

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

CHARGES AGAINST THE POLICE.

Mr. BOWEN, Chairman.

THURSDAY, 19TH SEPTEMBER, 1878.

ALEXANDER ANTHONY GORDON PILMER, being duly sworn, was examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] Do you remember speaking to Mr. Barton about a case in which you considered a policeman had maltreated a prisoner at the Manners Street lock-up?—I do. *Mr. Pilmer.*
2. When was that?—It was not very long ago, but I do not recollect exactly when. I did not know the matter was coming here, but I did speak to him about it. 19th Sept., 1878
3. When did the occurrence of which you complain take place?—Considerably before that. Perhaps the Committee will understand it better this way. Mr. Barton was going to bring something before the House.
4. That was late?—Yes; and I spoke in ordinary conversation about this matter; also about another man threatening to put me in the lock-up as well.
5. Can you tell us the time and date of the occurrence?—No; I cannot.
6. You were impounding horses at the time?—Yes.
7. Can you not get at the pound-book, and would that not tell you?—I was constantly impounding cattle, so I do not suppose that would give much information.
8. Do you know how long ago it was?—I should think about two years ago.
9. Where was it—at the Manners Street Station?—Yes.
10. Where were you at the time?—I was impounding horses. I had just finished putting them in, and I sent my son into the police-station with the key while I made up the list. The key was always kept at the stationhouse.
11. That adjoins the pound?—Yes.
12. Well, what occurred?—The boy came back to me and said, "Oh, father"—"papa" was the word—"just come and see how the policeman is beating a man." I went immediately to see what was going on—I am too ready to go into rows—and I saw the policeman beating the man with a baton about eighteen inches long.
13. Where did he strike him?—Over the shoulders, hips, and legs.
14. *Mr. Tole.*] Did you see this yourself?—Yes.
15. I thought it was the boy who saw it?—Not him only. I saw it myself. The boy drew my attention to it.
16. *The Chairman.*] Were they severe blows?—Yes. I should not like to have had them. I think they were unnecessary. Once the man (if outrageous) was brought to order, there should be no further violence; and if the man showed submission to the officer, that should have been an end of it.
17. What was the man doing?—Nothing; he was carrying a bucket.
18. Did he say anything, or do anything, to irritate the constable?—No; he seemed too frightened.
19. Could you say what he was?—No; he was not known to me. He appeared to be a sailor.
20. You did not know him?—No.
21. You did not address him?—No.
22. What did you say then when you saw this going on?—I said to the constable, "You should not do that, Buchanan." He then desisted, and the man went away with the bucket.
23. What did the policeman say?—He said, "Oh! he sprang at me like a tiger." Those are his exact words.
24. Did the man say anything on the policeman saying that?—No; he went out directly.
25. Is that all you know of the matter?—Yes. I mentioned the thing to the Mayor, Mr. Hutchison, either that or the following day.
26. Did you make any complaints to the Inspector of Police?—No; I thought the less I had to do with the police the better.
27. Do you know whether the Mayor made any complaint?—I do not know. I know once the Mayor wrote to the Inspector of Police, and could get no answer.
28. About this affair?—No; about another matter.
29. *Mr. Barton.*] Were the policeman and the prisoner of about a size?—No; the policeman was an immense man—a strong, able-bodied fellow of about 6 feet—while the prisoner was not more than 5 feet 6 inches.
30. When the policeman said, "He sprang at me like a tiger," did the man appear to be labouring under excitement?—No; the prisoner was not excited; he was frightened.
31. When you saw the policeman beating the man with a baton, did you say anything by way of remonstrance?—No. I said simply, "You should not do that, Buchanan," or something to that effect.