

1900.
NEW ZEALAND.

PUBLIC PETITIONS A TO L COMMITTEE.

(REPORT ON THE PETITION (No. 368) OF JOHN TAMMADGE AND OTHERS.)

(MR. W. SYMES, CHAIRMAN.)

Brought up on 17th October, and ordered to be printed.

PETITION.

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives of New Zealand in Parliament assembled.

THE humble petition of the undersigned sheweth:—

1. That your petitioners are Europeans resident within the area known as the Rohe-Potae, or King-country;

2. That about fifteen years ago the said area was prohibited;

3. That in consequence of there being no hotels or licensed houses within the said district necessary accommodation cannot be obtained by the travelling public, whether European or Maori;

4. That the condition of things has so altered since the said district was prohibited, by the influx of Europeans, and which is increasing every day, both as settlers and otherwise, and the great difficulty of putting a stop to the illicit sale of liquor within the said prohibited district, that your petitioners believe it would be most beneficial to both the Maori people as well as to the Europeans resident and coming into the said district that licenses should be granted within the said prohibited area;

5. That the said prohibited area be placed in the same position as any other licensed district in New Zealand:

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that honourable members may take the premises into their consideration, and your petitioners will ever pray.

JOHN TAMMADGE, and 113 others,
of Te Kuiti.

REPORT.

No. 368.—Petition of JOHN TAMMADGE and Others, Te Kuiti.

PETITIONERS pray that the King-country be placed in the same position as regards the sale of liquor as any licensed district in New Zealand.

I am directed to report that, as the subject-matter of the petition involves a matter of policy, the Committee has no recommendation to make, but that the report and evidence taken on the petition be laid on the table of the House, and be printed.

17th October, 1900.

WALTER SYMES, Chairman.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

THURSDAY, 6TH JULY, 1900.—(Mr. W. SYMES, Chairman.)

A. T. Ngata deposed as follows: I was sent up about a couple of months ago by the general committee of the Te Aute Students' Association to go through the King-country and furnish a report as to the state of affairs in regard to the sale and consumption of liquor. The attitude taken up by the Te Aute Association at this time was in favour of the continuance of the present prohibition of the sale of liquor in the King-country, as being in the best interests of the Maori population; but that was before we really knew anything of the actual facts of the existing state of things. Finding it would be better to get at the bottom of the matter, my committee (of the Te Aute Students' Association) sent me up through the country to make a special report. I went and spent three weeks in the King-country, seeing as much as I could in that time. All that has been said about sly-grog selling in the King-country has been amply confirmed by my experience of things there during my visit. I do not know whether you want me to give evidence upon the subject of sly-grog selling.

The Chairman: We want anything that will help to solve the difficulty. Give us all the information you can upon the matter.

Witness, continuing, said: Well, looking at the question from a Maori point of view, and with reference specially to the welfare of the Maori people, I find that there is a very degrading state of affairs, a very demoralising condition of things, in the King-country. It would be impossible to count how many sly-grog-selling places there are in the King-country.

Mr. Lethbridge: About what localities did you find them?

Witness: Between Mokau and Otorohanga. Just along the railway-line and a little off it. That is where most of it exists. A good deal has been said about the opinions of the Maori people in the King-country upon this subject by gentlemen outside of your House. I find there seems to be a consensus of opinion of the Natives on both sides (I mean of those in favour and those opposed to liquor in the King-country) in favour of a change from the present state of things. I went, first of all, to the liquor side or party, and of course their views will be treated as the views of interested persons. Then I went to the temperance chiefs, of whom there are a good many. I saw Moerua and Whitinui, and I would like here to read from a note which I took: "Several attempts have been made by some of us at the instigation of pakehas to secure the removal of the prohibition. Others objected until the restriction had had a longer trial. Now it has had a fair trial, and is an absolute failure. Even if you prohibited the introduction of the stuff, you could not prevent smuggling. It would require a cordon of police to watch the thousand-and-one inlets. More drinking goes on now than if the district had licensed houses. At one time it was secret, but hardly so now. It is demoralising and entirely degrading. . . . The land-sales came about ten years ago, and brought in more Europeans. Matters became worse and worse. Many of them tampered with our women, living with many of them. The Natives were taught sly-grog selling, and evasions of the law were clever and numerous. A large trade in *waiipiro* was carried on secretly, but everybody here knew about it. Men, women, and children were engaged in it, for the profits were great."

Witness, continuing, said: That is just an expression of the opinion of two chiefs who were themselves favourable to the cause of temperance. The whole trouble seems to have been caused by the failure, I might call it, of the Government—or, rather, I might say, of successive Governments—to note this point: that there were actually two prohibitions, one being in regard to the sale of liquor and the other restricting the sale of lands. So long as the two things went together the prohibition had a chance; but settlement was allowed to proceed in the King-country, and it was inevitable that the prohibition must break down. During the last two years settlement has been increasing very rapidly. Since last October some two hundred settlers have been brought into the country, and it is an indisputable fact that once you bring settlement into a Maori district prohibition as far as liquor is concerned must go. I felt bound to report to my committee that we must favour a change of some kind, and not bolster up a prohibition that is an absolute failure. There are some minor facts to be noted as to the effect, for instance, of sly-grog selling. When I was at Otorohanga a party of six Natives came into the accommodation-house. There was always a constable on watch about the place, but the Maoris, watching their opportunity, slipped into a room. I do not know whether there was any liquor there or not, but I saw the effect, because, after hearing them say "We might never get the chance again," they went in, and in about an hour's time all were dead-drunk. There were two women amongst them. Further up the line there was another instance. As to the amount of drinking that goes on, I believe that amongst the Maori tribes of the North Island the Ngatimaniapoto are the most drunken of all. At any rate, I would say that you see more drunkenness among that tribe than among their neighbours the Waikatos. But the latter have licensed houses right through their country, and you do not see so much of it there. I got this from another prominent man amongst them: that the convictions which the police obtained against them for sly-grog selling have had no effect whatever in keeping down sly-grog selling. On the contrary, the convictions seem rather to act as a spur to these sellers to make as much money as possible in a short time, so as to lay up a certain amount of

capital out of which to pay the fines. One of them said that he could make enough in a week to stand two or three convictions and still have a profit. Should a sly-grog case interfere with business for a week, the rest of the month you could make enough to pay your fines and make a handsome profit besides. In fact, the convictions were nothing less than good advertisements to those engaged in the sly-grog selling. Now the Natives themselves are doing something to try and keep liquor under some measure of control. In three of the settlements, I think, a rule exists to the effect that no liquor is to be brought into the settlement at large meetings; and meetinghouses are in some parts absolutely closed against people who are under the influence of liquor, and against drink generally. The *marae*—that is, the surroundings of a Maori settlement or meeting-ground—is absolutely tabooed against liquor. I want to refer to that question again later on in treating generally of the remedy for the existing state of affairs. After considering all the facts, and the expressed opinions of prominent men of the tribes, I sent in a report to my committee, in which I said,—

“I am compelled by the facts I have been able to elicit, and the strong and apparently spontaneous feeling of a large section of the Ngatimaniapotos, to report to your committee that a continuance of the present state of things in the King-country cannot be tolerated much longer; that the prohibition, though well meant, is a failure; and that the sale of liquor under proper control is desirable. I give the reasons briefly, and in order:—

“(1.) Sly-grog selling is carried on on an enormous scale in the boardinghouses, in the shanties, and in the settlements, by men, women, and boys.

“(2.) The chief incentive to this traffic is the large profit—say, 60 or 70 per cent.—made.

“(3.) The police are powerless to suppress it, because—

“(a.) It is very difficult to obtain convictions, from the generally unsatisfactory nature of the evidence:

“(b.) The law does not prohibit the importation of liquor into the King-country:

“(c.) The illicit traffic is carried on in so many different places at once that the police cannot possibly cover the country.

“(4.) That, since the provisions of the Licensing Acts do not apply, section 25 of ‘The Alcoholic Liquors Sale Control Act, 1895,’ does not protect Maori women, and the police can exercise no sort of control in that direction.

“(5.) That the Native chiefs who secured the prohibition sixteen years ago petitioned for its removal before they died, and the Ngatimaniapoto Tribe of to-day, among whom are prominent men of pronounced temperance views, ask for its removal.

“(6.) That since last summer nearly two hundred fresh settlers have come into the district, and, as the remaining Crown lands—a very large area—are thrown open, and the work of breaking in the new land proceeds, the white population must necessarily rapidly increase, rendering the efforts of the police increasingly difficult, if they are not useless now.

“I am compelled to recommend your committee to reconsider the first part of the resolution passed at the Papawai Conference, but to insist upon the second part, which urges the right of the Maori electors of prohibited districts to have a voice in deciding on the removal, and the right of Maori electors generally to decide on the question of licenses.”

Resuming his evidence, Mr. Ngata said: As to the question of the referendum, it must be remembered that, because prohibition has been placed in the King-country out of consideration for the Maori people there, they have a right to a voice in deciding on the removal of prohibition also. Take it any way you like, whether the referendum or local option, the Maoris are entitled to a voice in the matter, whatever the change. The only alternative that is proposed, so far as granting licenses for the King-country, is that which was suggested by Mr. Te Heuheu at the recent interview between Maori chiefs and the Premier. I favour his proposal myself because I have seen the present failure of the prohibition. I have seen Maori committees at work on the East Coast, in the Waikato under the Maori King, and in some parts also of the King-country. These Native committees are quite informally elected, and consist of the principal men who have most influence, whether they are chiefs or not. One of their rules in regard to the Maori meetinghouses has been incorporated in the Act of 1895, and is intended to prevent drinking in the meetinghouses. Another rule that is gaining ground in effect and favour is that no liquor is to be drunk or introduced into a Maori settlement at any meeting, of whatever nature. This rule is gradually gaining favour everywhere, and I will give you an instance of its having been carried out in the face of strong opposition. Last year I got the chiefs of the East Coast tribes to sign a paper agreeing to abide by this rule. All signed except one old gentleman. Last May he called a meeting to open a new meetinghouse, and in view of the occasion he got eight casks of beer. One of my uncles, who is head of the General Council of the Ngatiporou, heard of this, and at first he could think of no expedient for preventing the beer being drunk. When the meeting came on, however, my uncle found that he had some £90 which had been collected by two of the tribes towards the funds of the meeting. He thereupon told the old chap to make up his mind to have the beer sent back, failing which this money would be forfeited. The old chap very promptly got rid of three of the casks of beer somewhere, and sent the other five back. Now, the point which I wish to emphasize is that the Maoris themselves are able and willing to do something to keep down the drink evil, which is degrading them in the eyes of their women and children. The position is this: They say, “Here is the hotel; the law has seen fit to keep the hotel open, and God has seen fit to keep our throats open. Well, the best thing we can do is to take our throats to the hotel which has been legalised by the State, instead of bringing the stuff here to our *marae*.” I do not say that licenses would be the best alternative to meet the case in the King-country. It seems to me that any system that may be adopted that will tend to decrease the amount of drinking will meet with our favour. I cannot express any opinion as to whether we should have the Gothenburg system, or licenses, or any other system of controlling the liquor, as I do not know much about them. Well, Mr. Chairman, I cannot think of anything further to add.

1. *The Chairman.*] Then, in your opinion, even if the number of police were increased in the King-country, it would be impossible to suppress this sly-grog selling: that is your conclusion after your investigation of the matter?—Yes. My knowledge of the King-country covers about twelve years. I have been up and down the King-country, and I was sent up there specially during three weeks to investigate.

2. You say that these convictions are simply advertisements in effect, because people find out who are selling the grog, and then know where to get it?—Quite so.

3. *Mr. Colvin.*] Did you say that you were sent up into the King-country on this trip of investigation by a temperance society? Did I understand you aright?—Yes; I was sent up by the Te Aute College Students' Association.

4. Do the Maoris themselves indulge in this sly-grog selling?—Oh, yes; the Maoris are the worst offenders in this.

5. I understood it was the white people?—Oh, no; the Maoris.

6. I thought that as the white population increased they took in the grog and supplied the Maoris?—Well, it is the progress of settlement that induces sly-grog selling.

7. You believe it better to have hotels under proper control than the present state of affairs?—Yes. It would be better to have the sale of liquor under control. I think it would be a change for the better.

8. *Mr. Lawry.*] Do you remember a public meeting on this question held at Te Awamutu?—Yes; I had been there a week then.

9. The result of your investigations in the King-country has modified the opinions you expressed at Te Awamutu?—Yes.

10. *Mr. Hall.*] Are you well acquainted with the King-country?—Yes.

11. Are you acquainted also with the whole of its frontier?—Yes; I am very familiar with those parts, and about Kihikihi.

12. Are there any hotels adjacent to the frontier?—Yes; there is one at Alexandra, and one at Kihikihi.

13. Did your investigation lead you to conclude that these hotels are frequently visited by Natives?—While I was about Kihikihi for some ten days there were very few Natives there, though there are two Native settlements close by.

14. Have you any idea where the Natives in the King-country get their supplies of liquor from?—It is sent up from Auckland. They get their liquor for the *tangis* from Kihikihi.

15. And your investigations led you to conclude—?—That we must choose between two evils.

16. And in your opinion the lesser evil is to license houses for the sale of liquor?—Yes; the lesser evil is to bring the liquor under control.

17. You prefer to say that you had better buy the liquor in the King-country itself than have to procure it from outside surreptitiously?—Yes, I think so.

18. *Mr. Lang.*] You think it would be impossible to keep down sly-grog selling in the King-country?—Yes, I do think so, as things are at present.

19. What is the proportion of Europeans to Natives in the King-country at the present time, so far as you can say?—I suppose it would be, since the arrival of many new settlers, about five to seven, and including the whole of the Rohe Potae Block, about five to nine.

20. I understood you to say that you knew the Waikato?—Yes.

21. Could you tell the Committee, approximately, the number of Natives in the Waikato electorate between Kihikihi and Huntly?—I suppose quite a thousand.

22. What I want to arrive at, as near as possible, is the number of Natives there are in what may be called the settled part of the Waikato electorate, where there are licensed houses, and the number of Natives where there are no licenses. Can you tell us that?—[Having referred to a map showing the boundaries of the Waikato electorate, the witness said:] I think there would be about four thousand Natives in the portion of the land where licenses existed, and about eighteen hundred in the prohibited portion of the electorate. The Maori population is pretty thick about the Waikato Heads. The settlements are very close together, and some of them are very large.

23. I think you said there was more drink in the King-country than outside?—Yes.

24. Do you know the date that you visited Te Awamutu?—It was about the first week in June, 1900.

25. And the evidence you collected was for the most part after that date?—Yes.

26. *Mr. Colvin.*] I suppose the temperance party think that the quality of the liquor sold by the sly-grog sellers is not so good as that which is obtainable at licensed houses?—Yes; that is what the party think.

27. *The Chairman.*] You did not interview any Europeans up there in the course of your investigations?—Yes, I did; and among others I saw the Magistrate.

28. Do you know a Mr. Ellis?—No; but I heard that he was away at Rotorua unwell. I saw Mr. Jackson, S.M., also a Mr. Dyer, and Mr. Wilkinson, the Government land-purchaser.

29. What was their general opinion?—Their opinion generally was that the country would be better off with licensed houses.

30. As you have already expressed it, of two evils choose the lesser?—Yes, that is so.

31. *Mr. R. McKenzie.*] You say there are some four thousand Natives in the licensed portion of the Waikato electorate, and about eighteen hundred in the part which is under the prohibition?—Yes.

32. When you say that there is more drinking in the prohibited area, do you mean to say that the eighteen hundred Natives drank more than the four thousand?—I mean to say that the eighteen hundred drank more in proportion. The hotels at Kihikihi have not been so well patronised since the Government stopped the killing of the rabbits.

33. You mentioned the names of three gentlemen to whom you had spoken who considered that the country would be better for having licensed houses?—Yes; there was no talk of any other alternative.

34. Do you think that those persons would look at this question from a travellers' convenience point of view? They were in the habit of travelling about the country?—Yes, they did travel about the country, but I do not think they looked at it from a travellers' point of view.

35. But the convenience-of-a-traveller consideration might have influenced them to a certain extent?—I do not know.

36. Do you favour licenses?—I favour a change, but as to the alternative as between licenses and any other system I am not prepared to say. I am not able to decide upon that point.

37. Do you favour licenses under State control or other licenses?—I do not know anything about that.

38. *Mr. Hall.*] Are the Maoris in favour of having a population vote?—Yes, I think so. *Mr. Ormsby*, who represented the Ngatimaniapotos, brought that up very strongly at the Te Awamutu meeting. They do not know anything about the Gothenburg system.

39. *Mr. R. McKenzie.*] How would you propose to give them a vote?—I understand you would have to legislate specially to meet the case of the King-country. I do not see why you should not make special provision to meet the case for all adults in the King-country. You might take a referendum on the question.

TUESDAY, 11TH SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Mr. W. CUSSEN examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] The Committee will be pleased to hear any statement which you may have to make, Mr. Cussen?—Well, I may say I have been in the King-country for about twenty years, on and off. When I first went there there was no sly-grog selling in the country. No grog was allowed in the country, and it was not until the Europeans went into the King-country that the selling of liquor was commenced. Things have very much altered, however, since then, and now there is a very great deal of sly-grog selling carried on, and I know for a fact that spirituous liquors are taken up into the King-country and sold at 7s. 6d. per gallon to the Natives. There is scarcely a settlement in the country where there is no sly-grog selling. If any member of the Committee has any questions to ask I will be pleased to answer.

2. How long ago is it since you first went into the King-country?—I should say about twenty years.

3. Have you been in the King-country recently?—Yes; I came down from the King-country about a fortnight ago.

4. I believe you have been living there. Is that so?—Yes; I have been living there off and on. I have been there every year—sometimes for six or eight months.

5. What part of the King-country have you been in?—Well, I have been pretty well right through it.

6. You know, of course, that there are certain parts of the King-country—the Waikato electorate, for instance—where licenses are granted?—Yes. There is a licensed house at Tokaanu and at some other places, I believe.

7. Do you know the frontier of the King-country?—Yes, I do.

8. Did you say that some twenty years ago there was no sly-grog selling in the King-country?—Yes, I said so. There was none.

9. But there is sly-grog selling there now?—Yes, in every settlement, liquor of the worst description.

10. Do you think it possible for the police to stop it?—It is quite impossible.

11. Do you think the police have been doing their duty in trying to stop the sly-grog selling?—Yes. It is impossible to stop it as things are at present.

12. Do you think it would be possible to smuggle liquor into the King-country from the sea-board?—Yes, it is quite possible. It can be taken up by pack-horses.

13. Are there any hotels near what we may call the frontier?—Yes; there are licensed houses at Kihikihi, Te Awamutu, and at Alexandra, now called "Pirongia."

14. Are there any Native settlements near these places?—Yes; one of the largest settlements is at Whatiwhatihoe, only three miles from Alexandra.

15. And Whatiwhatihoe is within the prohibited district?—Yes.

16. And it is only three miles, you say, from Alexandra, where there is a licensed house?—Yes.

17. I suppose, too, there are Natives on the other side; I mean in the prohibited district?—Yes.

18. Is there any difference between the conduct of the Natives without and within the prohibited districts?—No; they are about the same. Some are very temperate.

19. How about the Natives at Otorohanga and Te Kuiti; is there any difference there?—Only at the time when the Land Court is sitting. There is a deal of drinking then, but at other times they are fairly sober. In the settlements where they keep the grog you very seldom see any drunkenness. I myself never saw a man drunk in his own settlement.

20. Do you mean that they go away from home to drink?—Yes. They drink most when they are attending the Land Court meetings.

21. What has been the general effect of imposing fines upon the sly-grog offenders?—Directly they are summoned they sell as much grog as possible, in order to make up for the fines.

22. In your opinion the police have done their duty, and it is absolutely impossible to stop the sly-grog selling?—Yes.

23. Both Natives and Europeans combine in the sly-grog selling. Is that so?—Yes.

24. *Mr. Lawry.*] Were you present at the ceremony of turning the first sod of the railway in the King-country?—I was not there on that occasion.

25. Have you any knowledge of a promise made or implied then to the Natives that it was an advantage to them that the railway should run through their country?—No.

26. Has there been any land sold or leased in the King-country since that occasion?—Yes, about 60,000 acres.

27. And now the European population there is very largely on the increase?—Yes. There are about four hundred men now working on the land recently taken up, and in about six months time there will be another 60,000 acres thrown open for settlement.

28. Is the feeling in the King-country in favour of direct legislation on the question of liquor, or is it in favour of giving the Natives the right to decide for themselves as to license or otherwise?—I think the feeling is that they should have the same privileges as others.

29. You mean that they should have the right to vote on the question?—That they should have the right to decide for themselves whether they should have licenses or not.

30. Taking into consideration the immense frontier-line of the King-country, how many police do you think it would take to keep down the sly-grog selling?—I do not think all the police in New Zealand could stop it.

31. You yourself are certain that under licenses the evil would be much less than at present, and you think that that is the opinion also of the people generally in the King-country?—Yes, and I may say that the head chiefs, who do not drink, think the same on that point.

32. Would you consider the opinion of five thousand people in Dunedin of any value in regard to this question?—Well, I do not see what they could possibly know about it. It is only the people who reside in or travel through the country who know anything of the state of affairs there.

33. You said there was a licensed house at Tokaanu?—Yes.

34. Have you ever been to Tokaanu?—Yes.

35. Have you ever seen any drunkenness there?—Very little, except during the sittings of the Land Court. In the Taupo district you cannot get the drink so easily.

36. Are you acquainted with Chief Te Heu Heu?—Yes.

37. Is the man Blake at Tokaanu a half-caste?—No, he is a European.

38. The house at Tokaanu is frequented both by Natives and by tourists?—Yes.

39. Do you think there is any more drunkenness at Tokaanu than there is in the King-country?—I think there is less.

40. And that fact impresses you in favour of licensed houses. Is that so?—Yes, it certainly does.

41. *Mr. R. McKenzie.*] You consider that licenses will benefit both Natives and Europeans?—It is better to have licenses, unless you can keep the drink away altogether.

42. Do you think there are illicit stills at work in the King-country?—No, they can take the drink up into the country on pack-horses from Alexandra or from Kihikihi.

43. You consider it impossible for the police to stop the sly-grog selling which goes on?—I say it is quite impossible.

44. Do the police ever get convictions?—Oh, yes. I think at the last raid some fines were imposed of from £15 to £50.

45. You never saw Natives drinking in their own settlements, I think you said?—I said they are temperate in their own settlements.

46. The Natives do not go far from home, do they?—Yes, they do: they sometimes travel right through the district from one settlement to another.

47. What are the occasions they mostly give way to drink; is it at times of deaths or feasts?—It is chiefly when they are gathered together on the occasions of the Land Court sittings.

48. How often does the Land Court sit?—I think about once a year. The sitting lasts sometimes for some months.

49. You say there were four hundred men (Europeans) working in the bush: What work were they doing?—Felling the bush and road-making.

50. Those men are not permanent settlers?—No.

51. Do you think that, if the Natives were given the right of referendum, they would support the granting of licenses?—Yes.

52. And Europeans would do the same?—Yes.

53. You think that licenses would be carried there?—Yes; the Natives are anxious for licenses to be granted as a means of doing away with the sly-grog selling as it is now carried on.

54. Do you think if there were more police they could keep down the sly-grog selling?—No, I am sure they could not.

55. Would not a stricter enforcement of the law put a stop to the evil?—Well, all I can say is there were about fifty convictions last year, and still sly-grog selling goes on.

56. Is it the Natives who carry on the sly-grog selling?—Yes, and the Europeans too.

57. *Mr. Colvin.*] If there is no illicit distillery, how do you account for the stuff selling at 7s. 6d. per gallon?—It is supplied from Auckland.

58. Well, this Auckland must be a very bad place. At any rate, are you in favour of temperance yourself?—Yes, and at one time I was not in favour of licenses in the King-country; but now I think it would be an advantage to have them.

59. The liquor should be sold under proper control?—Yes, I am of that opinion.

60. *Mr. E. McKenzie.*] Are you a member of any temperance society or association?—No.

61. *Mr. Thompson.*] I understand you to say that there is a good deal of drinking in the King-country: is that among both the races, or is the one race worse than the other?—I consider the Natives there generally very temperate.

62. Do you see people in the King-country the worse for drink?—Yes.
63. There is a good deal of sly-grog selling there?—Yes; but it is not so much the quantity of drink as the bad spirits which are sold. The stuff drives the drinkers nearly mad.
64. This is in both races. Is one race as bad as the other?—Yes.
65. *Mr. Hall.*] Is it your opinion that this desire for the granting of licenses within the King-country comes from the Natives themselves?—Yes, I think so.
66. Have you heard any of them express their opinion why?—Well, they say it would tend to put down sly-grog selling.
67. Do they look upon this as a benefit to themselves or to Europeans as well?—It is thought that licenses would be to the general good—to Europeans as well as to Natives.
68. But the desire has come on account of the demoralising effect of the present state of affairs on the Natives themselves?—The head chiefs in the King-country see that their tribes are drinking now, and they are of opinion that licenses will be a means of lessening the evil.
69. The chiefs would rather that liquor was purchased outside their own country than in it. Is that the position?—Yes.
70. Are there any boarding-houses in the King-country?—Yes, at Te Kuiti and at Otorohanga.
71. Are hotels required for accommodation?—Yes.
72. You think more accommodation-houses are required?—Yes.
73. Is it your opinion that licensed hotels would give better accommodation?—Yes, they would be then under police control, and that would be something of an advantage.
74. Is it your opinion that the present agitation comes from a want of accommodation-houses or from the want of drink in the King-country?—There is a desire for licenses as a means of getting rid of sly-grog selling. The sly-grog selling has given rise to a demand for a change from the present state of affairs.
75. From your experience of the Natives or from conversations with them, do you think they would be willing to vote on the question of license or no license in conjunction with the Europeans or separately?—I believe they would prefer to vote in conjunction with the Europeans.
76. And it is your sincere belief that the granting of licenses in the King-country would lessen the drinking evil. Is that so?—Yes.
77. *Mr. Rhodes.*] You are satisfied that the majority in the King-country do wish for licenses?—Yes.
78. *Mr. Hall.*] Is it within your knowledge that large quantities of liquor come from Auckland into the King-country?—Yes, I have seen it coming through in packing-cases.
79. *Mr. Rhodes.*] It is liquor of a very inferior quality?—Yes.
80. *Mr. Lawry.*] Is it true that travellers have been refused accommodation in the accommodation-houses at Te Kuiti and at Otorohanga?—Yes, because there were suspicions that they were spies.
81. And has prohibition in the King-country been the means of creating spies?—Yes.
82. You are certain?—Yes.
83. *Mr. Rhodes.*] If the Natives thought that the police could prevent sly-grog selling, then, do you think they would still wish to have licenses?—The Natives know very well that it is impossible to prevent it.
84. It is merely that the liquor should be brought under some control that they desire to have licenses?—Yes.
85. *Mr. Lang.*] I understood you to say that you had had about twenty years' experience in the King-country?—Yes.
86. You are a Justice of the Peace, are you not?—Yes.
87. I want to know whether there was any move on the part of the inhabitants of the King-country in opposition to allowing the Natives a right to vote on the license question?—I have not heard of any move against it.
88. You know the boundaries of the district well?—Yes.
89. You consider it impossible to prevent liquor being taken into the district?—It is, as I have said, quite impossible.
90. Could you give the Committee any idea of the number of miles that the boundary of the King-country would extend to?—I should say about a hundred miles.
91. And sly-grog selling is going on to a very large extent, even at the present time?—Yes.
92. You know the portion of the Waikato electorate that now has licenses?—Yes.
93. Do you remember a case of sly-grog selling in that part?—No.
94. You spoke of a place named Whatiwhathioe, near Alexandra (about three miles away), and you told us that there was a licensed house at Alexandra. Now, are the Natives at Whatiwhathioe inclined to drink because of the nearness of a licensed house? What is their condition there?—They are not more inclined to drink. You seldom see much drinking there.
95. They are not in a worse position on account of the nearness of a licensed house to their settlement?—No.
96. *The Chairman.*] Do you mean that a hundred miles is the whole extent of the borderline of the King-country, in answer to the question put by Mr. Lang just now?—I meant that a hundred miles was the extent of the interior boundary, not the coastal boundary.
97. It would be nearer four times a hundred if you take the whole area of the prohibited country?—Oh, yes; it would be more like three hundred miles.
98. The position seems to be this: It is not so much that the Natives are asking for licenses, but rather that, having tried prohibition, in their opinion it has not answered, and hence they desire some change. They find that drinking this vile stuff has got to such a rampant stage that a change is very desirable. Is not that the case?—Yes; they want some alteration.

99. Where does most of this sly-grog selling go on?—Well, I believe there are seven sly-grog places at Kawhia.

100. You said something about accommodation-houses at Te Kuiti. What accommodation do travellers get there?—The house has good accommodation.

101. I believe the house there is second to nothing of its kind in the colony?—Yes; it is a splendid house.

102. In your opinion is it a well-conducted house?—Yes; very well conducted.

103. It is conducted by a half-caste?—Yes.

104. And the man's wife is also a half-caste?—Yes.

105. *Mr. R. McKenzie.*] Do you think that these boarding-house owners or keepers put the buildings up with the intention of getting a license in the future?—No; I do not think so. One of these houses has been up for the last ten years, and at that time there was no possibility or prospect of getting a license.

106. Do you think the owners of these houses are supporting the present license agitation in the hope of getting a license?—No; I do not. I think it is the general wish of the community that there should be a change in favour of license.

107. Do you think that houses controlled by Government officers would be better than those conducted by private persons?—They could not be better conducted, some of them, than they were at the present time by private persons.

108. But of course you will see that there would be no inducement to Government officers to make people drink. Considering that there are so many Natives about in these parts, would it not be better to have Government conductors of the houses?—I would not like to offer any opinion on that.

109. *The Chairman.*] You are aware that liquor can be taken into the King-country at the present time without breaking the law?—Yes; I believe that is so.

110. A man is allowed to have two gallons in his possession at a time as the law stands at present, I think?—Yes; I believe that is the case, or something like that.

111. *Mr. Lawry.*] Are there any travelling sellers of grog in the King-country?—Well, I do not know about that; but I have seen Natives travelling with bottles of grog in their pockets.

112. *Mr. Arnold.*] Do you consider that, after this Committee has heard the evidence, it will be able to judge as to the advisableness of introducing liquor into the King-country?—It is impossible to answer that question properly. If the Committee hears true evidence, it should be able to judge the question.

113. Although the majority of the Committee have never been in the King-country?—Yes; that is, provided they hear reliable evidence.

114. I suppose that hundreds of people have been in the King-country, and to-day are scattered throughout different parts of New Zealand?—Well, I do not think so. Comparatively very few know the country.

115. Do you not think it quite possible that the great majority of the six thousand or seven thousand who signed the petition in the South are, by hearsay at least, familiar with the condition of things in the King-country?—It is doubtful if many of those people would have signed the petition if they had seen the state of the country for themselves. Some of them might have been in dead opposition to the petition if they had been in the country.

116. You do not think that those who signed could have known anything about it?—No.

117. Really you do not know anything about those who signed in favour of no licenses in the King-country?—No.

118. *Mr. Lawry.*] Is there a tourist route in the King-country?—No, not now.

119. Very few people go into the King-country unless they have business there?—That is so; a few might go there to see the caves.

120. But there are very few tourists through the country?—None.

121. So that you would say that the country is very little known to outsiders?—Yes, very little. It is only within the last few years that any numbers of Europeans have gone into the King-country.

122. How often does the train go through?—Twice a week. It reaches Otorohanga at 4.30 p.m.

123. Are there many passengers?—Yes.

124. Both Europeans and Natives?—Yes.

125. In what part of the King-country is settlement extending most rapidly?—Between Otorohanga, down the west coast, to Kawhia and Mokau.

126. Is there a direct route to the settlement?—Yes.

127. And a graded road?—Yes.

128. Is there a lot of land coming under settlement soon?—Yes, about 60,000 acres at the end of this year.

129. Do you know anything about Awakino?—Yes; from there down to the Mokau settlement is extending rapidly.

130. *Mr. Rhodes.*] Do you know the proportion of the population—that is, of whites to Maoris—in the King-country?—There are about five or six thousand Natives to some thousand whites.

131. That is about six to one?—Yes. At the end of this year the population will be much larger.

132. *The Chairman.*] You really do not know the number of inhabitants, Natives and Europeans?—No; the great number of Europeans working on the roads, the railway, and bushfelling makes it difficult to estimate.

133. *Mr. R. McKenzie.*] Do you know of any prosecution for sending liquor into the King-country to be sold?—I have not heard of any.

134. Have you heard whether the merchants in Auckland or anywhere else sent the liquor?—No; but I have seen jars of whisky and rum in long packing cases going up into the King-country.

TUESDAY, 18TH SEPTEMBER, 1900.

Mr. ELLIS examined.

The Chairman: This meeting has been particularly called to-day for the purpose of hearing evidence from Mr. Ellis and Mr. Isitt. The Committee will be very pleased to hear any information you can give us in connection with this licensing in the King-country, Mr. Ellis. It is a question agitating not only the Government, but the whole country, at the present time; and the object of the Committee is, if possible, to bring about some solution of the difficulty—at any rate, to be in a position to assist the Government in arriving at a solution of the difficulty.

1. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] How long have you been in the King-country?—I have been in the King-country for twenty-six years.

2. Did you know it when there were any licenses there?—There have never been any licenses in the King-country.

3. You were there when the Maoris first asked for prohibition?—Yes; long before that.

4. Was there much drunkenness in the country then?—No; apparently no drunkenness whatever.

5. How long is it since the Maoris first petitioned against the sale of it?—I suppose about 1883 was when it really commenced.

6. And do you think that it could have been stopped at that time if proper measures had been taken?—Yes, I think so, if certain measures had been taken. The Maoris asked for prohibition, and subsequently the prohibiting of liquor coming into the country, and the confiscation of the liquor which was coming up by train. They found that prohibition did not go far enough. I was speaking to Mr. A. Ormsby lately, and he said they thought they had done all that was required of them, and that the Government took no notice of the request that liquor should be stopped coming into the country.

7. Is he a Native?—He is a half-caste, and was the local representative with C. O. Davis and T. B. Hill when the second petition asking for prohibition was signed, in 1884.

8. You think, then, that if proper measures had been taken at that time this trouble would not have occurred?—Yes.

9. It is pretty generally stated, Mr. Ellis, that there are fearful scenes there with drunkenness; do you know of anything of that sort?—Yes, I have seen drunkenness there; but, of course, it has been grossly overcoloured; there is no doubt about that. The liquor and prohibition parties, of course, make us out worse than we are.

10. Have you seen scenes as bad where there are publichouses?—Yes, very much worse. At the time I lived at Kihikihi, on the borders of the King-country, it was the headquarters of the navvies when the railway was commenced, and of the Land Court, which was sitting there at the time, and I have seen it so bad that you could not drive through there, except at walking-pace, for fear of running over people.

11. The Land Court was sitting at the time. Were the Natives drunk?—Yes, very drunk at times; the Land Court had several times to stop sitting on account of it.

12. Has the Land Court stopped sitting at any time in the King-country?—No; although there has been an almost continuous Land Court there for the past twelve years there has not been a single instance of the Court having to adjourn for that cause. I lately asked Judge Mair, who has been presiding at Land Courts for some months past at Te Kuiti and Otorohanga, how the drinking-habits of the Maoris in the King-country compared with those of other districts he had held Courts in? He replied that he had seen hardly any drinking, and could only remember having seen one drunken Maori since he had been in the district.

13. You know Mr. Batley, of Moawhango?—Yes.

14. I think this place, Moawhango, is in something of the same condition as the King-country?—I think that the state of things at Moawhango should not be compared with the King-country, where there is not much settlement yet.

15. Do you know if there has been any license in Moawhango?—Yes, there was one for a short time; the sly-grog selling was so bad there that the inhabitants advocated a license to stop the drinking and the sly-grog trade, as many are now doing in the King-country. The result was so much the opposite to what they expected that they got the license cancelled at the first opportunity. Mr. Batley, the owner of the house that was used as an hotel, told me a few days ago that, although he was only getting £1 a week for the house now, he would not again lease it for the same purposes at £10 a week, as the state of things was so much worse under license. We have always had from three to six hundred of the navy class in the King-country, and we have them still.

16. Of course, they will not always be there?—No; as the railway moves on they will go with it. I am anxious that the power of voting should be put off until we have a more settled population.

17. Do you think if the Natives had a vote now that they would vote for liquor?—I think so.

18. Why do you think so?—I do not think they are particularly anxious to have the liquor, but they think the present state of things is a reflection on them—that they are being treated like children; and this feeling, I think, is at the bottom of it. I may say that all the leading chiefs in the King-country are dead; there are no commanding Native chiefs.

19. Then, the old chiefs who first started prohibition are dead?—Yes.
20. *Mr. Colvin.*] You are in favour of prohibition in the King-country?—Yes; I am in favour of prohibition.
21. You think it would not be safe to open the country and put it under proper control. Do you think it would be better to have liquor not prohibited, and the sly-grog selling at present done away with, and the liquor, which would be under proper control, sold in the hotels under police supervision?—Judging from what I have seen, I think it would not be better than the present unsatisfactory state of affairs: I have seen such a terrible amount of drunkenness among the Maoris at Kihikihi. Of course, I am speaking of ordinary licensed houses.
22. Then the sly-grog selling is as bad as it is made out to be, by the outrages that have happened there?—I think, not at all. The King-country Natives as a whole are not a drunken lot. The Europeans more often cause the drunken scenes.
23. You think that the Prohibitionists' party have made the matter out bigger than it is?—Yes. In the past they have had an object in showing that the police were not trying to enforce prohibition. I appeared before the Police Commission, and said so.
24. You think that a great deal of it is due to Europeans in the district—to the Europeans and the navvies engaged on the public works?—There is no doubt about that.
25. Have you written a letter to the *Auckland News*?—Yes; I wrote to the *Herald*.
26. In it you say that, if liquor was allowed into the country, it should be under the Gothenburg system?—No; a modified system of the Gothenburg. The local bodies might control it, or a private company, if it was thought objectionable to have direct Government control.
27. Is it true that the Natives go about with bottles?—There have been cases of that sort.
28. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] Are you aware if it is bad liquor that is sold in the King-country?—I have heard so.
29. *Mr. Rhodes.*] You say that all the old chiefs are dead; when living, had they much control over the Natives?—Undoubtedly.
30. There is no one they listen to now?—Practically, no one.
31. A younger generation has taken their place: there are chiefs?—Yes; but some of the greatest chiefs are the greatest toppers as well.
32. Are there many policemen in the King-country?—Yes; three. We had only one before.
33. Is it a large district?—Yes; a very large district.
34. Are three policemen enough for the purpose of preventing sly-grog selling?—They seem unable to prevent it; but I do not know that thirty would be much more useful.
35. Is it your opinion that no number of policemen could prevent it?—I do not think the police could suppress it without good legislation to assist them—legislation prohibiting liquor from coming into the country. You can get ten cases of liquor up there, and unload it before a policeman, and he cannot prevent you from doing so. I think the buyer of sly-grog should be just as liable to a penalty as the seller.
36. *Mr. Lawry.*] I suppose there is no man in the Rohe-Potae more familiar with the King-country than you are: I suppose you know as much as anybody? Did I understand you to say that the population was a floating population?—No; I said there was a very large floating population.
37. You think, apart from the Natives, that the European population of the King-country does not deserve some consideration of the rights of citizenship?—We vote on the matter as it is.
38. Would you be willing to leave the matter to a *plébiscite* of the Waikato—that is, taking the whole district represented by Mr. Lang?—Yes.
39. You would be quite satisfied to allow the people to decide this question?—Yes.
40. What—by the bare majority; No; in licensing matters, I am in favour of the three-fifths majority.
41. Why not the bare majority?—I suppose you mean a special vote taken for that one special purpose?
42. Yes?—I should fight very hard against ordinary licenses going into the King-country. If you had that you might just as well have a bare-majority vote for the whole colony.
43. I want a straight answer to my question: you are in favour of a three-fifths-majority vote?—Yes.
44. You referred just now to a disgraceful scene you saw in Kihikihi?—Yes.
45. Were there any King-country Natives present on that occasion?—Yes, there were King Natives.
46. Supposing you had an absolute-majority vote that prohibited the consumption of liquor in the King-country, what is to hinder the people of the King-country going to Alexandra, Te Awamutu, and Kihikihi to get drunk?—Nothing at all.
47. How far is Whatiwhatihoe from Pirongia?—Two or three miles.
48. Do they go there and get drunk?—It is quite possible.
49. Is there a Native settlement about three miles from the railway-bridge, along the river?—Yes.
50. If they want to drink there is nothing to hinder them going over the railway-bridge to Te Awamutu?—Certainly not.
51. You say there was no hotel within the boundary of the King-country; is there one at Tokaanu?—Yes; I forgot Tokaanu.
52. Any drunkenness there?—I do not know much of Tokaanu.
53. Is there a hotel at Mangaweka?—Yes.
54. Do you think the gentleman referred to knew anything about the effects of liquor?—*Mr. Batley*? yes.
55. Do you know under what conditions the so-called compact was made?—No, I do not know; but I suppose a great deal of it was private.

56. Are you aware that the chief objection of the two great chiefs of the time, Wahanui and Rewi, was because of these orgies that took place at the Land Court?—That was their chief objection.

57. Are you aware that the first petition contained reference to anything except liquor?—The first petition did, certainly.

58. What?—Well, there were a lot of things down in the first petition with regard to the land. The same petition, asking for prohibition, also contained conditions that their land should be neither leased nor sold.

59. The first petition did?—Yes; but I do not know that the second petition did.

60. Would you like to see the petitions?—Yes; I would like to see them.

Mr. Lawry: Perhaps they had better be put in, Mr. Chairman.

61. *Mr. Lawry*.] You are quite sure that one of the petitions contained the two important conditions that the land should never be sold or leased?—Yes.

62. Do you think that it is right that the Prohibitionists should agitate over the liquor question and not on the land question?—Well, you do not accept my statement that the second, or prohibition, petition contained nothing about the land.

63. Were you at Otorohanga when Mr. Cadman, as Native Minister, made a statement to the Natives?—I do not remember.

64. Do you not remember that you had charge of the telegraph department, and telegraphed the speech away?—I have no recollection of it.

65. Well, I know you did, because I handed it to you myself. Are you aware that Mr. Cadman promised to remove the embargo?—Yes; it is coming back to me now.

66. Was Wahanui present at that meeting?—Yes; he was almost sure to be.

67. What was the date of that meeting?—It would be about March, 1896.

68. Are you aware that at that meeting Wahanui stated publicly that the Natives themselves had made a mistake in asking for prohibition in the King-country?—No; I do not recollect it.

69. You have already stated that the Native race is in favour of removing this embargo. Was it right to say whether they should have it?—Yes, and they would vote for it.

70. Are you aware that Mr. Cadman and myself, together with Mr. Wilkinson, called on Rewi at his private residence, and that he indorsed everything that had been done and said at that meeting, it was so important?—I have no personal knowledge of it.

71. Had the Natives a right to petition when they did?—Certainly they had.

72. Well, where is the difference the one from the other?—We are in the position of guardians to the Native race, or ought to be.

73. You think they have the right to ask for a vote on this subject and no right to ask for the removal of prohibition; you cannot grant it in one case and not in the other?—They have a right to ask for its removal.

74. Do you know what the frontier-line is—the length of it?—No.

75. The whole length of the frontier that includes the prohibition area?—I do not know the southern boundary; I know the northern boundary.

76. Say, for the sake of argument, that it goes nearly as far as Karioi?—I think it is to the east of Karioi.

77. Do you think that it is three hundred miles?—Yes, it is getting on that way.

78. What effect do you think three policemen would have in keeping liquor out of that area?—I thought we were speaking of the King-country; there are more policemen than three in that area.

79. In your opinion, it would be an impossibility for the law to keep liquor out of the King-country?—It would help the police very considerably if no liquor was allowed to be brought in.

80. What effect are the fines having?—An unsatisfactory effect; in some cases most effective and in other cases no effect at all.

81. Some of the big men can stand it?—Yes.

82. The fines are not greater in amount than licenses would be?—No; that was the objection. There would be a raid, and then no raid for a year or more afterwards; it is just the same as a license-fee.

83. What would be the difference if the Magistrates had power to imprison instead of fining?—I suppose it would affect some of them more, and would drive the trade into the hands of a lower class.

84. You are well acquainted with Mr. Wilkinson, Native Interpreter?—Yes.

85. Do you know what his opinion is on this question?—I believe it is in favour of the introduction of liquor into the King-country.

86. He is in a position to know?—Yes.

87. He has a large acquaintanceship with the Native race?—Yes, at Otorohanga.

88. You have an estate near Awakino?—Yes.

89. Do you know John Elliott?—Yes.

90. He is a Justice of the Peace?—Yes.

91. Do you know what his opinions are?—I should say in favour of liquor being introduced.

92. What is your opinion of the wishes of the Awakino settlers as a whole?—I do not know exactly. I expect a majority of them are in favour of liquor, but we have little settled population. Awakino is a little outside of the King-country.

93. Did I understand you to say that if liquor was prohibited—that is, if the admission of liquor was absolutely prohibited—there would be nothing to prevent the Natives living on the margins of the prohibited lands from going to Cambridge?—Nothing whatever.

94. Then, would you go so far as to support a law to shut up these hotels on the boundary-lines?—The law already provides for it, if the people are in favour of it.

95. Such as the clause prohibiting the sale of liquor to a Native woman?—On my last trip to Otorohanga by train I saw two King-country women at Te Awamutu Railway-station in such a disgraceful state of drunkenness that I was surprised that they were allowed on the train, and there is no sly-grog selling in that district.

96. It has not had the effect of stopping the sale of liquor to Native women?—Only in degree.

97. *Mr. Rhodes.*] Can you speak as to the quality of the liquor in the King-country?—I had a discussion with a man on the train on the way down, and he had had three drinks—laager beer the first, Gaelic whisky the second, and English beer for the third. He said “he had been treated very well.” I believe that Gaelic whisky is the favourite liquor up there.

98. Then the liquor is of very fair quality?—Yes, I believe so. I do not believe it to be very inferior.

99. We have heard that whisky was 7s. 6d. per gallon?—I have not heard that; it might have been so when there was a still there.

100. Then there was a still there?—There was one when the tunnel was in course of construction; but I do not think that an illicit still exists now. I do not think there has ever been one worthy of the name.

101. As far as your knowledge goes, the liquor is of good or fair quality?—Yes.

102. *The Chairman.*] You know Mr. Ngata?—No; I have not met him.

103. You have heard of him?—Yes.

104. You cannot say of your knowledge whether he was sent to report or not?—No, I cannot.

105. Do you know yourself whether the chiefs who petitioned for prohibition petitioned for the establishment of licenses before they died—that is, for the sale of liquor?—I think they did; but they never brought these petitions before me.

106. I suppose you know that section 25 of the “Alcoholic Liquors Sale Control Act, 1895,” protects Native women in the King-country?—No, I did not know that.

107. Still, of course, it is only the sale to women in hotels. Are the women more drunken there than in any other localities?—I am inclined to think that they drink less.

107A. Do you know whether sly-grog selling is carried on to any great extent in the boarding-houses?—Yes; it is.

108. Do you think that convictions for sly-grog selling have been a deterrent for it, or the opposite?—Undoubtedly, a deterrent. Some of those fined have stopped absolutely.

109. Do you know the King-country well? What is about the number of the Native population and the European population in that particular part of the King-country that is prohibited, or, rather, supposed to be prohibited?—I think, roughly, that the Native population would be two thousand, European population about the same—of course, allowing for the navvies and other labourers in the district.

110. What is the general habit of the Waikatos: are they a more sober lot than the other tribes?—I do not know that I am in a position to speak on that point.

111. Have you ever heard that the King Natives were the most drunken tribe in New Zealand?—Yes; I have heard that, but I did not agree with it.

112. Is there no provision as to the quantity of liquor a man may have in his possession in the King-country?—Yes; I believe there is something to that effect, but, judging by the quantity taken up, it does not seem to have had much effect.

113. Then, in your opinion, it would be worse to admit liquor than that the present state of affairs should be allowed to go as it is?—I am in favour of a Prohibition Act that would help to prohibit. I think the present position of affairs is very unsatisfactory.

114. Then, if you altered the present law, you would have to take a vote of the people?—No; I do not think that advisable.

115. Then, how would you treat these people in that locality: differently to any others? You must amend the law to do so?—To place them on an equality with the rest of the people in the colony you would require to alter the law, so that if an increase in licenses was carried in the Waikato Licensing District as a whole the increase could take place in the part of the district known as the King-country; that is the only alteration that would be required.

116. Do you think it is fair to have one little spot blocked? Is it your opinion that it would be unwise to give people in that locality the opportunity of saying “Yes” or “No”?—Well, I have already stated that I should like it deferred until we have a more settled population. The people who would settle it now have no interest in the district.

117. Then, the two thousand is a floating population?—Yes; it is chiefly a floating population.

118. But the King-country have had the power to vote for an increase or otherwise; the King-country is part of a licensing district, is it not?—Yes; of course, we have always voted on the licensing question for increase or to remain the same, the same as other districts.

119. You have that now?—If the electorate voted for increase it would not apply to the King country. The King-country gives a much larger vote for increases than the rest of the Waikato.

120. You are not certain whether the petition asking for prohibition also asked for the prohibition of land-selling?—I feel absolutely certain in my own mind that there were two distinct petitions—the first, in 1883, from the Ngatimaniapoto tribe *re* land, liquor, and other matters; the second, in 1884, originating from the Temperance party, and only referring to the prohibition of the sale of liquor in the King-country. I am quite sure on that point.

121. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] You spoke of the population there being two thousand, and described the European population as a floating population?—Yes; chiefly a floating population. There are a number of men belonging to your department there.

122. Yes, we have about three hundred there?—Yes, and they have their wives and children there.

123. You do not infer that the Natives are below the average in intelligence? Do you think they would express a fair opinion upon any question submitted to them?—Well, up to the present they have had no right.

124. Do you think they are capable of expressing an opinion, Yes or No, if you give them the right to judge as to the best man to represent them in Parliament? Do you think they are competent to express an opinion upon the licensing question?—Well, you do not give them manhood suffrage, and place them on an equality with whites in other matters.

125. But, seeing that they have this right to elect their members, are they sufficiently intelligent to express an opinion: have they the knowledge of right or wrong (for their interest or against) to have the liquor in the King-country?—Yes, I think so.

126. You think they are competent to say if they should have licenses or not?—Yes, I think so; but I do not know why the Natives of the King-country should be picked out and treated differently in this matter.

127. We are only speaking of the locality from which you come. You do not know if the Natives in your own district consider they are competent to exercise a judicious vote upon this question? It is not a question of giving licenses, it is whether they are capable of expressing an intelligent opinion upon the question?—Yes, I think so. I think Maoris of the King-country are capable of expressing an intelligent opinion upon the question; they are exceptionally intelligent.

128. You would say the same of the European population, who represent about the same number?—Yes, I would say so.

129. We have only three hundred there?—I thought you had about four hundred. With women and children that would bring it up to a thousand, together with those employed by the Roads Department?

130. Do you think they are men of intelligence, who would express an opinion which they considered in the interest of the district?—I have already said that if a vote was taken they would be favourable to the introduction of liquor.

131. You desire to alter the present state of affairs: you are not satisfied with the present state of affairs?—No.

132. Do you know what has been done?—Yes.

133. Inspector Cullen is a capable officer?—He has done more than any one else.

134. He has taken effective steps to prevent the sale of sly-grog?—Well, not very effectively.

135. He has taken every reasonable precaution to prevent the sale of sly-grog?—Well, just at present the police are very active. Just lately thirty-three summonses have been issued for sly-grog selling; about a month previous, fifty.

136. There were some cases three years ago?—Yes, and there have been some since, but more recently.

137. You say this has a deterrent effect on the sale of sly-grog?—Undoubtedly.

138. Have you any suggestions to make as to how the working-methods should be improved?—Yes; I have already stated that the buyer should be equally fined with the seller, and the taking of liquor for sale into the country should be prohibited.

139. Do you think, assuming it is a question for the people living in the district to decide, to have a certain number of houses under restriction and supervision and so on, would be better as compared with the present system?—Yes, it would be very effectual if conducted under a proper system, such as the Gothenburg.

140. You refer to drinking among the Natives when the Land Court was sitting?—Yes; I have several times seen the Land Court stop sitting because practically all Maoris interested were drunk in Kihikihi; that is where the Land Court started, outside the King-country. I am speaking of twelve years ago.

141. At the present time is that the case?—No; at that time the railway had just started, and the navy was there as well.

142. That was twelve years ago, and, apparently, the administration of the law has stopped that?—No; as the work extended the navy went away.

143. You consider him to have been the cause of the drinking?—Yes, largely.

144. I am not, myself, acquainted with the boundaries of the King-country, but the difficulty of preventing liquor from coming over what you call the frontier would be very great?—Undoubtedly.

145. You say sly-grog selling is decreasing now?—Yes; things are not so bad as they were.

146. Do you think it could be reasonably expected that it could be stopped?—I think a more determined attempt could be made to stop it.

147. What methods would you adopt to stop it?—Preventing liquor from coming into the country. I would not think it advisable to stop people getting it up for personal consumption, but not for other purposes. I would limit the amount. People could take in a certain amount for their own consumption.

148. *The Chairman.*] You know Captain Jackson, Mr. Dyer, and Mr. Wilkinson: well, I suppose they have been a good deal through the King-country?—Captain Jackson has been up to one or two Old-age Pension Courts. I do not know that Mr. Dyer has actually been in the King-country. He lived in Kihikihi for a time.

149. You stated just now that if the people had a vote they would vote for the introduction of liquor; do you mean they would vote for Government control?—Yes; I mean that they would vote for such control.

150. Would vote for control?—Yes; I am quite satisfied on that.

151. Do you know of your own knowledge that the Native population are anxious for

some control other than that at the present time?—Yes ; I have already explained that they think the present position reflects upon their ability to behave themselves.

152. *Mr. Lawry.*] You referred to the action of Mr. Cullen before he was Inspector ; do you approve of the method he adopted for procuring convictions?—I do not think I should like to do as he did, but it is the only method you can adopt to get a conviction.

153. Do you not object to that system?—I object to it personally.

154. Do you think it is justifiable on any ground? Do you not think that a man who would tell a lie to get evidence will tell a bigger lie for a conviction?—He might.

155. You say that there have been thirty summonses issued ; are we to take that as evidence that there were thirty people summoned?—No ; last time there were fifty summonses and only fifteen accused—several summonses against one person.

156. Is it not a fact that sly-grog selling in the Rohe-Potae has spread throughout the length and breadth of the country?—Yes.

157. Well, supposing that the Natives and Europeans decided in favour of liquor in the country, there would be four or five hotels—one at Kawhia, Otorohanga, Te Kuiti, and Mokau ; that is, instead of having fifty sly-grog shops, you would have four or five hotels. If there were an hotel establishment somewhere at Kawhia, do you not suppose the hotel would be a great check on the sly-grog selling?—It would, in a way.

158. Would it not be to the publican's interest to put a check on sly-grog sellers generally?—Yes ; but I expect sly-grog sellers would take care to buy their liquor from him.

159. You wish to make it quite clear to the Committee that Europeans should be allowed to take liquor into the King-country in small quantities for their own individual use?—I do not propose any alteration in the law in that respect.

160. Do you not think that if hotels were established, especially at Otorohanga, that you would not see such drunken scenes when the chief Land Court was sitting as you saw at Kihikihi?—Perhaps not.

161. Do you remember when the Native Land Court was sitting at Cambridge?—Yes ; I have been there.

162. You will remember reading about the fearful scenes of intoxication there, and who was responsible?—I know there were licensed houses there.

163. Do you not think it was the "land-sharks" grabbing the land from the Natives, and bribing them with drink? Were they not bribed with drink and bad tobacco?—I think some of them turned their money into liquor.

164. *Mr. Lang.*] I want to speak now only of the question of the Waikato. When you were speaking of the population of Natives in the King-country, was that in the Waikato electorate?—No ; I was referring to the prohibited portion of the Waikato.

165. What is the Native population, roughly speaking, of the part of the King-country included in the Waikato electorate?—About one thousand seven hundred.

166. Between the European and Maori population I suppose there is not a great deal of difference?—Not much difference, I should think.

167. You spoke of the European population as about two thousand, and, in reply to another question, spoke of a floating population. Have you any idea as to how many men are working on the railway-works?—Well, Mr. Hall-Jones said three hundred ; I should have thought that there was nearly four hundred.

Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.] Six months ago there was not one hundred.

168. *Mr. Lawry.*] You could not say whether there are more Natives in the licensed part than in the prohibited part of the Waikato?—Roughly, I should say they are fairly evenly divided.

169. I suppose the King-country is bound to become settled by Europeans, and will be placed in the same position as the other part of the electorate—that is, a vote should be taken on the whole of the Waikato, the same as in any other part of the colony?—The vote is now taken in the King-country the same as in the rest of the colony. There is no doubt but that the other part will always vote against an increase.

170. If a vote was taken, would you confine it to the Europeans, or the Maoris and Europeans both?—Well, the Maoris are as much interested as the Europeans.

171. There is a good deal of sly-grog selling going on in the King-country?—Yes.

172. Have you ever heard of any sly-grog selling in the licensed part of the Waikato?—No, I do not think I have.

173. The tendency of the granting of licenses, then, would be to do away with sly-grog selling?—Undoubtedly. If we had licenses there would be less sly-grog selling.

174. *Mr. Colvin.*] Do you think that people unacquainted with the King-country can give a fair opinion of the matter of sly-grog selling in the King-country? For instance, do you think that people living on the West Coast, where they are nearly all Good Templars, and so forth, could do so? Can Mr. Isitt give a fair expression of opinion?—Yes, if the facts are put before them fairly.

175. You have already stated that the prohibition question has been made bigger than it really was. Have you seen what the Prohibitionists have written lately?—I have not seen what the Prohibitionists have written for some months.

176. Do you think a person living in the King-country can give a far better opinion than people living in other parts of the colony?—Yes.

177. Then the petitioners from Christchurch, and Dunedin, and other parts of the colony should not have much knowledge of what is going on in the King-country?—I suppose their action arises from a desire to protect the Native race.

178. *The Chairman.*] Do you know, Mr. Ellis, whether the Natives really have prevented the introduction of liquor at any of their Land Courts, and the introduction of liquor to their tangis?—I do not know about their Land Courts ; they have a tangi sometimes.

179. Is it not a fact that they cannot have liquor at any of their *maraes*, or any of them?—In some particular districts.

The Chairman: I understood Mr. Ngata to say that it was not admitted to any of their *maraes*.

180. *Mr. Lawry*.] Are you aware what Mr. Ngata's opinions are on this question?—I do not know. I judge from his speeches that he takes the same side of the question as I do myself.

181. Would you attach any value to his opinions?—Yes.

182. He is a gentleman of high erudition?—Yes.

183. Up beyond Te Awamutu he virtually denounced the people who are giving the Natives the right to vote. You are aware that Mr. Ngata spoke very strongly against the liquor in the King-country?—Yes.

184. You attach a considerable importance to his opinion: was he in the King-country before?—Yes, I think he was.

185. You attach a great deal of importance to Mr. Ngata's opinions on the question?—I do not know that I have expressed that. I am not capable of valuing them from personal knowledge.

Rev. F. W. ISITT examined.

Mr. Isitt: My knowledge of the King-country dates only from 1896. In September, 1896, I accompanied the Rev. Mr. Gittos to Otorohanga and Te Kuiti, under these circumstances: Wahanui had written to him giving the motives which had induced him to ask for a license after so long opposing it, and he begged Mr. Gittos to come and see him and help him undo the mischief he had done. Mr. Gittos offered me an opportunity to accompany him, and I went. We met Wahanui, Hare Wanonga, Patupatukepa, Hami Kingi, and other Natives. I do not understand Maori. The whole conversation was in Maori, but Mr. Gittos interpreted it as we went along. Wahanui understood more English than he could speak. Hare Wanonga and Patupatukepa each spoke a little English, and Hami Kingi spoke it perfectly. Wahanui listened to Mr. Gittos, and occasionally gave grunts of satisfaction. He told the whole story of the King-country, and went back to the petition of 1883, which, he said, contained signatures of 1,400 Natives, and asked that liquor should not be allowed to enter the King-country when it was opened by Europeans. He spoke of his own opposition to it, and said he had changed his position because of having lent money upon an accommodation-house at Otorohanga, and having been told that he would lose his money unless the house were licensed, but that if it were licensed he would be paid immediately. He expressed very great regret that he had ever deviated from his position, and urged Mr. Gittos to help him undo the mischief he had thus done. The conversation lasted for two hours, and we stayed there for several days, and asked particulars as to the sly-grog selling, &c., from every one whom we could interview, European and Maori. I have been chiefly responsible for the statements made by the Prohibitionists concerning the King-country, and my knowledge was obtained from that visit, from the evidence of many witnesses before the Police Commissions of 1898, at which I led evidence on behalf of the New Zealand Alliance, and from continuous correspondence with residents in the district. At the time of our visit Mr. Gittos addressed public meetings in Otorohanga and Te Kuiti, at which he spoke plainly as to the condition of things resulting from liquor. He made one statement which greatly impressed and shocked me inexpressibly. At each place he said deliberately, both in Maori and in English, that those present knew that there was scarcely a young Maori girl in the district who had not lost her innocence, or a married Maori woman who had not been unspeakably degraded as the result of drink. Though hostile interjections had been repeatedly made during the progress of his addresses, this statement, which evidently made a deep impression, was received in absolute silence. No European or Maori challenged the statement, and I understood that they accepted it as fact. Then, in 1893, when I was asked to conduct the inquiry before the Police Commission in Auckland on behalf of the New Zealand Alliance, I examined probably twenty-five or thirty witnesses, most of whose evidence bore more or less on the King-country. All the policemen available who were or had previously been in the King-country were examined, as well as others who had served in Maori districts where there were licenses, and Messrs. Ellis, Macdonnell, and Wilkinson, Justices of the Peace, all conversant with the King-country. Some of the constables were from the Waikato and other places. The whole evidence went to show that the measure of failure which had existed in the King-country had not been a failure of prohibition, but a grievous failure to prohibit. From the first, when the no-license Proclamation was made, nothing further was compassed than the prohibition of the licensed retail sale within the district. Any Auckland brewer or spirit merchant could at any time have sent liquor in any quantity to residents within the King-country, provided only that the quantity was not less than 2 gallons of any one kind. Any Native could import beer by the hogshead or spirits by the case, the only restriction being that he must not bring himself under the vague and doubtful clause which rendered him liable to the confiscation of his liquor if he gave ground for reasonable suspicion that he used it for illicit sales. When land adjacent to the King-country was thrown open, and publichouses crept to the border of the King-country at Te Awamutu, Kihikihi, and Alexandra, a publican could legally sell a half-pint or a hogshead, a bottle or a case, for a purchaser resident in the King-country to carry it across the border. There was no stipulation made, as in Clutha, that the package containing liquor should bear an outside label stating the fact, and so make it easier for the police to trace it. A liquor merchant or brewer could send canvassers through the district, and appoint agents residing there to receive orders. Neither of these actions would be legal within the Clutha. While wishing to avoid any expression that would sound offensive, I can only say of this defective legislation that it was wilfully persisted in by the Government. Constable Stanyer and others, when giving evidence before the Police Commission, replied to questions on this point by Mr. Poynton, who was evidently impressed with the defects in the legislation. They said that if clause 33 of the Act

of 1895 had been made applicable to the King-country it would have greatly facilitated the work of the police in preventing sly-grog selling. The same answer was given by some of the Justices of the Peace in reply to Mr. Poynton's question; I think it was made by Mr. Ellis and Mr. Wilkinson. The Police Commission, in its own report, made a mild recommendation that the clause should be applied, and for five successive years the Alliance party have urged the Premier to legislate in that direction, but without avail. Several witnesses and Justices of the Peace recommended that the purchasers of illegally sold grog should be subject to penalty as well as the vendor. This was recommended by several constables, and, I think, by Messrs. Ellis, Macdonnell, and Wilkinson, but no notice was taken of the recommendation. For at least five years prior to the 1st December, 1897, Mr. Edward Parry, of Te Kuiti, was allowed to hold a license, in consideration of the sum of £1 per annum paid to the Collector of Customs, to carry on the business of brewer, and to sell in quantities of not less than 2 gallons of beer, ale, and porter made at his brewery at Te Kuiti. Mr. Rose, the Collector of Customs, gave evidence at the Commission that this brewery license was stopped after the 31st January, 1897, because he (Mr. Rose) had seen reports in the newspaper of several convictions of sly-grog selling against Parry, and it seemed to him that Parry was unable to commit this breach of the Act under the cloak of holding a license as a brewer. He stopped it of his own motion, and not because the police had taken any action. A man can hold a license to brew within the Clutha, but not to sell within the district, as could be legally done within the so-called prohibited area of the King-country. Now I want to come back to Wahanui, and the statement made that he was mad at the time he asked that prohibition should be enforced. The statement was made by Kahu Huatere, Wahanui's brother, when addressing the Premier as a member of a deputation on the 3rd of this month. I wired to Mr. Gittos, who replied, "Absolutely untrue," and that the same statement was made concerning Rewi just before his death. Presumably it was made because he also advocated prohibition. Returning again to the failure of prohibition, the defective law was as imperfectly administered. Messrs. Ellis, Macdonnell, and Wilkinson gave evidence at the Police Commission that for many years sly-grog selling was kept in check with a firm hand and held within reasonable limits. That during the most difficult years of enforcement, when the railway-line was being formed, it was held in check, but that when the Natives began to attend the Land Court in large numbers they found one European selling with impunity, and followed his example. Numbers of them began to carry bottles and glasses of grog about the street, while others sold under the guise of what pretended to be butchers' shops. Moerua, addressing the Premier on the 3rd September, gave another reason why sly-grog selling was so rife. He objected to prohibition because, he said, "under it a stigma was cast on the chiefs when, instead of getting their liquor openly, they got it by stealth; and," he added, "a stigma was also cast on pakehas, men of position, officials of the Government, because of their seeking grog by stealth." I should like to put in these sworn declarations as indicating that a change from defective prohibition to sales under license would not benefit the Maoris. [Exhibit A.] All the declarations were sworn except one from a friend of the Rev. Mr. Bennet's, who wrote from Pirongia, and whose letter was published in the *Taranaki News* of the 15th September. [Mr. Isitt offered to get this in the form of a sworn declaration if the Committee desired.] I should be glad to state the grounds on which temperance reformers base their objection to Maoris being supplied with liquor under any system. They know that he is absolutely defenceless against alcohol, whether under license or no license. The system does not matter; if he gets the liquor it will destroy him. To use a phrase much employed of late, he is not in any way so "immune" as the British people are—i.e., comparatively speaking. We claim that they should be protected, because it is the wish of the people of New Zealand that it should be so. The Government and Parliament are both temporary. The people's responsibility to the Maori remains a permanent trust, and the ignominy of failure is theirs. The principle of fatherly care of the Maori has been recognised throughout, especially in regard to the controlling of his own land and in respect to liquor. He is protected by paternal legislation against alienation of his own lands. He is protected as Europeans are in part against liquor. All licensing systems imply that the people must be protected against liquor as they are protected against nothing else; but, it is now proposed that, while the protection of the Maori in respect to land shall be continued, he shall have no special protection against liquor, but share the restrictive liberty in that respect which is granted to the European. We hold that the positions are not equal, that the races cannot be treated alike. Centuries of drinking alcoholic liquors, first in milder form and then in greater strength, have given the British people a comparative immunity from its evil effects, though only comparative. The Maori, on the other hand, was the only aboriginal race of which we know anything which had no alcoholic liquor or intoxicant of any kind. He knew nothing of it until we brought and gave it to him in a strong form, which had grown out of the centuries of our drinking habits. It finds him defenceless. As the Chinese are so inured to typhoid and small-pox that those diseases are with them comparatively mild disorders, as measles are with us, while measles will destroy a Polynesian race; as many Austrians and Hungarians so accustom themselves to the use of arsenic that they can take a dose which would kill twenty other men; so we, as a people, can take alcohol with a comparative impunity that the Maori cannot share. To him it means certain destruction. In all parts of the Empire native races are protected, and under penalties more severe than have been imposed here. Dr. Ashe, in his book on the siege of Kimberley, reports that the publicans broke the law prohibiting the supply of alcohol to the natives, until the first of them was detected and heavily fined and lost his license, on which the others submitted. The *Cape Times* of the 11th June reported that a man named Joffe had been sentenced to twelve months' hard labour without the option of a fine for illicit liquor-dealing in the Transvaal, and another liquor-dealer, a Pretoria liquor merchant named Tiendbirg, had been fined £500 and lost his whole stock of liquor (valued at £3,000) by confiscation for selling a single bottle of grog. The *London Spectator* of the 16th

June, in an article condemning prohibition, added, "We have never maintained that alcohol is equally good for all men, but have urged for years that the negro of all grades, from some peculiarity of his brain, requires total abstinence for at least a century or two as a condition of his civilisation." Without comparing the Maori to the negro, I urge that if the London *Spectator* deems a century or two of prohibition necessary to insure the negro's civilisation, we are justified in asking that the Maori shall be saved from liquor for at least a generation.

186. *The Chairman.*] I suppose you are aware of the fact that the law would have to be considerably amended for absolute prohibition?—Yes; the law seriously needs amending.

187. Do you believe the Maoris of to-day are more sober than they were twenty-five years ago?—I should have thought so; but one of the sworn declarations states that there is more drunkenness now than twenty years ago.

188. *Mr. Lawry.*] I think you said that Wahanui was mad?—Wahanui's brother told the Premier that Wahanui was insane at the time that he (Wahanui) asked for prohibition; and Mr. Gittos said the same statement was made against Rewi when he favoured prohibition. At the time we visited Wahanui he spoke with perfect calmness and perfect memory; it was, I should say, absolutely untrue to say that he was mad at that time.

189. Was he examined as to his sanity by medical men?—No, sir, there was nothing of that sort.

190. I suppose you know that it is very difficult to say whether a man is mad or not?—Yes.

191. Was Mr. Gittos long there that he could speak in this way?—He was there then three or four days.

191A. What is Mr. Gittos?—He is the Wesleyan missionary to the Maoris, residing at Auckland.

191B. Is it part of his duty to visit the King-country?—It is his duty to go to Otorohanga at intervals.

191C. He would often see Wahanui?—Yes.

191D. Evidently Kahu Huatere was not qualified to make the statement as to Wahanui's insanity?—No.

The Chairman: It is impossible for you to say that.

192. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] These documents that you have put in: most of them are sworn declarations. Were they in response to an application from yourself?—Yes.

193. Have you a copy of the letter asking for this information?—I did not bring it, but I shall be glad to produce it. It was a simple statement asking for information.

The Chairman: I think it would be well to have the letter that brought about these statements.

194. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] You visited the King-country in 1896?—Yes.

195. Did you think the Natives intelligent?—Yes. I am not sure that they seemed to me more so than other Maoris; but Wahanui struck me as being very intelligent. I enjoyed my visit, because the Maoris were friendly and intelligent.

196. You found them really an intelligent class of men?—Yes.

197. You do not mean to compare them with the "niggers" you referred to just now?—No; but, with regard to alcohol, they are in worse plight than the negro. The Maori is the only race that had no alcohol until the European brought it to him. He is more defenceless against alcohol than any people on the face of the earth of whom I know anything.

198. Why?—Because he is not inured to it. The negro and the Kaffir have for many generations been accustomed to some form of intoxicant.

199. This is not a question of saying whether liquor shall be admitted to the King-country, but whether it shall be placed in the same position as other parts of the colony, and the Natives have the right to vote Yes or No?—They have no such vote in other parts of the colony.

200. You would not trust the Maoris to vote on this question?—No. I am an extreme Radical, a socialist, but I dare not advocate giving a vote on this question, because, as I have said, centuries of drinking have made alcohol comparatively harmless to us, but the Maoris have never had any liquor of his own until we gave them a highly spirited injurious liquor.

201. Do you think that the Maori, who you say is intelligent, can form an opinion as to whether liquor is good for him or not?—No, I do not think so. Some of the most intelligent Europeans are not able to do so. Intelligence does not save many of our own people from being ruined by drink.

202. You are satisfied that the Natives you have met are an intelligent class of men?—Yes.

203. Do you not think that the effect of taking a poll would be that liquor would not be granted?—It might or it might not, but I think it is a very great mistake for New Zealand to lead the way in giving them the right to say if they shall have it.

204. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] The resolutions that have been carried from time to time and in various parts of the colony, were they carried in response to your request?—At the request of the Alliance executive. The executive submits drafts of resolutions to local committees for approval or amendment. It sends the resolutions as finally approved to its members throughout the colony, and requests them to call meetings and submit the resolutions.

205. You, then, draft the resolutions?—In that way, yes. One reason is that we are dealing with a great many people, some of whom have strong opinions but are not capable of expressing just what they want to say.

206. You draw up forms of motions and petitions and send them to various parts of the colony to adopt them if they approve of them?—Yes.

207. Is this frequently done?—Yes.

208. Wahanui, I understand, and some of the Maori chiefs, expressed a wish for the Otorohanga license to be granted?—Wahanui sent the petition which he headed, and which was signed by some hundred Maoris. He said to Mr. Gittos that he was urged from financial reasons to take the step he did.

209. He was prepared to go to the extent of placing temptation in the way of his race for the sake of money?—Unfortunately. He was prepared to do what many Europeans are prepared to do. Afterwards he wrote to Mr. Gittos to help him to undo the mistake. In September, 1896, he was strongly adverse to the issue of a license.

210. You are not prepared to trust the Maoris with a vote on the liquor question?—The danger would be that they would be bribed by liquor into voting for liquor, as in past years they have been bribed by liquor into selling their lands. If I may state an illustration of the Rev. Spencer's, he said that he was in a Maori district many years ago when a Government agent came up and tried to induce the Natives to sell land, but they refused. He then sent for large quantities of beer and spirits, after which the Maoris parted with their land for much less than they had been offered in the first instance. Mr. Spencer's statement was, I think, that he buried thirty-two of them in six weeks.

211. Now, you fear that if they had the right to vote they would be most likely bribed to vote for liquor?—And, sir, I have a high authority for my statement. The Premier said, in 1895: "If the Maoris had a vote they would leave their settlements with the intention of voting one way, would get liquor into them, and would be in danger of voting another way."

212. There is less sly-grog selling going on now than in the past?—I think, from what Mr. Ellis says, that there is less than there was since Mr. Cullen took it up vigorously in 1897.

213. The Police Commission resulted in a good deal?—That was before the Police Commission in 1898. He had a successful raid then, but I think that the way of grappling with the matter in to prevent liquor going into the country.

214. *The Chairman.*] Will you tell me when and where Mr. Gittos made this vicious statement about the Maoris?—23rd September, 1896, I think.

215. Does not this charge reflect upon himself as missionary for the district?—I think not, sir. He said that there were dances held, and the Maori women came there. Liquor was got at the brewery, and they afterwards adjourned to the scrub. He only applied it to that immediate district—Te Kuiti and Otorohanga.

The Chairman: It was a fearful thing to say about any one. What impressed me was that there was not a pakeha or a Maori there who interrupted him, and the statement was received with dead silence—no one attempted to dispute it.

216. *Mr. Hall-Jones.*] Was it indorsed by any one else?—No, sir.

The Chairman: The silence shows that it was treated with contempt. Mr. Gittos must have been in a passion. I think it is a stigma upon our Native population. Mr. Gittos must have been in a passion.

Mr. Isitt: No, indeed, sir; whatever else may be true, Mr. Gittos was in no passion. He spoke solemnly and with emotion.

The Chairman: I say such a statement, from my knowledge of the Maoris, is a stigma, and cannot be borne out by fact.

Mr. Lawry: From mine, too.

The Chairman: And I say that he must have made that statement in a temper, and that it was a fearful thing to say about any one; and because no one contradicted it goes to show that it was treated with silent contempt.

Mr. Isitt: He (Mr. Gittos) said it as a heartbroken man more than anything else. Mr. Lawry knows that Mr. Gittos is one of the noblest men in New Zealand.

217. *Mr. Lawry.*] Are you personally acquainted with Mr. Ngata?—No.

218. He is a Te Aute student, Temperance Association?—I do not know. I only know of him as a Te Aute student.

219. Do you know that Mr. Ngata entertains the same opinion of the King-country as you do yourself?—I think it is very probable. He had the pluck to say at the Te Awamutu meeting, by no means a devout gathering, that he would go down upon his knees and thank God, if liquor were prohibited, for protecting the Native race.

220. Had he been in the country?—He had probably been all about it.

221. Are you aware that he is very accomplished, also that he bears a high character?—I believe so.

222. Would you attach much importance to his opinion?—I would be disposed to do so, from all that I have heard of him.

223. You say that you went into the King-country in 1896?—Yes.

224. You went as far as Te Kuiti?—Yes.

225. Are you aware that the circumstances of the country have been entirely changed since then?—Yes.

226. Are you aware that the whole country has been opened up now?—I do not know it in detail. I know there have been some alterations since 1896.

227. *Mr. Lawry.*] Now, coming back to the Police Commission, are you aware that all the witnesses before that Commission were in favour of giving the people the right to decide the question?—No. At that time the question was not asked.

228. You asked the question yourself?—I do not remember that the question was ever raised. I do not believe it was, but I have the report here if you wish to refer to it.

229. Are you aware that at the time I went up and delivered a public address previous to the sitting of the Police Commission?—I remember hearing of it, I think.

230. Do you remember commenting on it adversely?—Very likely. I do not remember this occasion. I have commented adversely on your statements so often.

231. Do you remember asking me whether I did not go up to advocate the right of the people to vote as to whether they should have licenses or not?—No, I do not remember.

232. You say you attach some importance to those documents (the sworn declarations)?—Yes.

233. What have they to do with the King-country?—They show the effect of liquor under license.

234. We have it on the evidence of a member of the House that at Hastings (Napier) there is no drunkenness. Would you be surprised to hear from reliable witnesses that at Hastings there is virtually no drunkenness among the Natives?—I should not be surprised, but I would attach very little importance to it.

235. You would not accept the word of a member of the House and accept that of a parson?—No, sir, some people do not see drunkenness.

236. If we have evidence here that there is no drunkenness at Te Kuiti, would you be surprised?—No, sir, I am not surprised.

237. Are you aware that there is very little drunkenness at Te Kuiti?—I should want to see, myself, before I believe.

238. At Otaki there are a great number of Natives?—I have heard so.

239. You do not believe in hearsay evidence, then?—I have not been there.

240. You do not think that Natives in this respect should have the same power and privileges as Europeans?—No.

241. How, then, can you attach any importance to their signing a petition?—There may be some weight in their asking to be saved from liquor, but I should be very sorry to give it to them because they asked for it.

242. As far as the Natives are concerned, you are prepared to accept any of their evidence when it suits your particular views?—I say, as Mr. Seddon said in 1895, that Maoris, in regard to liquor, should be treated as European children are—liquor should be kept from them.

243. You are familiar with the Maori. I suppose you are aware that the Natives of the King-country are in disposition greater than those in Taranaki?—Probably, but not very much greater.

244. You do not lead the Committee to understand that you treat the Maori of the King-country differently to the rest?—No; my point is perfectly clear. When a paper like the *London Spectator* says that two centuries of prohibition is necessary for the Kaffir and the negro, a generation is not too much for the Maori.

245. Does the *Spectator* understand anything about the Maori?—No, but they understand the negro and the Kaffir, and I understand the Maori.

246. Would you give the Maori a vote for a representative in Parliament and not a vote on the liquor question?—Yes.

247. The fact that they have the same electoral system and the same representation, does it not argue a high order of intelligence?—Yes; but not a knowledge of alcohol. The Maori knew nothing of liquor till we brought it. The Fijian had his kava—an intoxicant, but the Maori had nothing of the kind.

248. Are not the Fijians a drunken race?—No; the sale of liquor to Fijians is absolutely prohibited, and the law is enforced.

249. Have you ever attended any of the Maoris' big meetings?—Yes.

250. Where?—At Waitara, when Rewi came to meet Sir George Grey, and recently at Rotorua.

251. Were you present at the large meeting held at Waihi, on the Waikato River?—No; I have read of it.

252. Did you hear of the Natives getting intoxicated?—I did not hear of it; I know that Mahuta has set his face against alcohol.

253. Yes; Do you know that Mahuta and his chiefs crossed over the river and got liquor at the Huntly Hotel?—I was not aware of it, but I should not be surprised.

254. Then, do you think it is fair and just of you to go and denounce them as drunkards?—I have not denounced them as drunkards. I say that there is a great deal of drunkenness amongst them. I have seen their women drunk at Mania and elsewhere, where the men got the liquor and gave it to the women, not breaking the law technically, but in effect.

255. You were present at Te Kuiti when Mr. Gittos made that statement?—Yes.

256. You believed it?—I was shocked, and obliged to believe it.

257. You would not believe me if I told you that Mr. Gittos was mistaken; you would not believe me?—Not always; you would not believe me in some things.

Mr. Lawry: I certainly would not.

258. Would you be surprised if I told you that I have been at many of these dances?—No, I should not.

259. And would you be surprised to hear that I have not seen the slightest signs of immorality?—No; what one man sees another does not see.

260. *The Chairman*.] Has Mr. Gittos been at these dances?—Not at the dances, but at Te Kuiti when they were held.

Mr. Lawry.] No testimony except silent testimony.

Mr. Isitt.] I am aware that Mr. Gittos moved about amongst these Maoris as much as any one.

261. *The Chairman*.] He must have been at the dance, and an eye-witness, to have made such a statement?—I know that Mr. Gittos went to Te Kuiti to do what he could. I heard him dissuading some young Maori girls from going to the dance.

262. Has he a down upon dancing?—No, he is a large-hearted man.

263. Do you consider dancing wrong?—No, sir; I do not consider it necessarily wrong; it may be associated with evil things.

264. Yet Mr. Gittos was apparently unable to control and prevent them committing these evils?—A Maori population under the influence of liquor would be a very difficult thing to control.

265. He did not mean to imply that the whole of the Natives were under the influence of liquor?—No, but a very large number of them.

The Chairman.] I have been to Native dances myself, and have seen them conduct themselves as well as Europeans.

Mr. Lawry: Better.

The Chairman: A statement like that should not be made unless it is borne out in fact.

266. *Mr. Lawry.*] How often does Mr. Gittos go to Otorohanga?—I do not know.

267. Does he go there once a year?—I think much oftener.

268. *The Chairman* (to Mr. Ellis).] Do you know anything of this alleged immorality?

Mr. Ellis: The Natives and Europeans resented most bitterly the statement made, and that it should be said to be the best to prohibit the Natives for that reason. I spoke pretty plainly before the Police Commission, and the evidence did not support the statement made.

269. *Mr. Hall-Jones.*] Then, Mr. Gittos was not justified in making the statement?—No. It was thought that Mr. Isitt had made it, and it caused a very bitter feeling throughout the King-country. It should have been supported by the clearest evidence before it was made.

270. Have you seen any of this alleged immorality?—No, I have not personally. Of course, Maoris are not moral according to our standard, but promiscuous immorality is not a fault of the Maori woman any more than with us.

The Chairman: No one should make a damning statement like that when there are not the actual facts to bear him out.

Mr. Ellis: I should like to say that Wahanui had a paralytic stroke about two years before he died, and that gave rise to the supposition that he was insane. His breathing was also thickened, and affected his voice.

TUESDAY, 25TH SEPTEMBER, 1900.

CHARLES HURSTHOUSE examined.

The Chairman: We have asked you, Mr. Hursthouse, to attend here to-day to give us what evidence you can on the famous King-country license question. The Committee has already taken the evidence of several gentlemen, including Mr. Fraser, the member for Napier, Mr. Hone Heke, Mr. Ngata, Mr. W. Cussen, Mr. Ellis, and the Rev. F. W. Isitt. The Committee has decided that we can only hear direct evidence, not hearsay. Knowing of your long residence in the King-country, you being the first white man through there, we will ask you to give all the information you can. You may give it yourself in your own way or in answer to questions. Probably you will give it better in your own way. We will be pleased to hear anything of the state of the King-country, the drink, and licenses from your own knowledge.

Witness: To begin at the beginning of the thing, I think the Maoris would never of their own free will have asked to have the country restricted in regard to the sale of drink. Somewhere about 1884 two or three prominent teetotalers (I do not know whether that is the sort of thing that you want) went through the King-country and asked the Maoris to sign a petition praying the Governor, or the Government, whichever it was, to withhold the licensing laws from that part of the Island. The Maoris signed the petition numerously. One of the local men who accompanied those gentlemen, who, I think, was a teetotaler, Mr. Arthur Ormsby, has since then changed his views entirely. Some years afterwards, I suppose about ten or twelve years after the Maoris had signed the first petition, there was, I believe, another petition, also numerously signed by the Maoris, asking that the restriction previously referred to should be removed. There has been no apparent result from that, the country being still under the restriction originally placed upon it. As far as the actual sale of liquor in the King-country is concerned, both the amount of drinking and the attendant immorality of the thing has been very very much exaggerated. At certain times it must be admitted Maoris will take it into their heads to run a publichouse in their own pockets, having a bottle in one pocket and a tumbler in the other. This, however, is very rare. I have only known it on one occasion. Also intermittently people at out-of-the-way places will send their pack-horse and get whisky and other grog by this means, and retail it, but that is not a continuous practice at all. The permanent sale of liquor takes place only at the centres of settlement—for instance, at Otorohanga, Te Kuiti, "The Tunnel," and at Kawhia and Mokau Heads; although, in regard to Mokau Heads, I can plead the virtue of never having purchased a drink there, and I think it is pretty difficult to get. If you would like to know what I think about whether licenses in the King-country should be granted or not, I would say that, admitted that the use of alcohol is a thing which should be discouraged, then by far the best way of discouraging it is to grant licenses. The reasons I would give for that conclusion are these: First, I think it is practically impossible to stop the illicit sale of liquor in that country; and, secondly, were licenses granted at the centres of settlement every license-holder would take very great care that there were no illicit sales taking place within a reasonable distance, at any rate, of his hotel. Under the present circumstances, the hotelkeepers on the border, north of the Punui River, are very willing and anxious to sell liquor in bulk to any persons. Of course, they sell it to persons who they know very well are going to carry it into the King-country, but in these cases the liquor is taken so far away from their licensed houses that they (the licensees) could not hope to get the retail custom from the people who consume it. That will always remain so so long as there is no license in the King-country. There are very easy means of getting liquor into the King-country. I have heard it suggested that all goods entering into the King-country by rail should be examined, with a view to preventing the introduction of liquor; but that is not the only road. There are two cart-roads leading into the King-country, besides two ports giving access—namely, Kawhia and Mokau. I do not know that there is anything more that I can think of, but I will be very glad to elucidate anything if you like to ask questions.

1. *The Chairman.*] What is about the length of the frontier or boundary of the supposed prohibited area?—I can only give a rough guess, but, including the sea-coast, I think it would be from two hundred and fifty to three hundred miles.

2. *Mr. Lawry.*] Does that include the Mokau country?—Yes.
3. *The Chairman.*] It would be quite possible to smuggle liquor into the King-country by other means than through these ports?—Oh, yes.
4. I mean that it would be possible to smuggle the liquor in by roads or by means other than by the recognised port?—Oh, yes; perfectly easy. The liquor could be taken in almost anywhere. For instance, a man might buy liquor at Tokaanu.
5. It is only a supposed prohibited country, or, in other words, a man is not prohibited from taking a certain quantity of liquor for his own use?—Quite so—except the Maori.
6. So that it is prohibition in name only?—Yes.
7. It is only prohibition as regards licenses?—Yes.
8. In your opinion it is impossible for the police to stop the sly-grog selling?—Yes, quite.
9. Even if there were an army of police?—Yes; the thing has been going on for some fifteen years.
10. You do not think it is, as a lot of people have stated, that the police not doing their duty is the cause of so much sly-grog selling?—I do not think that. I do not think the police have had a fair chance. For instance, there was only one policeman stationed at Te Kuiti when there were some four hundred navvies about, and, of course, the officer was known to every one, and to all the boardinghouse-keepers, and to those who sold the grog; so that it was impossible almost for him to get a conviction. There is no doubt the police have been trying their best to stop the sly-grog selling, but they are succeeding worse than ever.
11. What is the effect generally of a conviction against sly-grog sellers?—The effect is that there is a great deal of sympathy for the person convicted, the result being that all the more liquor is bought, to enable him to recoup the fine.
12. It amounts to an advertisement, really?—Yes; and the same sympathy applies if the man goes to prison, for nobody up there thinks the worse of him if he goes to prison instead of paying the fine. They think a great deal worse of the person who informs in such cases.
13. You have heard, I suppose, of vile stuff being sold in the King-country—stuff sold, for instance, at 7s. 6d. a gallon?—I cannot say of my own knowledge as to that, but I certainly do not believe it. I do not think there is any harm in my saying that I myself have had liquor at a great many places there, and have never had bad grog in the King-country.
14. Do you know Mr. Ngata at all?—I have been introduced to him, that is all.
15. Do you know Mr. W. Cussen?—Yes, I know him.
16. Is he an old resident of the King-country?—He has been most of his time there for a good many years. Off and on, I think he has lived in the King-country for eight or nine years.
17. You think he could speak authoritatively as to the state of affairs existing in the King-country?—Oh, yes.
18. You say there are several hotels immediately outside the boundary?—Yes.
19. There are Natives living there near to these hotels?—Yes.
20. Is it an awful place about there? Are the Natives there a drunken lot?—Not in the least. The Maoris who live where there are licensed houses are no better or worse than those in the King-country. The morality of the Natives in the King-country is quite on a par with others. It is a mistake to suppose that the King-country is occupied almost entirely by Maoris; indeed, the Maori population is sparse.
21. What are the names of the tribes in the King-country?—Well, there are the Ngati-maniopoto and the Wanganui—they are the two principal tribes; other tribes being the Ngatitu-wharetoa, of Taupo, Ngatimahuta, near Kawhia, &c.
22. Are the Ngati-maniopoto a more drunken race or tribe than any of the others?—No, certainly not. I think, if anything, the Ngati-maniopotos are more abstemious.
23. Have you ever heard in the King-country, say at Otorohanga and Te Kuiti, of the fearfully vile state of morality, especially as between the Maori women and the pakeha men, owing to drink?—I have heard of it, but it is not true. I might say here that on one occasion Colonel Hume and Inspector Hickson came up into the King-country full of expectation of seeing something of those fearful orgies supposed to take place every train-night. Those officers sent the local policeman to me, in order that I might have a yarn with them. I went and sat with them on the balcony. I did not know then what the officers were after, but it came out afterwards that they wanted to see if there was anything in the allegations of gross immorality, and they found nothing of the sort.
24. You say that any man stating that a dance was got up, and that after it, and after drinking, the whole of the males adjourned to the scrub with the Maori women, was telling an absolute untruth?—Most decidedly. The Maoris, for instance, would never allow such a thing.
25. Any man making such a statement as that could not bear it out by facts?—Most decidedly he could not.
26. *Mr. Lawry.*] I suppose there is no man better acquainted with the King-country Natives than you are?—Well, I think Mr. Wilkinson probably knows more of them, although I have a very good knowledge.
27. Does Mr. Wilkinson know the Natives over such a large area as you?—Yes; I think he does.
28. You speak the Maori language?—Yes.
29. You are well acquainted with their inner life and working, are you not?—Yes.
30. You have made, to some extent, a study of their character?—Yes.
31. The immorality alleged does not exist to anything like the extent stated?—Nothing approaching it. The Natives are not all savages.
32. You are quite clear that the first petition sent down asking for prohibition in the King-country resulted from the solicitations of Prohibitionists?—Yes; that has always been my impression.

33. Were you present at the turning of the first sod of the railway?—Yes, I was.
34. Do you remember on that occasion any chiefs making terms that if liquor was not kept out of the King-country the railway would not be allowed to go through?—No. I may say that I never saw the petition just referred to myself; that is hearsay evidence of mine, but I am morally certain it is correct.
35. You would not be surprised to hear that there was really three prohibitions—viz., against the sale of liquor, and the sale or leasing of lands?—I did not know that was so.
36. Do you remember being at Otorohanga when Mr. Cadman, Native Minister, was there?—No; I cannot say I do.
37. But you were present on that occasion?—No, I do not think so.
38. From conversations you have had with the Natives, and with European residents in the King-country, are you satisfied that they are desirous of having the power to decide whether they shall have licenses?—Most decidedly they are desirous of having that power.
39. They are not pressing so much for the establishment of licenses or licensed houses as for the power to say whether or not they shall have licenses?—That is all they desire, the power to decide for themselves.
40. Do you think it is fair to compare the Maori even inferentially to a low type of negro?—No; they are far superior in intelligence and in ability.
41. From your thorough knowledge of the country, and of the Natives themselves, would you be satisfied to give them the power to say whether the existing restrictions, as to the sale of liquor, should be removed?—Yes; I would give them that power to-morrow, if I had the opportunity, as I believe it would be far more satisfactory.
42. You know the settlement of Whatiwhatihoe?—Yes.
43. How far is it from Alexandra?—About a mile, I should think.
44. That is a pretty large settlement?—It used to be.
45. During the time the Natives lived there they could have easy access to the hotel?—Yes.
46. And yet that caused no intemperance?—None whatever, except, perhaps, individual instances of Natives who would have drink at any cost, and would have got it elsewhere. I do not think that the Natives living so close to the two or three hotels indulged in excessive drinking.
47. Do you think it will be very long before the King-country is settled with European population?—The Europeans are getting there very quickly. It is only a matter of surveying, when that country will be practically all settled.
48. You are quite satisfied that the allegations as to drunkenness and immorality are highly coloured and exaggerated?—I am perfectly certain of that.
49. *Mr. Lang.*] I think, Mr. Hursthouse, you know the boundaries of the Waikato electorate?—Yes.
50. The question I wish to ask has reference only to the Waikato electorate. As you probably know, there is one portion of it in which licenses are granted, and another portion where they are not. Now, I want to get at the population of Natives in these two separate portions of the electorate?—I should not think there are more than about two thousand in that part of the electorate known as the King-country. The European settlers would not, I suppose, be more than one thousand altogether.
51. Can you give a rough idea of the number of Natives settled in the licensed or northern portion of the Waikato electorate?—I do not know. I know very little as to that, but think they are more numerous.
52. As far as sly-grog selling is concerned, it is true there is a certain amount of that?—Yes.
53. Have you ever known of any case of sly-grog selling where licenses exist?—No, I have never known of any in that part of the district.
54. But in the King-country sly-grog selling is carried on to a large extent?—Yes.
55. *Mr. Lawry.*] Do you know Tokaanu?—Yes.
56. A considerable number of Natives have either settled or visit there?—Yes.
57. Do you remember visiting Tokaanu with the Hon. Mr. Cadman and myself?—Yes, I think we stopped there from Saturday until Monday.
58. There were a large number of Natives assembled?—Yes.
59. And all had access to the hotel?—Yes.
60. Did you see a single case of drunkenness and immorality?—I did not. I may add that I have been often at Tokaanu since then, and I have never noticed anything to complain of as regards wine and women.
61. The house there is conducted as well as those outside the King-country?—Yes.
62. Did you know Wahanui?—Yes.
63. Did you see him at any time shortly before his death?—Yes, six or seven months before.
64. Would you say he had all his mental faculties about him at that time?—No; he was "cranky." He was "cranky" on some things, at any rate. I can give you an example of this, if you think it worth while. In my travels I had to pass the place where Wahanui was living, or rather camped, and on one occasion he sent word asking me to call and see him. I went, and when I got to the tent door he asked me inside. We shook hands, and a woman brought in some tea and bread. I said, "I did not come to eat; I came to speak to you because you sent for me." Wahanui then said, "Well, your friend Jesus Christ is dead, so you will have to eat." I do not think any sane man, for instance, would have said that. He told me that everything was settled now as regards "peace," and I was to tell all men who were sore-footed and hard-up that they were to call at his place and he would entertain them, but they must behave properly or he would not have them. In this conversation Wahanui used some most extraordinary words, which I had never heard before, and his wife and a friend of his said "That means so-and-so." He invented words. He would not call things by their proper names. Then he asked for a contract on the road, which was not to exceed £10. He impressed upon me principally that I was to send all the "hard-ups" to him, and he would give them food. He was decidedly off his head.

65. You would not have taken much notice of his petition or declaration—it would not have had much weight with you?—It would have no weight with me.

66. Did you know Bewi?—Yes.

67. Was he also that way inclined?—He was all right when I knew him.

68. In your opinion Wahanui, when you saw him, was not answerable for what he said or did?—Oh, no; he was “looney.” He started prophesying.

69. It has been stated that Wahanui, before he died, declared that he had changed his opinion?—I have never heard about that. I do not know if it was true. I know that his brother, Kahu, went in for some sly-grog selling.

70. *The Chairman.*] You knew Hetet well?—Yes.

71. He is generally supposed to be a man of means?—I do not know that he has got much money. He is too good-natured to keep it.

72. Do you know anything of the reason for Wahanui wishing to raise this prohibition: was there not something about an advance of money?—I cannot say anything as to Wahanui's reasons, but I should doubt the fact of there having been an advance of money.

TUESDAY, 9TH OCTOBER, 1900.

Evidence of TAINGAKAWA TE WAHAROA.

1. *The Chairman.*] The Committee wants to get evidence concerning the liquor question in the King-country. Do you live in the King-country?—[Interpreted by Mr. Monk, M.H.R.] No. I do not live in what is known as the prohibited district.

2. Then I suppose you can only speak generally on the matters concerning which the Committee wants information?—I can only say that I have words to say upon this matter of intoxicating liquors.

[At this stage Mr. Monk had to leave, and the interpreting was taken up by Mr. Graham.]

3. I may say, Mr. Graham, we are taking evidence as to the liquor question in the King-country. The Committee wishes the witness to understand that we are not taking generalities concerning the Native character and customs outside the King-country. We are only taking evidence of the witness's own knowledge. We cannot accept any mere hearsay evidence. We have members in the House of Representatives who can tell us of the Native customs. We want actual facts, so that whenever the Committee presents its report and evidence, the Government will say that this is a document of some service either for the protection, or suppression, or otherwise. If this man (the witness) does not know anything about the King-country beyond generalities, the Committee cannot bother taking his evidence. Will you ask the witness now if he lives within the prohibited area of the King-country; and, if so, to give the Committee all the information he can from his own knowledge?—[Interpreted by Mr. Graham, the witness answered] I do not live within the prohibited area. I am Taingakawa te Waharoa, the son of William Thomson, and I am the Premier in the Maori Parliament, and one of the most representative chiefs. I live at Matamata, which is not within the prohibited area.

4. You live in the prohibited part of the King-country occasionally, do you not?—I pass through there, of course.

5. Can you speak of the liquor traffic there of your own knowledge?—All that I can say from what I have seen myself is that grog is sold there. I have seen the state of affairs.

6. In that case you can speak from your own knowledge?—I have never been a permanent resident in that part of the country. I have only been a visitor to it, but with my own eyes I have seen the Natives there drinking grog. I heard that some of them were summoned by the Court for selling grog.

7. Did you see more drinking there than where licensed hotels exist?—No. I have never seen anything to be compared to the drinking that goes on where there are licensed hotels. There are hotels at Cambridge and at Alexandra; but I may say that I was not in the prohibited district long, but while I was there I certainly did not see more drinking than goes on where there are hotels.

8. Do you think that the people in the prohibited area are more sober than those outside?—I noticed a difference in the part of the King-country where licenses exist.

9. Are the Natives living within the prohibited area better or worse off than those living outside? Have they more money inside the area?—I could not say there is much difference. They both do the same thing to get money—that is, they both sell their land.

10. But they cannot sell their land in the King-country: I understand that is also prohibited?—They sell to the Government in order to raise money with which to buy the grog.

11. *Mr. Lawry.*] They sell their cattle?—There are very few Natives there who are cattle- or sheep-owners.

Mr. Lawry: That is not my experience, at any rate.

12. *The Chairman.*] Are there any hotels near to where you live?—No; I object to anything of the sort coming into my settlement. There is no hotel in my district. I object to the grog.

13. Well, how far is the nearest hotel from your kainga?—It is about seven miles—at Cambridge and at Morrinsville.

14. *Mr. Lawry.*] How far off is the Oxford Hotel from your place?—It is a long way off. The Cambridge is the nearest. The railway runs right through my settlement.

15. Have you ever been to Te Kuiti?—No.

16. How far up in the King-country have you been?—Not further than this side of Otorohanga, at Puniu.

Mr. Lawry: Well, it appears to me that this witness does not know anything about the King-country proper. I have no further questions to ask him.

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