

527. What have you observed recently?—Well, from the casual observations I have been able to take—from the same sort of observation I took on these Sundays—I do not things have improved. I thought at the time I took that watch that the trade was being carried on, and from the same feelings I have come to the conclusion, best as I can, that things have not improved except in the way that drinking has increased. If I had taken a watch lately probably I would have found my total greater.

528. You are in the city on Sunday?—Yes.

529. Going about the streets?—Backwards and forwards from church.

530. You notice people going in and out of hotels?—Yes; in the back ways. In some of the instances, if they did go in to use the urinal then the urinal must be placed inside the building.

531. Will you kindly tell us if you went to church last Sunday?—No.

532. Did you observe any last Sunday?—The Sunday before I did. There were two places which I passed, and I passed them at night-time. I have a very good view of one hotel. I believe if I had watched the total would have been just as big, if not bigger, than the others which I have taken.

533. What is the name of that hotel?—The Park Hotel. The number of people who called at that place on various objects was very large. Of course, I cannot say what the objects were.

534. That is within vision of your own place?—Yes; and if I was blind I could not help hearing the demonstrations that go on at times.

535. You observed that right down to the present time?—Yes; and on one Sunday night I had to ask the folks to get off my shop door. They come down from that hotel to recruit their strength and steady their shattered nerves.

536. *The Chairman.*] You say late in the evening?—It is some weeks ago since the Sunday night incident took place.

537. *Mr. Tunbridge.*] It is a question of people going into hotels in crowds right down to the present time?—I did not observe last Sunday. If I had I should very likely have been able to tell the reason of people entering there. Last Sunday morning between 6 and 9 o'clock, I saw folks entering the back way between this hotel and another house, which appears to be the only back entrance into this hotel. They walked into this right-of-way, and I saw no more of them.

538. You cannot say whether they went into the hotel or not?—No. On several occasions when they have come out they have been so ill at ease that they were not able to walk as well as they did when they went in. This was last Sunday.

539. I do not quite follow you about "ill at ease"; what do you mean?—Well, to put it plainly, they were drunk.

540. *Mr. Taylor.*] Did you get any information about any other hotel?—Just these two.

541. *Inspector Pender.*] Did you communicate with the police?—No.

542. Why not?—I thought of that at the time; but what we were told was that the information would be used to the best advantage.

543. That was in 1893 and 1894; but last Sunday, for instance, why did you not go to the constable who lives close by?—To tell you the truth, I was too busy with my own affairs.

544. Do you know the men who were drunk?—No. I did not take any notice of them.

545. Is there any one who can corroborate your statements that the house is rowdy, and that loud talking goes on?—Probably if the inhabitants about the district were communicated with they would bear out what I say.

546. Do you know of any inhabitant in the district?—I could not help noticing it. I went away because I had an appointment, and I was a bit late, and whether anybody was cognisant of what I saw I cannot say. But when you ask me to name inhabitants, I can give you several; but whether they were awake at the time I cannot say. It was between 6 and 9.30 o'clock in the morning.

547. Cannot you give us any more definite time?—No; I had some preparations to make for my appointment, and they occupied all my attention. I had to open the shop-door occasionally, and one of the times I was at the shop-door I noticed this. I only happened to see it because they were in front of my own eyes.

548. *Mr. Taylor.*] You did not notice the time?—No.

549. *The Chairman.*] They came out of the hotel?—Yes.

550. *Mr. Tunbridge.*] I think you said the house was also rowdy and noisy?—No. I was referring to the cases in 1893 and 1894.

551. You did not think it was your duty to go down and tell the constable?—I never thought of that aspect of the case at all. In fact, I think if I had, it would be a most thankless job.

552. Why?—It was not my duty; I was not paid for it, and I am not so public spirited as to do public work for nothing.

553. You do not think it is your duty to assist the police in carrying out the law?—It was too far out of my way to assist the public.

554. *Mr. Poynton.*] What was the distance between your shop and the hotel?—About 500 ft., I suppose.

WEDNESDAY, 9TH MARCH, 1898.

ARTHUR WAKEFORD NICOL examined on oath.

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you, and where do you live?—Plumber, Victoria Avenue, Wellington.

2. *Mr. Taylor.*] Did you assist in 1894 in collecting information at the request of the *Prohibitionist* as to the number of visitors to the various hotels in Wellington on Sunday?—Yes.

3. Did you take notes in connection with the Post Office Hotel?—I did not personally; I helped to take the notes.