

disagree as to whether this has been carried out. No hard and fast rule can be laid down to govern promotions or anything else in the Police Force. Successful administration must depend on the exercise of discretion and a sound judgment, and on the possession of knowledge.

Although the evidence is full of complaints, and some of them valid ones, on the score of promotion, the Commissioner makes the astonishing statement that there is only one instance before the Commission in which the slightest suggestion can be made of delay in promoting a constable, and he excuses himself in this case by saying that he could scarcely be expected to promote this constable, although recommended by his Inspector, because the late Commissioner had not recommended him six years ago; and it is as well to note here that the late Commissioner only saw this man *once*, and then only for a moment. As I have said elsewhere, a grave injustice has been done to this man, which I hope to see rectified. It is a curious commentary on the Commissioner's attitude with respect to the information left him by Mr. Commissioner Tunbridge that he gives this as an excuse for promoting a certain constable who had *not* been recommended by his Inspector, and that this man was such a shocking bad selection that he had to be reduced very shortly after promotion.

The Commissioner has thought proper to reflect upon the attendance at the Commission of Mr. R. A. Wright, member of Parliament for Wellington South. He says that Mr. Wright displayed a marked hostility to himself personally and to the Police Force generally. There is not the slightest foundation for such a statement. The clear object in making it is to reflect upon my action in giving Mr. Wright the privilege of asking any suitable and proper questions of any member of the Force. I explained that I accorded this privilege to any member of Parliament who desired it, in his capacity of trustee of the public interests. Mr. Wright displayed not the slightest hostility towards Mr. Dinnie, and the latter's wild statement is a mere flight of imagination.

The Commissioner takes credit to himself for considerably improving the efficiency of the Force after he took over charge from ex-Commissioner Tunbridge. Whether this credit can be justly claimed must be judged by the evidence. There is no doubt, I take it, that the Force was highly efficient when Mr. Tunbridge left it. It is unfortunate that a Commission of Inquiry should have to sit upon it to-day.

#### CONCLUSION.

After having been all over the Dominion, having come in contact with a very large number of members of the Police Force of all grades, having heard the evidence, in many instances highly condemnatory of administration, general and local, having seen the demeanour of certain members of all ranks from the Commissioner downwards towards each other, I feel bound to assert the opinion that the handling of police matters in the immediate future will require the exercise of great tact and discretion. The position of several officers, if left as they are, will be perfectly impossible, and grave trouble may arise. As I have previously pointed out, the Commissioner has stated his opinion of one Inspector to be that, where a matter affects him personally, he becomes so vindictive as to be capable of giving false and unreliable evidence on oath. I do not believe this to be true for one moment, but it serves to show the spirit that may possibly underlie and actuate police administration, general and local, for some time to come. What is going to be the position of certain men who have given evidence adverse to their superiors? The progress of a Commission such as this through the country must necessarily seriously affect discipline, and is liable to create turmoil. I can do no more now than leave the position here in the hands of those in authority, with an earnest injunction to grapple honestly and sincerely with any difficulties that have arisen, and to endeavour to the very best of their ability to smooth over the rough edges of controversy and rivalry, so that no feeling of soreness may continue, or risk of doing injustice may arise, but that all may work together for the benefit of a Force that, taken as a whole, is a credit to the Dominion, and that compares favourably with any similar Force in the world, and that, properly handled, will still further enhance its reputation.