

of it: "The only remedy in respect of the present state of matters at Blenheim, more especially in regard to licensed premises, seems to me a change of local police control, and I will keep this in view when a favourable opportunity occurs." [It has apparently been kept in view for the last two years.] "The sergeant-major must clearly understand that by strict supervision over hotelkeepers he is rendering the trade a good service, and preventing 'no-license' being carried. The present laxity is simply playing into the hands of Prohibitionists, and neglecting his lawful duties.—W. DINNIE, Com'r. 21/10/07." A more extraordinary appeal by a Commissioner of Police to the well-known sympathies of his subordinate officer, the sergeant-major, could not well be imagined. Then we come down to the 13th July, 1909, when Inspector Ellison again addresses a memorandum to the Commissioner drawing attention to the alleged drinking habits of the sergeant-major, and to the absolute lack of energy on his part in dealing with certain houses in Blenheim that require special attention and supervision. The Inspector says that he fears that some serious trouble may arise at any time owing to that officer's convivial habits and general laxity. He says, "I consider an active, energetic sergeant of considerable ability is necessary at Blenheim in order to firmly enforce the Licensing Acts and some other laws, and maintain good discipline in the service there." The Commissioner minutes this thus: "INSPECTOR ELLISON,—This sergeant-major must be transferred from Blenheim. He has already had warning in respect to his conduct in the direction indicated. I hope to be in Wellington soon, and will arrange his transfer. Please show him this file, and he can report thereon if he chooses.—W. DINNIE, Com'r. 15/7/09." The sergeant-major then writes a long rigmale protest against being transferred, but not making any serious answer to the allegations by the Inspector. The Commissioner minutes this: "File for present. This sergeant is now nearly sixty-five years of age, and will soon be leaving the service.—W. DINNIE, Com'r. 16/8/09." I understand that he will not be sixty-five years of age until June next. As the Commissioner seems to me to be quite unable to realise the gravity of the position, I strongly recommend the Hon. the Minister to deal with the matter himself, and insist on action being taken. It would be far better to send the officer on leave of absence until his time expires than to allow the continuance of what I consider is a public scandal. For this purpose I am sending the file to the Hon. the Minister for his information.

A practice has grown up of late years which I very strongly deprecate as not conducive to true discipline and as tending to raise dissatisfaction. It is that of *offering* positions to men, whether on promotion or otherwise, and asking them if they will accept them. It is on record that a man has been asked if he will accept promotion to the rank of sergeant, and has refused, mainly on the ground that he was comfortably settled in a nice district, and that the emoluments of his position were far in advance of what he would receive as a sergeant. I hold strongly that a man in this case should be given no choice. The interests of the service must be the very first consideration. If the Commissioner once decides that Constable A is the very best man for the next promotion, he should inform Constable A, and instruct him to report himself accordingly. If Constable A is allowed to refuse the promotion, there is a distinct loss to the service. It is no answer to my contention to say that Constable B, Constable C, and Constable D are all equally good men, and that any one of them can with equal advantage take the place of Constable A. I do not say that it may not occasionally happen that even half a dozen men at one time may all be equally efficient, but the chances are that it is not so, and my experience has shown me this also. At any rate, I would say that discipline and efficiency must regulate the position, and it is certainly not discipline to go hat in hand to a man and ask him if he will please do this, that, or the other thing.

The same remarks apply to filling vacancies in stations and districts. It has become a common thing for the Commissioner to ask Inspectors if they have men who would be *willing* to go to this place or that place, just as if the Force were to be run for their convenience and pleasure.