

it will do. We wish this honourable House, when making new laws *re* this matter, to make the penalty for breaking them very heavy, as it has been proved over and over again that a light fine is of no use whatever.

LOUIS KITT

[And 4 Others].

## REPORTS.

No. 20.—Petition of LOUIS KITT, of Wellington, and 4 Others. (No. 1.)

PETITIONERS pray that more drastic measures be taken for the suppression of opium-smoking.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition, together with the evidence of Inspector Ellison, should be referred to the Government, and that the Government be recommended to give effect to the prayer of the petition.

19th August, 1904.

WALTER SYMES, Chairman.

No. 21.—Petition of LOUIS KITT, of Wellington, and 4 Others. (No. 2.)

PETITIONERS pray that more drastic measures be taken for the suppression of gambling among Chinamen.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition, together with the evidence of Inspector Ellison, should be referred to the Government, and that the Government be recommended to give effect to the prayer of the petition.

19th August, 1904.

WALTER SYMES, Chairman.

## MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

THURSDAY, 11TH AUGUST, 1904.

Inspector ELLISON, examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] Any evidence you can give the Committee in connection with either or both of these petitions we shall be very glad to receive?—As regards opium, I think the petition puts the matter in a very exaggerated form. There is very little opium-smoking going on, and there has been very little of it for a long time past, in Wellington. There have been several prosecutions, in which fines have been inflicted. The police have frequently visited Chinese quarters, especially in Haining Street and its neighbourhood, in search of evidence in connection with opium-smoking, but latterly they have found none. A large number of pipes and small parcels of opium have been seized at various times, and I may say that the Bench has recorded several sharp fines in connection therewith. I cannot speak positively, but I think the fines have been sufficient to deter a continuation of the practice. It is possible that some opium may be smuggled into the country still, but there have been several prosecutions for the smuggling of opium, and fines have been recorded as a result. I know that frequent searches have been made by the Customs officers from communications I have had, and that very great care has been exercised to prevent the importation of opium. I believe that in the last one or two cases where opium was found in the possession of Chinese in this city it turned out to be opium that was not of Chinese manufacture and importation, but which had been purchased from a chemist in Wellington. I think this would fairly indicate that the supply of Chinese opium was very much diminished. The smell of opium-smoking can very easily be noticed on entering Chinese premises where it is practised—that is, by persons who are accustomed to it—and from conversations I have had, and from reports received from constables, sergeants, and others who have entered the quarters of the Chinese specially to look for opium-smoking, I believe that very little, if any, is carried on now, and what there is is done in a very secret manner, if it is done at all. The police have full power to enter upon Chinese premises under the Opium Act and take possession of opium, pipes, and other things without any warning, and to prosecute Chinese who are found to be contravening the existing law; and that has been done. The existing law gives the police power to enter Chinese premises where opium-smoking is suspected, and that law has been taken advantage of by the police. There have been several seizures of opium smuggled by seamen or other persons, both in Wellington and elsewhere, and very heavy fines have been recorded. I think one man was fined £100 for having opium in his possession in Tory Street, and there were two Europeans who were very heavily fined for having smuggled opium, or, at any rate, having opium in their possession. In my opinion, the Bench has very fairly supported the police and the Customs officials in all the cases that have been taken before them. I do not know that I can say anything more about opium-smoking.

2. Can you give us any information with regard to gambling?—Yes. Gambling in various forms is carried on very much by Chinamen in all parts of New Zealand where the Chinese collect. It seems to be about the only recreation they have, and in my opinion the really objectionable feature is where Europeans—young men or old men—take part in it. I think the only game that Europeans take much part in is that of pak-a-poo. It is really a lottery pure and simple. Fan-tan is another game that the Chinese play, but that is carried on principally amongst themselves. The law at present has been found to be defective in cases which have been taken before the Supreme Court. Three years ago prosecutions for pak-a-poo and fan-tan where convictions had been recorded failed by reason of the convictions being quashed on appeal. I do not think pak-a-poo would be carried on to any harmful extent were it not for the support it receives from Europeans, and I think the easiest way to check it would be to make it an offence for any European to frequent Chinese quarters where any such game is carried on, or where tickets are sold or lotteries carried on. It is an offence now for any person to habitually consort with prostitutes or thieves, or persons having no visible means of support, and I think that men—young men especially—who frequent Chinese quarters for the purpose of gambling at pak-a-poo are likely to come to as much harm as those who are found in the other prescribed companionship. If it were made an offence for any person not of the Chinese race to be found on such