

This man was enrolled into the New Zealand Police Force on the 20th March, 1908, on the strength of his previous service in the South Australian Eighth Contingent and in the South Australian Police Force. His discharges showed his character to have been good. As he only left the South Australian Force on the 31st January, 1908, and joined here on the 30th March, 1908, it is apparent that he could only have been a very short time in New Zealand. Absolutely nothing was known about him beyond the discharges, and we have seen what these have proved to be worth in other cases. On the 22nd November, 1908, he was fined 10s. for being off his beat and in the Albert Hotel without lawful excuse between 2.25 a.m. and 3.10 a.m. The next entry on his defaulters sheet shows that on the 27th March, 1909, he was called upon to resign and allowed twelve days' annual leave to 13th April, 1909, for "neglect of duty in failing and refusing to render assistance to several of his comrades who were engaged in bringing a resisting prisoner along the street, surrounded by a riotous and obstructing crowd." I do not consider that Mr. Arnold's statement is in any way "a gross misrepresentation of the facts," as it is described by the Commissioner. On the contrary, I believe it to be substantially correct, for that is the distinct impression left on my mind after closely reading all the evidence given at the inquiry and the reports of the constables. Inspector Ellison said of him, "I have several times noticed him inattentive, slovenly on his beat, and given to gossiping, and have checked him without good result. I consider he is one of the most useless men in the station as a policeman, and one who will do no duty that he can avoid."

In spite of all this, there is an entry on his defaulters sheet by Sub-Inspector Wright, "Discharge handed to ex-Constable Hood 12/5/09. 'Generally good.'" This can only be described as perfectly astonishing in the face of the man's record.

A number of men have been referred to by Mr. Arnold in his evidence as having been enrolled into the Police Force with little or no inquiry into their previous history. He supplied me with their names. I have gone through the files, and find that all these men were admitted on the strength of previous police service outside of New Zealand. So far as I am able to judge, there is no reason to doubt that they will turn out well. I have pointed out elsewhere the extreme danger of relying exclusively on *written* testimonials and discharges, especially in the case of men who come to the Dominion from overseas. I think that in all cases the preference should be given to either New-Zealand-born applicants or to those who have been here since youth. The desire to get men of previous police service, so as to dispense with training in the depot, has resulted most mischievously.

The case of a man who was dismissed from the Force on account of having been convicted in the Magistrate's Court on two charges of assault in the streets of Wellington, on one of which he was fined £5, and on the other sentenced to twenty-one days' imprisonment, has been mentioned to show (1) that strict discretion is not always used in considering the suitability of an applicant, and (2) that a man is retained after he has proved his unfitness for the position of a constable.

The man, on applying for enrolment, referred the Commissioner to a certain constable who he said knew him well and could speak as to his character. This constable reported on the 20th April, 1905, "His behaviour in company is rather silly, shouting loudly and making silly remarks, leads me to think he will not make a very intelligent officer." The Commissioner returned this to the constable with the following minute: "This report is not sufficiently explicit. For what period does Constable R. speak of? Is the Mayor of S.'s recommendation for eleven years a satisfactory one?—W. DINNIE, Com'r. 26/4/05." Constable R. then reported again, "I have seen the Mayor of S., and he informed me that he gave attached certificate with a view of getting G. into the Railway workshops as a carpenter. He can only say he is a fairly good carpenter *from what he had heard*. I knew G. from 1898 to 1903. Although I do not class him as a larrikin, he was very noisy on the street, giving me the impression he was