

There are, however, 67 constables who, having joined since the 10th February, 1887, are debarred by circular of that date from receiving long-service pay, and it is on their behalf that I suggest a method whereby they may receive pensions with the minimum of expense both to the Government and to themselves.

Then he goes on to show how a pension fund may be created.

19. What period of service entitled a man to long-service pay?—Five years' to 6d., and ten years' to 1s. a day. Then, in my first report, dated the 1st May, 1891—that was from July, 1890—I state: "Vacancies in the Force have been almost entirely filled by transfers from the Permanent Artillery or the Prisons Department, and this system works well, the recruits having acquired a good knowledge of discipline before being transferred to the Force." And that was the year of the labour troubles. With a total force then of 492 of all ranks—

20. That 492 is without counting district constables and Native constables?—No, Sir, everybody.

21. The report says it is not so. The report says there are ten district and ten Native, in addition to the 492?—Oh, yes. You are quite right. I thought it included all. It does not. With a force of 492, with the aid of the Permanent Militia and some special constables, I was able to successfully cope with the labour difficulty. Then I go on to say: "On assuming charge of the police I received instructions to move from the West Coast, Middle Island, and the Lake District, Otago, all those who were still drawing the extra shilling per diem as goldfields allowance."

22. That was an instruction to you?—Yes, Sir, from the Minister. I go on to say: "Previous to these transfers a considerable amount of discontent existed on the Coast, in consequence of the old hands receiving 1s. per diem goldfields allowance, in which the younger hands did not participate." It was done away with in this way: That as the men moved away they were no longer to get it. I state also that there were constant complaints that sly-grog selling was being carried on on the West Coast. I go on to show that during that year, in consequence of the changes, I presume it was, sixteen persons were convicted of sly-grog selling, and fines amounting to £292 10s. were inflicted on the West Coast. In the next paragraph I refer to a matter that was alluded to yesterday:—

On taking charge of the department I found that Inspectors in charge of districts had assumed the right of transferring constables from one station to another within the district without any reference to this office, and doubtless in this way unnecessary changes have been made; but that practice has now ceased, and all transfers must be sanctioned from headquarters.

23. You put a stop to that?—Yes. Then I drew the attention of all concerned to the necessity of special and more stringent supervision being exercised by the police in the matter of the Licensing Act, more especially as regards Sunday trading and the closing of houses nightly at the stipulated hours, and directing that transgressors, when discovered, should invariably be summoned to answer for their conduct. Then, I go on to comment on the no-promotion business:—

Though virtually no promotions have been made since I took charge, it is an open secret that much discontent prevailed in the Force owing to the system, or, rather, want of system, which hitherto had been adopted in selecting men for promotion and charge of stations, together with an entire absence of classification of stations and subdistricts. At the present time, in all parts of the colony, there are to be found third-class constables in charge of important stations, while first-class constables are kept on street duty and compelled to pay house-rent, while their juniors have the lighter duties to perform and get Government quarters provided. Rewards also appear to have been indiscriminately distributed, while cases really deserving of both remuneration and mention in merit-sheets appear to have been entirely overlooked. All these circumstances have tended considerably to bring about uneasiness and discontent. A better feeling has, I am glad to say, already been established, and, though promotion has been blocked, the disappointment is less acute than if juniors had been promoted over the heads of their seniors for no greater qualifications or recommendations than political or local influences.

Then, I did away with that examination business:—

The system of examination which was in force last year was found to be useless, expensive, and harassing. Many members of the Force who at small stations are also Clerks of Court had an unfair advantage over the hard-worked town constables, inasmuch as the former had access to the statutes, with spare time to study them, with the constant experience to be derived from attending Courts; so that, had the examination test continued, it would have been found at no distant date that the majority of those qualified for promotion had served most of their time as Clerks of Courts in small stations, and would probably, from want of experience, be quite unfit for the duties of a non-commissioned officer at the larger places.

Then, I got framed a superannuation scheme on the lines of the Government taking long-service pay, together with one year's pay allowed as compensation, and investing them in insurance to secure every man a lump sum of £400, or an allowance of a little more than £1 per week if not taken in a lump sum, on attaining the age of sixty-five years. A member of the House took a great deal of trouble about it, and the police were consulted. He endeavoured to work it up, but they would not give up the long-service pay, and they could not have both.

24. Was the scheme printed?—No. I may say it really was not my scheme.

25. *Colonel Pitt.*] Do you mean a member of the House agitated against it?—No; he was agitating for it. He made out the scheme and brought it to me, and he had permission from the Minister to visit stations, and ask the men about it.

26. Then, it originated with him?—I modified it again, in the hope that it might be carried into effect. Then I go on to say:—

Sly-grog selling is perhaps the most difficult matter we have to deal with, but during the year the number of convictions under this head have been very satisfactory, and the offenders cleverly detected; and all ranks deserve special commendation for their services during the labour troubles.

The present organization no doubt admits of changes in accordance with the altered state and conditions of the colony—that is, bearing in mind that the organization was borrowed in its entirety from one of the other colonies. On the breaking out of the goldfields in this colony in 1861 it was thought a large number of the criminal class would find their way over here, and to meet this a police system was introduced, and a posse of men were specially engaged to establish and carry out its workings and operations. Evil-doers were sternly met and put down, and that peaceful order of things resulted which has now been established for many years past. But, looking to the altered circumstances of the colony, it is obvious that a more simple system of administration will meet all our requirements, and will insure more efficiency and economy; in fact, to simplify matters, what is required in this colony is a thoroughly efficient and active municipal and rural constabulary, whose aim should be to preserve law and order rather than make prisoners and obtain convictions.

One step towards this end is to make larger districts and therefore fewer of them, and to give the officers in charge of districts a position and standing that will command confidence and respect. Then, follow the example of other