

733. With respect to the Masterton electorate, the evidence shows that there is very little sly-grog selling at Masterton. This was the view of the Masterton No-license League, represented by Mr. George William Morice, the senior assistant at Wairarapa College (R. 6207). A similar view was expressed by Mr. Walton, the Mayor of Eketahuna, who gave evidence on behalf of the residents of the borough and the County of Eketahuna (R. 1711 and 1731). As the Mayor desired licenses and the No-license League did not, we think we may assume that there is little sly-grog selling in the Masterton electorate.

734. In Ashburton the position is peculiar. The police sub-district, in which the Town of Ashburton is, was "dry" from 1902 to 1927 (R. 5274 and 5275). The electoral boundaries were altered on five occasions—in 1907, 1911, 1917, 1921, and 1927. Under the last alteration the Ashburton electorate ceased to exist. Part, including the Borough of Ashburton, was joined with Ellesmere, a "wet" district, to make the Electoral District of Mid-Canterbury. The other part was joined to the Electorate of Temuka, another "wet" district. In each case the population of the part of the old Ashburton district was smaller than the population of the area to which it was joined, so that the districts of Mid-Canterbury and Temuka are regarded as "wet" districts. Yet under the law hotels cannot be reinstated in the Ashburton Police Sub-district (para. 1102, *infra*).

735. We have been supplied by Sergeant James Francis Cleary with a summary of the convictions for sly-grog selling in the Police Sub-district of Ashburton from the year 1923 onwards. They are as follows (R. 5254):—

1923–1927 (dry period): 28 convictions, average 5·6 per annum;
 1928 (transition year): 1 conviction;
 1929–1933 (wet period): 38 convictions, average 7·6 per annum;
 1934–1938 (wet period): 29 convictions, average 5·8 per annum;
 1939–1943 (wet period): 34 convictions, average 6·8 per annum; and
 1944 (wet period): 5 convictions.

It would seem from this return that there was no great difference in the average between the "dry" period and the period during which Ashburton has been included in the "wet" electorate.

736. In Oamaru the evidence shows that at one time sly-grog selling was rampant, but that it began to disappear after no-license was carried. The evidence is that it has now almost entirely disappeared (R. 5969, 5970, and 5975). The reasons given by Mr. H. D. Grocott, on behalf of the Oamaru Temperance Council, were:—

(1) That it is much easier for the police to detect sly-grog selling in no-license than in wet areas;

(2) That the police have for the last ten or fifteen years been doing their best to eliminate sly-grog selling; and

(3) That the young people are being educated so that they do not grow up to drink as they used to do.

The reason given by Senior Sergeant McGregor, who was stationed in Oamaru from 1909 to 1915 and again from 1935 to 1945, when he retired, was that the practical elimination of sly-grog selling was due to Police supervision (R. 5975).

737. Upon a view of the whole of the evidence, we conclude that the existence of sly-grog selling does not materially depend on whether the district is license or no-license. It depends on whether there is a demand for sly grog, either (1) where there are no licensed hotels, as in no-license districts; or (2) where the hotels are not readily available as in scattered settlements of either license or no-license districts; or (3) during the hours when the licensed hotels are closed.

738. We think the extent to which the demand is supplied depends very largely upon the degree of police supervision which is given, or which it is practicable to give.

739. Special reference should be made to the powers which enabled the police to control sly-grog selling in the principal cities during the war. These powers were contained in Regulations 20 and 21 of the Licensing Act Emergency Regulations 1942 (1942/186) and Regulations 6, 7, and 8 of the amending regulations of July, 1943 (1943/122).