

he considered that Inspector Cullen was vindictive, especially when he took a dislike to any one. He said that on this account he had considered Inspector Cullen's fitness to control a large district and body of men, and that it was not satisfactory. He further stated in effect that Inspector Cullen's evidence as to the staff was unreliable and untrue, and actuated by malice. Although I pointed out that, if this were true, it was tantamount to asserting the unfitness of the Inspector for his important office, and placed all the men under his control at the mercy of a vindictive man, especially as he, the Commissioner, had previously stated that he relied almost wholly on the Inspectors to recommend men for promotion, he did not seem to me to realise the seriousness of the allegation he was making against the Inspector, and how it might affect the whole question of the efficiency of his own administration. The evidence, as referred to, will be found on pp. 497 and 499. With a view to satisfy me of the truth of his allegation that the Inspector was vindictive, as the result of a dislike he had towards Sub-Inspector Wright, he handed me a small file of papers showing that in August, 1906, a very slight dispute had arisen between Mr. Cullen and Mr. Wright over the querying by the latter of the details of a very small voucher for the removal of nightsoil at a suburban station. Truly a very serious indictment! When men are lacking in a due sense of proportion, their judgment as a rule is seriously wanting.

I am not going further to refer to Inspector Cullen's relations with Mr. Kettle, S.M. The Commissioner has been fully aware of them for several years past. If he considered that they were likely to affect Mr. Cullen's efficiency and usefulness as a police officer, he should have taken action long since. He only refers to them now in connection with a matter personal to himself.

Matters at Oamaru in connection with police administration have been reported as not quite satisfactory, and I perused papers in connection with certain complaints there. On the 28th November, 1908, the Commissioner wrote as follows: "INSPECTOR GILLIES,—Unfortunately, since Sergeant Griffiths took charge of Oamaru we have had nothing but trouble, and I quite agree with you *that a complete change is absolutely essential*. Let Constables Nuttall and Murphy be transferred at once to Christchurch, and replace them by two constables from there. I will transfer the sergeant as soon as I can make the necessary arrangements, as this state of affairs cannot be allowed to exist." Comment on this is not necessary. The minute was written nearly a year ago, and the sergeant is still there.

My attention has been drawn to a condition of police matters at Blenheim that calls for prompt action. I have perused the file dealing with complaints made as to police administration in that town, and I am convinced that steps should at once be taken to put matters on a more satisfactory footing. The file dates back to December, 1906, when the Commissioner addressed a memorandum to Inspector Ellison stating that he had reliable information as to Sunday trading, and that it was "useless complaining to local police, who do not endeavour to trap the offenders. . . . I am not at all satisfied that the sergeant-major is sufficiently strong in this direction" (preventing Sunday trading). And then, on the 26th January, 1907, there is the following minute on a report by Inspector Ellison severely criticizing the sergeant-major: "INSPECTOR ELLISON,—I quite concur that the sergeant-major has not been paying proper attention to licensed houses in his district, and I am considering the necessity for his transfer.—W. DINNIE, Com'r." And so the condition of things, judging by the file, continues to steadily deteriorate, and no attempt at effecting any improvement in the only possible apparent way is made. Complaint after complaint is received, and prompt attention is promised. Owing to a great scandal that was caused by the death of a man who was burned in a cottage while drunk, Inspector Ellison, on the 17th October, 1907, addressed a further memorandum to the Commissioner dealing with the whole position of police matters at Blenheim, and expressing strong opinions as to the great laxity shown. On this the Commissioner writes a very long minute. I need only quote portions