star and Garter Hotel, Cuba Street.

215. Did you take these observations yourself?—I did. Before asking any one else I had a quiet look round myself on Sunday, the 12th March, 1893, from 10.30 a.m. to 12.45 p.m. The