

77. Now I am asking you to exert your memory a little further and tell the Committee if you had heard of anything while you were in Greymouth from any person before you came up at Jubilee time?—No.

78. You did not?—No.

79. But you say you had received some information by means of an anonymous letter?—Yes; there were one or two. I think I got two, one after the other, if I remember correctly.

80. Did you show those anonymous communications to the sergeant in charge at Nelson?—I think I sent him the first one—I am pretty well sure I did.

81. You referred it to him for report?—For inquiry and report; that is true.

82. Did he report?—He did not.

83. Have you got any official record of your referring that particular letter to the sergeant in charge?—I think it should be with the rest of the papers.

*Commissioner Tunbridge*: It appears in the papers.

84. *Mr. Maginnity*.] Very well. Now, Inspector, one of the charges inquired into by the Commissioner against Burrell and Durbridge was that they took two girls into the station late at night and gave them some refreshment?—Yes.

85. Having heard the statements made before the Committee and the evidence that was given before the Commissioner, and being aware of the Commissioner's finding, added to the fact that one of those young ladies was at the time engaged to be married to one of the constables, do you still view that as an offence of a serious character?—I do.

86. Notwithstanding that the constable was taking his intended bride into his own home, that the doors were wide open, that the gas was alight, and that the window-blinds were up and were not drawn—I believe that came out in evidence in Nelson, did it not?—I think the lower portions of the windows are frosted. I think so.

87. At any rate, having heard all that you have heard, including the Commissioner's finding, would you still tell the Committee that it was an offence of a serious character?—Certainly. I would say, in my opinion, the fact of taking them there after midnight was serious.

88. Having heard the evidence, and been told of the circumstances under which these girls were taken there, would you not say that the Commissioner's finding was a reasonable one?—Under all the circumstances I would not, but it is not for me to judge the Commissioner.

89. It is for you to give your evidence and answer questions. You say that you would not?—That is so.

90. Now, supposing you had dealt with the matter, what would you have done?—As I said before, I would consider it very carefully.

91. Would you rather not say what you would have done?—I have not made up my mind. I would consider it very carefully.

92. Do you mean to say that the Commissioner did not consider it very carefully?—I do not.

93. Well, supposing we assume for the moment that he did consider it very carefully: from the evidence he had at his command would you not say that his finding was a reasonable one?—No, I would not.

94. You would have gone further?—Of course, different people look at things in a different manner.

95. Although you would merely caution a constable who while on duty went into a billiard-room and played billiards, being guilty of a direct breach of the Police Regulations without any excuse, still you would say that the Commissioner's finding in this case was not reasonable: is that what we are to understand?—I would consider that the one was far more serious than the other.

96. Although the constable was taking his intended bride into his own house—in company with a relation, by the way—to have some refreshment. Did you make any inquiry at all as to the length of time these people were in the station?—No, I did not, because I thought further investigation would take place.

97. With regard to Burrell going off duty, did you not know that for some years past the constables on night duty had been in the habit of going to the station to get some cocoa or coffee?—No, I was not aware of it.

98. Now, having been made aware of the practice that has obtained, and having heard the evidence and the explanation of the constable, would you say that the finding of the Commissioner in that case was not a reasonable one?—According to my view it was not.

99. Then, we are to conclude, I suppose, that the Commissioner must be an unreasonable man: is that your experience of him?—No, I do not say that. You can conclude anything you like.

100. With regard to the charge against Durbridge of going to an hotel after hours, you heard the circumstances of his doing so: you heard that he had been at a football match; that he had been at a football social; that he had gone out with one of the players in company with five or six others to see this player off on his road to the cable-station; that he returned, and that there was a question between them as to whether it was 11 o'clock at night or not; that there was a light seen in the hotel; that they went to the hotel and asked for liquor; that they got a drink; and that Durbridge left another companion at Vause's hotel a few moments after 11 o'clock and presumably went home. Having heard all that, would you still say that the Commissioner's finding in regard to Durbridge was not a reasonable one?—I heard more than you have stated. I heard that there was no light to be seen as well as that there was.

101. That was in your statement?—I think the witnesses gave evidence as to that, if I remember correctly.

102. Having heard all the evidence that was given, and Durbridge's explanation, would you still say that the Commissioner's finding was not reasonable?—I do not say that it was unreasonable, but I think it was a very lenient one.