

8. In regard to the discipline and efficiency of the Force?—It is head and ears over the discipline of the provincial days; there is a great improvement in the service.

9. The Force is more efficient to-day than during any part of your experience?—The only place where it was superior was Dunedin; I came over with Branigan.

10. In regard to character and sobriety?—The men are sober, and do their duty; they may grumble, but they do it all the same.

11. They are a credit to the Force?—So far as I can see.

12. Do you know of any cases where constables have used political or other influence?—I never knew of such a case. In my case it has been thought I was a favourite of Sir Joseph Ward. I was never under any obligation to him, nor would I ask it.

13. You have been seventeen years at the Bluff, and have not asked for anything?—So long as I am left alone I am quite satisfied. A man who cannot carry on under Inspector Mitchell is a dunderhead: he can hardly make a mistake.

14. Do you think promotion is unfairly dealt out?—I do not know of a case: some men have been on a station for a long time, but I understand they have refused promotion.

15. What should be the reasons governing promotion?—I should say intelligence and efficiency, taken together with seniority. Seniority alone would not do; you want common-sense and judgment in dealing with the public.

WALLACE ABERCROMBIE BROOKES, Sergeant, examined on oath. (No. 8.)

*Witness:* I am stationed at Invercargill. I joined the police in 1889, and was sent to Clyde; from there I was transferred to Invercargill, and from there to the Bluff; from there to Ophir, and from Ophir to Ross; from Ross to Christchurch, on promotion; and from there to Invercargill.

1. *The Commissioner.*] Were you satisfied with your promotion, and the circumstances under which it took place?—Yes, I received it when I thought I was entitled to it.

2. In regard to the general organization of the Force and control or enrolment, have you anything to say?—No.

3. Do you know that at the present time there is a difficulty in getting the proper class of men?—I believe there has been some difficulty; there might have been a better class got.

4. To what do you attribute that?—I think the pay is the cause of it, for one thing.

5. Do you hear grumbling in regard to it?—I have heard dissatisfaction expressed with the rate of pay, more especially among the married men. When I was in Christchurch, as a sergeant, it cost me more to live than I earned, both rent and the cost of living. I paid 17s. 6d. rent, and was allowed 10s.; my pay was 10s. a day. I have eight of a family.

6. How does that compare with Invercargill?—I think it is somewhat cheaper here.

7. If it costs you more to live than you earn you will get into debt?—That is so. Constables with small families are in the same position. I have been told on many occasions by the men that it takes them all their time to live.

8. Do you attribute that to the increased cost of living?—Yes.

9. You think the knowledge of this has an effect on recruiting?—I could not say.

10. I suppose if men in the Force were asked for an opinion by men who thought of entering the Force they would say "Keep out of it"?—That is my opinion.

11. To what extent could the position be improved?—I believe it acts most harshly with married men joining the Force.

12. There are not many married men joining now?—Well, men get married shortly after joining, but there are married men who join, and that has been their experience. They have complained to me about it.

13. How is the average married man in any other walk of life better off?—I do not know.

14. Is there much difference between the amount the average constable or sergeant receives compared with the average civilian?—Others may live in different quarters; we are expected to live in a respectable locality, and we pay higher rent.

15. What do you mean by better quarters? There are plenty of respectable quarters with small rents?—I could not find them in Christchurch. I have free quarters here, but married men on this station have told me they spent all they earn on living.

16. How could this be improved?—I do not know, unless married men were to receive a larger house-allowance and a rise in pay.

17. Your position is worse because you have a large family?—Yes.

18. What would you do to improve the position?—It would be hard to do that.

19. Are the men you come in contact with fairly efficient?—Yes; I have no fault to find.

20. Do you often have to report men?—On one or two occasions since I came here I have had to report for trifling things.

21. How do you find your position supported?—My complaints always receive consideration.

22. The general conduct of the men?—It is good.

23. Both in regard to soberness and morality?—Yes, I dare say there are a few exceptions.

24. I want those exceptions?—There are no exceptions here.

25. I want you to give me the names of any for my private information, not to be used for publicity unless I am satisfied they are undesirable men. These men you have in your mind, how did they escape being dealt with?—They have been dealt with.

26. But they are still retained?—Apparently.

27. Would you consider them fit to be in the Force?—I would not trust them out of my sight.