

born applicants, to be sufficient to insure that only men of good record would secure enrolment. There are, however, weak spots in the system, and these I shall show later on. It is not long ago since several instances of very grave misconduct on the part of certain members of the Force became public property, and attention was directed to these in such a manner that it is not to be wondered at that people began to ask how it was possible that men who had been shown capable of such gross misbehaviour had ever obtained admission to the Force. It has created a feeling of unrest and want of confidence in the Force, but there is no reason to doubt that stricter supervision in the future will render extremely unlikely any such instances as we have had in the past.

Mr. Arnold, M.P., who was the first to direct public attention, from his place in Parliament, to the whole matter, was good enough to attend the sittings of the Commission in Dunedin, and he afforded me very great assistance in the direction of enabling me to trace certain cases which he referred to. Mr. Arnold's conduct and motives were broadly impugned by the Commissioner of Police during the proceedings before me. I see no reason to doubt that Mr. Arnold was prompted by the best motives, and only acted as he did in the best interests of the Force. He gave me several instances of men admitted into the Force without proper inquiry being made as to their character and antecedents, and who had afterwards to be got rid of. I will deal with the cases as given by him.

The first case, referred to by Mr. Arnold as No. 1, was that of a man who was dismissed from the Force for being concerned in an assault case.

I find from the official file that this man was enrolled on the 27th November, 1907, and apparently on the strength only of certain certificates that he produced of good conduct in—

- (1.) West Surrey Regiment, January, 1900, to September, 1901;
- (2.) London Police, October, 1901, to March, 1903;
- (3.) Cape Police, Kimberley, June, 1903, to May, 1905; and
- (4.) De Beers Mines Company (Limited), May, 1905, to September, 1907.

He must have been enrolled very shortly after his arrival in New Zealand, and there was absolutely nothing known of him beyond what was contained in the certificates, and these were of the usual very stereotyped form that we know from experience are very often given to a man without very much justification. This has even been the case with men leaving our own Force, as will be shown hereafter. I think it distinctly dangerous to enrol men without some better knowledge of their antecedents. The next case will emphasize this.

No. 2 is the following :—

This is a man who left England in company with his wife's sister. He came to New Zealand and joined the Police Force. His deserted wife made inquiries, and it was discovered that he was living at the Lower Hutt with his wife's sister, by whom he had two children.

This case calls for some remark, and is not at all disposed of by the Commissioner's explanation.

He was enrolled into the Police Force on the 11th June, 1908, under the name of James Holbrook, his birthplace being stated by himself as Bath, England, and the date 26th December, 1876. He stated that he left London for New Zealand on the 14th January, 1904, and arrived in New Zealand on the 1st March, 1904. He gave all these particulars on his form of application to be enrolled. He further stated that in addition to other services he had been a trooper in the Cape Colony Special Police, and that he left Cape Colony for London in November, 1902. After he arrived in New Zealand he was employed by the Wellington and Manawatu Railway Company, and later was in the service of the New Zealand Government Railways. Inquiries as usual were made as to his conduct in New Zealand, with satisfactory results. Every candidate for enrolment is required to produce a certificate of birth or other satisfactory proof of age. This was not done in this instance. Applicant gave the date of his birth as 26th December, 1876. On the 18th June, 1908, a week after his enrolment, he was instructed to obtain his birth-certificate, but nothing was done to