

the practice of transferring constables to be near their relations should be stopped at once. How can a man do his duty amongst his friends? From my personal experience, I would suggest that departmental inquiries be done away with, and all inquiries be held by a Magistrate in open Court. The pernicious practice of obtaining written statements from suspected persons, which has lately crept into the Force, should be stopped: it is unfair, un-English, and does not give a suspect a fair chance of defending himself if he is brought to trial. A practice has crept into the Department of employing newly appointed constables to detect sly-grog sellers. This practice should be stopped, as it lowers the members of the Force in the eyes of the public, who are too ready to believe that a conviction is necessary to an appointment. I know this view of the matter is not correct, but still it exists. Men employed for such a purpose should not be admitted into the police. The act of one tells on all as well in the police as in other bodies of men. Great care should be taken in the selection of candidates for admission to the Force, and the whole of the responsibility should rest on the Commissioner, the selection to be made from country candidates; and more reliance should be placed on the certificate of the officer in charge of the sub-district where the candidate comes from than all others. I remember hearing of a candidate being sent by a Cabinet Minister to the Commissioner's office a few years ago for admission into the police. The Commissioner rejected the candidate, but a few days after he came back with an order from the Minister to the Commissioner to take him on at once, and he was taken on. I believe this was in Mr. Tunbridge's time. This one case alone bears out what I say—namely, take the control out of the Minister's hands and put it in the hands of a man whom the members of the Force will have confidence in. If something is not done, I know that some of the best men will leave very shortly. In regard to travelling-allowance, I think all expenses out of pocket should be allowed, and that the officer incurring the expense should be made to show the work he was performing, and that he was not out to make a cheque. I will give a case in point: A few years ago an Inspector used to come to my station monthly. He would arrive about 8 p.m., go to his hotel, remain all night, come to my office at 8.30, and leave at 9, just signing his name. At another station I was in charge of the Inspector would arrive in the evening, remain all night, go to one of the outlying stations from mine, visit another station next day, and come back to the town I was in, and, as a rule, took a whole week to do this, that could easily be done in two days. I have been on duty with Inspectors, and lived in the same hotel, and sat at the same table, and the Inspector got 12s. per day and I got 6s. I am of opinion that work done for other departments should be stopped or paid for, as it takes up a lot of time that should be otherwise employed.

1. *The Commissioner.*] Are the opinions you express in regard to the present administration of the police, and the feeling of dissatisfaction amongst them, based on information you have received in Invercargill or Southland alone?—No; all over New Zealand. In the last six or seven years I have travelled half a dozen times to Wellington, three times to Christchurch, once to Auckland, and if there is a policeman about I always have a conversation with him.

2. And they speak their mind more freely to an ex-constable than to another?—Yes.

3. When were you last away?—Last year, at the time of the visit of the American fleet, I went to Auckland.

4. You think the feeling of dissatisfaction is deep seated?—It is.

5. When did you first notice it as a serious factor?—It has been going on all along; as long as I have been in the Force there has been political and private influence, but the consequent dissatisfaction is more serious now than formerly.

6. Do you trace it mainly to the existence of what is called "political pull"?—I do—political and private "pull." I never used it. I would not join the police under present circumstances.

7. Without political "pull" a man cannot get beyond the rank of constable?—No.

8. Do you think this "pull" is being exercised more in connection with the present Commissioner than previously?—I do not say so for a moment.

9. But you are prepared to get rid of the present Commissioner, while the previous one was in just the same position: why?—The previous Commissioner was a man of more firmness and backbone than the present. I never saw the present Commissioner till the other day at Invercargill, and I have never spoken to him, but from what I hear he is completely under the control of his Minister, and does whatever he dictates without question.

10. But you instanced a case in which Mr. Tunbridge, who you recommend should be brought back, took on a man because the Minister told him to?—But he refused in the first instance.

11. How do you know Mr. Dinnie would not do so?—I cannot tell. The man in question came from the West Coast, and was ineligible in every way.

12. I notice, in suggesting suitable men for the position of Commissioner, you limit your choice to Invercargill or Southland?—I am personally acquainted with them. I never exchanged ten sentences with Mr. Mitchell in my life, but I judge by what I see.

13. *Mr. Dinnie.*] Do you know of any case at all since I took charge of the Department in June, 1903, where political influence has taken effect?—No, I could not give an instance.

14. Do you know anybody else who can give an instance?—I do not.

15. But police constables have been talking a great deal to you: have they not told you?—They may have, and no doubt they have, but I cannot give any names: if I recollected them I would not give them to you.

16. *The Commissioner.*] What would happen if you did?—What happened to me when I went before a Royal Commission ten or twelve years ago. I have heard from time to time from policemen all over the colony that if they could get some person to go to Mr. Dinnie they would get what they wanted.

17. *Mr. Dinnie.*] Do you not think there are a great number of constables who could get influence if they wished?—I am quite satisfied of it.