

77. Do you know that there were frequent complaints about the boys disturbing respectable people?—Yes, there were for a while.

78. In the way of larrikinism and also fruit-stealing?—Yes.

79. To such an extent that special precautions had to be taken in sending men out in plain clothes: is that so?—That is correct.

80. And it was in attempting to put down larrikinism, alleged against the lad Neave and others, that you interfered with the lads by Mr. Wilson's?—Yes.

81. In the presence of Wilson, the complainant?—Yes.

82. Who you say is a respectable old man?—Yes, he is.

83. Those lads would have a grievance against you?—Yes; they would take it very badly.

84. Lads do not like to be interfered with?—No.

85. You take it that that would be a reason why they should make a complaint, or make an exaggerated statement, against you when approached by Inspector Macdonell?—Yes.

86. As regards Blincoe, what is his character in Nelson?—Very bad.

87. In what respect?—He is looked upon as a low-down hoodlum in the town. He is pretty well always under the influence of drink.

88. How about Allen?—He is one of the worst in Nelson.

89. Do these remarks apply to Reed also?—Yes. You could not pick worse characters in Nelson than those mentioned, I think.

90. Have you seen the memorial that was sent in by the Nelson residents against the treatment that was being meted out to you?—Yes, I have.

91. Have the people who signed that memorial had an opportunity of witnessing your actions as a police constable while in Nelson?—Yes, every day.

92. Nelson, of course, is a small place?—Yes.

93. Perhaps I may mention a few of the people who signed that petition: The present Mayor of Nelson, Mr. Graham, M.H.R. for Nelson, Colonel Pitt, M.L.C., the Town Clerk, the Justices, solicitors, bankers, &c.?—Yes.

94. Now, as a matter of fact, the representative people of Nelson, the commercial community, and the private residents in the main have signed that petition, have they not?—Yes.

95. The number I have stated in a memorandum—seven hundred, I think?—It is something between two and three hundred, I think.

96. I merely put that question to the witness, Mr. Chairman, as showing one side of the case. The man is complained of by the larrikin Neave, and others, Blincoe, Allen, and Reed—drunkards and hoodlums; on the other side he gets the support of hundreds of the principal residents of Nelson. All I say is that it is a matter, in my opinion, of which side you are to believe—whether to accept the statements of hundreds of respectable people in Nelson as to whether these men carried out their duties, or to believe what four or five hoodlums state to the contrary.

97. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] I would like to ask the witness a question with reference to the charges inquired into by Commissioner Tunbridge for which punishment was inflicted: do you dispute the judgment of the Commissioner as to your guilt?—No, not in the slightest.

98. You admit that you were guilty of the charges for which the punishment was inflicted?—Yes.

99. *The Chairman.*] Are Stapp, Blincoe, Remnant, Allen, and Reed young or old men?—They vary. Remnant, I should say, would be the oldest; I expect he would be 35; Reed, 30; Allen, 25; Blincoe would be about 21; Stapp, I should say, 18 or 19. The other four youths would range from 17 to 19.

100. Have you had any opportunity of judging whether they are old residents of Nelson or only new-comers?—I could not say. I was not there very long—only about two years.

101. In one of those statements it was said that the Postboy Hotel had a very bad character. The inference I drew from it was that it was a house of ill-fame?—That is the first I ever heard of it. It was quite otherwise, I thought.

*The Chairman:* From the statement of one of these people—

*Commissioner Tunbridge:* That was a statement by Inspector Macdonell.

102. *The Chairman.*] From that statement I should have judged at once that it was such a place. You say it is the first that you have heard of anything of the sort?—Yes.

*The Chairman:* I ask that question because I know Nelson probably as well as witness—perhaps a great deal better—and I know the houses and a great many of the people there.

103. *Mr. Colvin.*] Did the proprietor, Wemyss, at one time manage the Masonic Hotel, the principal one in Nelson?—Not in my time.

104. *The Chairman.*] You absolutely deny the statement that, according to what these men say, the greater part of your time you have been assaulting people in Nelson?—I positively deny it.

105. *Mr. Maginnity.*] You spoke about the Postboy Hotel and Mr. Wemyss?—Yes.

106. Did Mr. Wemyss not manage the Masonic Hotel before he took the Postboy?—That question has just been asked me. I do not know.

107. *Mr. Hardy.*] I am not altogether certain that I understood the witness's reply to the *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.* You know the finding of the Commissioner with regard to the charges made against you?—Yes.

108. Do you think that his finding was a reasonable one?—I do.

109. Under the special circumstances?—I think it was reasonable.

*Mr. Maginnity:* I would like to know at this juncture whether in the opinion of the Committee it is necessary to call the girl———. Of course, you will understand that I do not wish to put the girl to the unpleasantness—she is in attendance—of examining her upon what the members of the Committee will at once see is a very delicate matter indeed, and that it is only under extreme