

9. Surely no man need be afraid of facing a charge when he is not guilty?—Lots of them face it and say nothing. A man is frightened of getting sat on, or of being marked afterwards.

10. For denying a charge?—Yes.

11. That is rather a grave reflection, because it practically means that there is almost a desire on the part of the superior officers to see their men get into trouble. I should have thought the contrary would be the case. Where is this man now?—In Auckland. He was fined 5s., I think.

12. It seems strange that he did not call you as the only witness who could have cleared him?—He could not call me then because I was away at the time.

13. Have you a clean sheet?—No, I have not.

14. When were you last in trouble?—In November, I think.

15. For some breach of discipline?—Yes.

16. Had the constable you refer to a good sheet?—This case was the only mark he had against him then.

17. I will look into the matter in Auckland thoroughly?—So far as you know, what is the feeling generally as to the administration of the Force?—There is objection to the way in which promotion is carried out. I have heard it spoken of amongst the constables in the district generally. Otherwise I have no complaint to make. I have not been here very long.

18. Were you in the depot in Wellington?—Yes, I was there six weeks, I think, after I had accepted.

JOHN FOX, Constable, examined on oath. (No. 24.)

*Witness:* I am a police constable, stationed at the central station, Dunedin. I joined on the 1st September, 1906. I was appointed with two others by a meeting of constables to lay the views of the meeting before you, sir. The meeting was attended by the constables of the central station, and also of the North and South Dunedin stations. First of all, every constable in Dunedin considers that the present rate of pay is too low, and that this fact is in itself sufficient to prevent desirable men from applying for positions in the Force. Considering the unpleasant work a constable has to perform, and the risks he is exposed to, and the fact that morally and physically he is supposed to be almost perfect, and that he must have a fair education, he feels he is labouring under an injustice in being compelled to work for four years for 7s. 6d. a day. The ordinary labourer gets 8s. a day for work done between 8 in the morning and 5 in the evening. If he is called upon to work beyond those hours he is generally paid at the rate of time and a half, which would usually bring his pay up to about 12s. a day; while a great deal of the work of a constable is done outside those regular working-hours. Then, I think the Police Department is the only Department in which men have to pay for the making of their uniforms. This is considered an injustice by the men generally. Apart from the uniforms, the gaol warders are supplied with two pair of boots each year, and we consider we are just as much entitled to boots as they are, as there is no class of men so hard on boots as the beat-duty constables. It is also considered that when a constable travels on a train, whether on leave or not, he should be supplied with a second-class pass, as constables are always on duty in accordance with section 112 of the Police Regulations. Even if a constable is going on his honeymoon from Dunedin to Auckland, and some man commits an offence on the train, the constable has to attend to it under pain of a severe penalty. He may have to break his journey to have the offender dealt with. There is another little matter which, though it was not brought up at the meeting, some of the constables have asked me to mention. It is that a warrant card should be supplied to each constable to show who the bearer is, just as is supplied to constables in other Forces. It would be useful to a man in plain clothes, for instance, as a means of identification. Then, Regulation 128 makes it compulsory for single men residing at a central station to be in bed and have their lights out at 11 p.m. Well, it sometimes happens that a man may go to the theatre, and, as a play is not generally over before 11, if he remains to see the finish of the play he is liable to be fined. This regulation is strictly enforced. It is true that we can get late leave by making application in writing, but often a man may go out at 5 or 6 in the evening, and circumstances may arise which may make him wish to stay out later than 10 or 11. We suggest that the time should be extended to midnight. Beat-duty constables have only seven nights off in the month. On those nights they knock off at 5 o'clock in the evening, and are off until 9 o'clock next morning. There are some nights on which they go off at 9 o'clock, but they have to start work at 5 the next morning, and any constable of ordinary common-sense will not go out after 9 o'clock when he has to get up next morning at half-past 4. The men also complain of the system under which a sergeant visits each sleeping-room at 11 p.m. when the men who have to get up at 4.30 in the morning are generally asleep, and flashes his bull's-eye on the sleepers. It is, of course, not the fault of the sergeant, who under the regulations has to satisfy himself as to the identity of the sleepers. It is suggested that arrangements might be made for keeping a book in the ward room in which every man could enter his name before retiring for the night. Then, the beat-duty constables consider the lamps they have to carry are altogether out of date, and that something in the nature of this electric lamp which I have here might be supplied, and which was lent me by the firm of Turnbull and Jones. Not only are the present lamps inconvenient to carry, but they are dirty, and the oil soaks through on to the clothes and hands. This electric light seems to be quite as good as the bull's-eye now supplied, and I am informed by the firm that if some hundreds were ordered they could be supplied for 9s. or 10s. each—possibly less. They reckon it would cost about 6d. a month to keep them supplied, and they can be supplied wherever an electric-light station is in existence.

*Mr. Dinnie:* We have tried them, but they have not been found satisfactory altogether. They deteriorate as regards the strength of the light.