

premises, and they were made liable to a penalty, the harmful features of pak-a-poo and the other game would soon be stopped. I do not think the playing of dominoes, cards, or even fan-tan among the Chinese themselves will be productive of much harm. The suppression of such games would probably cause a break-out of evil in some other direction, because human nature must have some kind of a safety-valve, or a means of relaxing the energies, and if it is not done in one way it will be done in another. I think it would be as hard to stop such recreation amongst the Chinese as to stop whist and other games amongst Europeans in the country. I think the gaming propensities of our own people in private houses is just about the same as with the Chinese. The Chinese adopt this method of whiling away their time. There is more or less gambling done by them with dominoes and cards and fan-tan, but it is just about the same as playing whist and poker and bridge in private houses. I cannot make any distinction between the two habits; but I am decidedly of opinion that it is bad for young men, middle-aged men, or old men to mingle with the Chinese for the purpose of indulging in gambling of any description. I think if it were made penal for such persons to be found on such premises without lawful excuse it would remedy a great deal of the harm which is done. I do not know that I can say anything more. If there is anything you can suggest I can give information upon I will do the best I can.

3. *Mr. Hardy.*] With regard to Haining Street, I understand that it does not bear a very good reputation?—It is not so bad as it was some years ago. The reputation it had was due to the fact that a great many women of immoral class used to frequent it. We have had a great many prosecutions, and as a result there are very few European women frequenting the Chinese quarters now.

4. Are there many Europeans of the criminal class about there?—There used to be a few living in the place, but they have been scattered a good deal during the last eighteen months. Of course, they pay occasional visits now to the place.

5. Has it come within your knowledge that many boys or young fellows invest their money in the lotteries you have spoken of?—A great many young men from about eighteen years and men up to sixty years go there.

6. The inducement is a very good one, and the investments are small?—Yes; but the odds, I think, are very greatly in favour of the Chinese—the bankers. There is a certain amount of charm about it. When a man begins and wins a little he does not look at the odds, but just goes on hoping to strike the bank for a good sum.

7. Have you heard of the bank being struck for a large sum?—A gentleman came to me some time ago and complained that his son had struck the bank for £20—the lad was about eighteen—and from that time the young fellow was frequenting the place and passing his time there. I got a sergeant to tell him that I would bring him up as a vagrant if he continued to visit the place, and that had the effect of keeping him away for some time. I saw the boy's father a few months ago, when he told me that the boy was in Dunedin. I simply bluffed the boy, because, living with his parents, I could not charge him with vagrancy.

8. You simply bluffed the lad because you had not any power?—We had not the power because he was living with his parents.

9. I understand that you recommend the law to be amended to enable you to deal with such a class?—I think that probably would be the best way of dealing with the matter.

10. Do you think an amendment of the Police Offences Act would meet the difficulty?—I think that probably would be the simplest way of dealing with the trouble.

11. *Mr. Hall.*] I understood you to say that amongst Europeans there was not much opium-smoking?—There is very little in Wellington. In every place where the Chinese congregated there was a good deal of it prior to the Opium Act coming into force, but since then it has been reduced to a minimum.

12. The petition says it has extended to Europeans as well as to Chinese?—I do not believe it. I have spoken to several Chinese to give me one or two cases in connection with men who made allegations, and I could not get a single instance quoted. I believe that certain men used to be addicted to opium-smoking, but not now. I know there was a porter who came from Greymouth and who at one time was a great opium-smoker.

13. It is said that a large quantity of opium is smuggled into this country, which the Chinese have here?—I think the smuggling of opium has practically ceased since last year. I believe half a pound was seized in Wellington, and that another small parcel was seized. A man passing from Christchurch to Greymouth was intercepted with some in his possession, and several parcels have been seized from Chinese, but very heavy fines have been recorded for these offences.

14. Report says that the precautions taken by the Customs officers are not sufficiently rigorous?—Of course, I cannot speak for the Customs, but I know that several times when I have received information that opium was about to be received—I have heard it through both Chinamen and Europeans—I have communicated with the Collector of Customs, and the steamers and persons suspected have been carefully watched and searched, and I know that the Customs officials do overhaul the steamers and pay special attention to the matter. From my own knowledge of what has been done, and from conversations I have had with people, and from the effect which has followed, I know that the Customs officers do all they can to prevent opium-smuggling.

15. Could you suggest any means which would bring the Customs Department and your Department closer together?—No; we both work together as closely as possible.

16. Do you believe that everything is done now that can be done?—Yes; I believe the Customs officers are very careful and are on the alert for opium-smuggling. Of course, it is like the smuggling of other small goods: there might be a leakage going on for some time, but it would eventually be found out. There may be a small amount of smuggling going on, but it is very small. I do not know any means that would be more effectual than the present law when it is put into operation.

17. *Mr. Lang.*] I understand that you consider you have all the power necessary so far as opium-smoking is concerned?—Yes; we have full power to enter on Chinese premises when we have reason to believe that opium is smoked or kept there.

18. And you think that if it were made an offence for Europeans to be found in Chinese quarters that would put a stop to gambling?—Yes; in houses that are used for playing any game in. Of course,