

Promotion, which has been virtually at a standstill for some years past, owing to the senior grades of sergeants and first-class constables being beyond their required strength, is now likely to flow steadily on; but, owing to the numerous grades of the different ranks in the Force, this question of promotion becomes one of great difficulty as to selection. This may be better understood when it is known that a first-class constable in charge of a station, who is probably Clerk of Court, and holds other appointments for which he is paid extra, is, as regards pay, responsibility, and hard work, infinitely better off than a first-class sergeant in a large town, who gets nothing but his police-pay proper, has to find a house, and oftentimes finds household commodities are far more expensive in towns than in the country districts. It is obviously necessary that many of the sergeants must be stationed in the towns, and I have no hesitation in recommending that in such cases, where they are married, the State should provide them with quarters, or an allowance in lieu thereof. At present, in many cases, the promotion of a third-class sergeant is a direct loss as regards pay.

I may state that, on that recommendation, sergeants in towns were granted an allowance of 10s. a week as lodging-allowance. Even then it is a big loss to a man to be promoted from first-class constable in charge of a station to a third-class sergeant. I think it could be proved that some of them lose £80 or £100 a year.

35. *Colonel Pitt.*] Yet want of promotion has been bewailed all through?—Yes. Then, I go on to deal with the cost of supervision:—

From the return attached, showing proportion of police to population, and cost of police per inhabitant in each of the Australian Colonies, it will be seen that New Zealand is far below any of her sisters in both these respects; but I am of opinion that the time has now arrived that the police, at the centres at least, should be augmented, especially as a considerable number of what appear to be the criminal class are flocking just now to New Zealand, no doubt on account of the depression elsewhere. Another matter I also desire to draw attention to is that at no police station in the colony have we a matron. There are at many stations a female searcher; but when there are female prisoners the searcher's duty ends when she has carefully searched the prisoner, who is then handed over to the care of constables, usually married men; but I am strongly of opinion that, at the chief centres at least, there should be a matron on the strength of the police establishment, who, after searching the female prisoners, would have charge of them until such time as their cases are disposed of. It is extremely undesirable that constables, whether married or single, should at any time be in charge of female prisoners while they are under detention at a police-station.

I may state that on that I succeeded in getting four matrons for the principal centres at the pay of £100 a year each. Then I go on:—

I am also of opinion that at the larger centres two mounted constables should patrol the suburbs nightly. This has been done during the long winter nights, for three hours, at uncertain hours; but these recommendations, if carried out, mean extra expense, and, therefore, a corresponding increase in the cost of police per inhabitant in this colony.

Then, in my report dated the 1st July, 1894, I state:—

Vacancies in the Force have been, as heretofore, filled by transfers of gunners from the Permanent Militia, and this system continues to work satisfactorily.

Then,—

I was instructed to promote to second-class rank all third-class constables who had served seven years in the Force with clean defaulters-sheets; and shortly afterwards I was directed to promote to second-class rank all third-class constables who had seven years' service in the Force with only one trivial entry in their defaulter-sheets, and these promotions no doubt caused some dissatisfaction. In a Police Force, the fact of a constable having a clean defaulter-sheet should not be the only qualification for promotion, as there are so many different contingencies which should be taken into consideration. For example, two constables join at the same time; one is posted to a city, the other goes to the country. The city man is open to all sorts of temptations, which are wanting in the country station, while he is constantly under the eyes of his superiors, and consequently more liable to have an entry recorded against him in his sheet which would at once debar him from promotion; while his more fortunate comrade in the suburban or country station, though perhaps by no means so efficient a constable, would be far less likely to sufficiently commit himself to cause an entry to be made against him, and would thereby claim advancement before the one who had been less advantageously situated. Again, the public generally, especially in small communities, are apt to think that their local constable is *par excellence* as near perfection as possible, and ought at once to be promoted, quite forgetting that the police is a colonial and not a local Force.

In the next report, of 1895, I still report that the recruits from the Permanent Militia are satisfactory:—

I stated last year that the New Zealand Police Force labours sorely under two great disadvantages—the want of a superannuation scheme, and, as a consequence thereof, and a result therefrom, tardiness of promotion. It was thought that this might to some extent be overcome by promoting to second class all third-class constables on their completing seven years' service with clean defaulter-sheets; but if this were carried out the second class would be very soon in excess of the number provided for by the estimates, and a very serious injustice would be done to some forty now at the head of the list of the third class, who, perhaps, have two or three trivial offences recorded against them, but who, in consequence of these two or three offences, could never be advanced, and would be daily seeing their juniors promoted over their heads. After giving these matters a great deal of serious consideration, I framed a scheme by which increases of pay would be given by length of service, all other things being equal, and if this scheme is adopted I believe it will give general satisfaction throughout the Force, as a man on entering would know, if his conduct and ability gave satisfaction, what exact rate of pay he would be on ten or twelve years hence. If the proposed scheme for advancement is not adopted, I would suggest, in all fairness to the forty constables already referred to as at the top of the third-class list, and to many others, that a continuous service of, say, five years without an entry against them should wipe out any previous record of misconduct, and so place them in a position that will prevent the constant supersession by their juniors on account of irregularities committed many years ago. To carry out efficiently the proposed scheme it will be necessary to have only four classes of rank—viz., Inspectors, sergeants, constables, and detectives, and for these ranks only provision has been made in the proposals now before the Government. At the present time we have no less than thirteen different ranks in a Force of less than five hundred men.

I may state that that scheme, if it had been adopted, would have cost very little more. It might have cost £400 more than we are actually paying now, and every man would have got his increase annually.

36. The scheme would have cost £400 a year more?—Yes.

37. *The Chairman.*] An increasing charge every year?—No; decreasing, because the long-service men would be dying out. Then, I went on to show that there had been complaints about the removals of constables—all put down to different reasons. The brewers put it down to one reason, the prohibitionists to another, and the public to another, and so on. One was removed because he looked too well after the publichouses; and another was removed because he did not look sufficiently well after them, and so on. I went on, about the liquor question,—

In commenting on this liquor question a great deal is said about the Force being reorganized, but I boldly assert that, as long as the liquor laws remain as at present, no organization could possibly successfully grapple with the question.