

centres would have to be obtained; but I do not think that this would cause any difficulty, for I know from a long experience that it would make very little difference to them. I limit the proposal to the four centres, because it is only in these that the grievance is a real one, owing to its frequent occurrence. This is no matter of pampering or coddling. It is one that most clearly affects a large body of men in the Force, and materially affects the efficiency. There are a large number of entries on the defaulters' lists showing that men have been dealt with by their Inspectors for failing to attend Court, say, at 9.30 a.m., when they only get to bed at, say, 5.30 a.m. I am informed that the practice suggested is followed in other places, and with great advantage.

Sunday Leave.

Complaint has been made that there is no regular system by which men can get an occasional Sunday off duty. One man stated upon oath that he had not had a Sunday "off" for three years. I recognise the difficulty there must be in relieving men in this way, and I think that in most districts the officers would be glad to assist the men in this direction. It is, I think, only reasonable that every man, whatever his calling, should have an occasional "day of rest." Attention has been directed to this matter in other parts of the Empire, and the need has been emphasized. I make no recommendation, for I am not in a position to do so, but I suggest to those in authority that a little more attention should be paid to this need.

Late Leave.

Constables in various parts have tried to make it a grievance that while they are living in barracks they are required to be in by 11 p.m. I may say at once that I consider this full late enough, and I am of opinion that discipline could not be properly maintained were this rule not strictly enforced. There is really no cause at all for complaint. Extension is very readily granted where request is made and proper and sufficient reasons shown. I imagine it is not very difficult to find reasons. A very little excuse seems to suffice.

A Dunedin Complaint.

The men in the Dunedin Station complain bitterly that they are compelled to wear uniform in leaving the station until they reach their homes. It is not the rule in any other centre, and I think should now be abolished. It was made under special conditions, and these conditions no longer exist. It may appear to some people a very small grievance, but there is a good deal underlying it. Now that police matters in Dunedin are so very much improved, there seems no sound reason why a special rule should be retained which only acts as a reminder of a most regrettable period.

Appeal Board.

Suggestions have been made that an Appeal Board should be set up on the same lines as is now the case in the Railway and elsewhere. I may say at once that I am not at all in favour of such a proposal. The Police Force stands on quite a different footing from any other public service in the Dominion. It is, or should be, under strict discipline, and the right of appeal would only foment dissension. With firm, strong, and equitable administration there would be no general demand for an Appeal Board, and I feel sure that the effect would merely be to remove control from those who ought to exercise it, and to seriously affect the discipline.

Detective Rank.

It has been urged that a special grade should be established for the Detective Branch. I have heard no convincing argument in favour of a change in this direction, and I agree with the Commissioner that the time is not ripe yet for such a departure. For the present the uniform branch and the plain-clothes branch must be as one Force, and each member stand on his own merits for promotion.