

153. *Mr. Tunbridge.*] You have been asked a question about the reduction of your office staff: Do you consider that reduction has been conducive to the good working of the office or otherwise?—Otherwise.

154. Very much so?—I should think so.

155. So much so that you had to approach me with a view to getting an addition to your staff?—Yes; and I also approached Colonel Hume.

156. Has it become so acute that both yourself and Mr. Tasker have been compelled to work late here during holidays and to carry work home with you?—I have never taken work home, but Mr. Tasker has and does.

157. *The Chairman.*] You are speaking of the office at the present time?—Yes.

158. *Mr. Tunbridge.*] I have endeavoured to relieve that by bringing in a constable to assist you, as a temporary measure?—Yes.

159. Up till about a fortnight ago you had not accommodation here for an increased staff?—No; we were crowded up.

160. *Colonel Hume.*] Do you know of any other office where they do not work occasionally on holidays or after hours at night?—I suppose the majority of them do.

161. Do you think I used to work much at night?—I have no doubt you did.

162. Have you ever come down at night?—Yes.

163. Often?—Yes.

164. And Mr. Tasker too?—Yes.

165. Often?—Yes.

166. Has the third clerk ever come back at night?—I do not know that he has ever come back.

#### WEDNESDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY, 1898.

ARTHUR HUME, Inspector of Prisons, and late Commissioner of Police, examined on oath.

1. *The Chairman.*] When were you appointed Commissioner of Police, Colonel Hume?—On the 1st July, 1890.

2. We want to take you step by step through all the matters referred to this Commission. Firstly, we will take the general organization of the Force, then its distribution, control, and so on, taking item by item, so as to lay a foundation for our inquiry?—Perhaps you will let me make my own statement.

2A. Yes; if you will kindly make it in the order I have named, because otherwise our attention may be disturbed from the subject-matter of our inquiry. We would like you to confine yourself as much as possible in the first instance to the general organization of the Force while it was under your control, and then go on to the distribution, control, and so on?—I shall have to ask the Commission to let me go back first of all to the report of Colonel Moule, Commissioner of the Armed Constabulary Force, dated the 18th July, 1877.

3. Very well. Was he then Commissioner of Police?—He was Commissioner of the Armed Constabulary Force. They were not separated then. They were about to be separated, I think.

4. *Colonel Pitt.*] What was his office?—Commissioner of the Armed Constabulary Force. My object in doing this is to show that one of the grievances the police suffer under is the want of promotion—the slow promotion. Now, in that year, the Marlborough Force consisted of one first-class Inspector, two sergeants-major, one sergeant, and three constables.

5. In 1877?—Yes, Sir; when they were taken over by the General Government. In Nelson District at the same time there were 1 first-class Inspector, 1 first-class Sub-Inspector, 3 first-class sergeants, and 8 constables. The Westland District comprised 2 first-class Inspectors, 1 first-class Sub-Inspector, 1 sergeant-major, 7 sergeants, 21 constables, and one detective. The Napier police district consisted of 1 first-class Inspector, 3 sergeants, and 16 constables. In the other districts there was not quite so large a proportion of officers and non-commissioned officers.

6. *The Chairman.*] You say the other districts were not quite so much over-officered?—I do not know really; perhaps I had better give some of the others too. Take Canterbury: Canterbury consisted of 3 first-class Inspectors, 2 second-class Inspectors, 1 accountant, 9 sergeants-major, 13 sergeants, 67 constables, and 4 detectives. That is a fair proportion of them all, I think. Of course, I was not in New Zealand at that time, but I am informed that the reason of this was—of course this is only hearsay—the provincial people knew the General Government were going to take over their local Forces, and they made promotions accordingly, as they would be no longer responsible. That is what I am told. However, the reason I have quoted this is that it has caused ever since a stagnation of promotion. Now, in 1887, Major Gudgeon, who was then Commissioner of Police, says: "The present strength of the non-commissioned officers in New Zealand is as follows: four sergeants-major and sixty-six sergeants, or one to every six constables." He says the results of his inspection convince him that the Force would gain in efficiency by reduction of those numbers, and he goes on to say that in his opinion the Force should be reduced to four sergeants-major and fifty-two sergeants. In the next paragraph he says: "In the case of first-class constables the proportion is out of all reason as compared with second- and third-class"; and he gives the numbers as "140 first-class, 100 second, and 147 third." And he says here again: "A large saving will be effected by your decision"—that was, the decision of the then Defence Minister: "That in future the strength shall be 100 first-class, 100 second-class, and the excess shall be gradually reduced by the simple expedient of not filling up vacancies." Then, in his report dated the 3rd May, 1888, he says: "The retirement of four Inspectors in consequence of retrenchment in the Government service has enabled me to effect the amalgamation of several districts as follows:—." There was a reduction then of four Inspectors. Then, in consequence of the large amount of sly-grog selling that was going on at the Bay of Islands, he opened a district there