

Mr. W. H. Swain.

2nd Oct., 1878.

1225. I suppose you had accounts from him in reference to the matter?—Well, afterwards, the whole thing fell through. I backed out of it, and gave Mr. Nathan £100 bill.

1226. For what?—To drop back again into the house. I do not know whether he ever paid Atchison that money.

1227. Do you know of any instance in which the police have been paid for their services in such matters as these? You say it is matter of general rumour: Do you know anything, of your own knowledge?—No.

1228. Mr. Barton.] Except that your agent asked you what sum he should pay Atchison—£5 or £10?—Yes.

THURSDAY, 3RD OCTOBER, 1878.

Mr. W. Hutchison.

3rd Oct., 1878.

Mr. WILLIAM HUTCHISON, being duly sworn, was examined.

1229. The Chairman.] You were lately Mayor of this city?—Yes.

1230. You had, in your official capacity, cause to communicate with the police on various occasions, I presume?—I do not know that officially I had, but it is very likely I may have communicated with them. I have no recollection, after this lapse of time, of what I may have said. Most likely I sent a memorandum to them once or twice.

1231. Have you had any reason to notice particularly their mode of conducting business and of doing their duty?—Yes, I had an impression then—I do not know that it is so strong now—that the police of Wellington required very strict looking after—that they were inclined rather to go beyond their duty; but I am not now prepared to give special instances. It was an impression I had that they were inclined to go beyond their duty, not only in arresting prisoners, but also in the rough way in which they subsequently treated them.

1232. Do you know of your own knowledge of anything of the kind?—Not in the way of detail, but, from sitting on the Bench pretty frequently, I had an opportunity of seeing how they conducted themselves towards prisoners generally; and I have had statements made to me, by persons in whom I had perfect confidence, which went to show that that was a characteristic of them; and I did, when I was Mayor, deem it my duty to look into the matter somewhat particularly, with good effect, I think.

1233. There was one case here in which your name was mentioned: that was the case of a man who was alleged to have been maltreated by Constable Buchanan at the Manners Street lock-up. He himself referred to you as knowing something of him, and Mr. Pilmer, who made the charge, said he had informed you of the circumstance, and that you wrote to the police, I think, about the matter. Will you state what you know of Buchanan?—Yes; that is why I am here, I understand. I have said that my impression, generally, has been that the police as a body were inclined to go beyond their duty not only in arresting prisoners—because my idea, rightly or wrongly, is that, even if a man is drunk, there is no call for the police to arrest him so long as he is going home quietly—but in their mode of treating them subsequently; although I am bound to say that, from what I have observed, this man Buchanan was one of the most careful and considerate men of the whole force.

1234. Have you any recollection of Mr. Pilmer having made any complaint to you about the matter I have referred to?—No; I have no recollection. I recollect that he has spoken to me generally about the police on several occasions, but not particularly about this matter, so far as I recollect.

1235. Hon. Mr. Fox.] Mr. Pilmer tells us he could never get sufficient aid from the police, and referred to you in support of that statement?—The police did not think it was part of their duty to go with Pilmer to hunt up nuisances, and it may be that on one or two occasions I have sent a memorandum to the Inspector saying I thought he should give more assistance. But that is a different thing. I should be surprised if there was any document from me in reference to Buchanan's case.

1236. No, there is no document; but Buchanan referred to you, and so did Pilmer. Pilmer says he spoke to you about it, and that you communicated with the police. Buchanan says he never did such a thing, and referred to you for a character?—I am perfectly satisfied that, if Pilmer had informed me of any such assault as Buchanan says he is charged with, I should not only have represented it to the Inspector of Police, but also to the Minister of Justice. I am inclined to think Pilmer must be mistaken so far as Buchanan is concerned, because he appears to me to be one of the most considerate men in the force. He came to me himself about the matter, and asked me to say what I knew of him; and, believing my estimate of his character to be quite true—because I have had a good many opportunities of judging—I said I had not the least objection to give it.

1237. Is Pilmer an excitable man?—That would depend upon circumstances.

1238. Do you think he would recollect clearly and distinctly anything that occurred? Is he a reliable man as to evidence?—Oh, I think so; but I think he must have been mistaken in this case. It must have been some other man.

1239. I believe Buchanan has always borne a good character in the force?—Yes; from what I have seen of him I have always regarded him as a rather better class of man.

Mr. Wallace.

3rd Oct., 1878.

Mr. WALLACE, being duly sworn, was examined.

1240. The Chairman.] You wrote the other day to say you wished to give evidence as to some further payment you had remembered?—Yes; I said, in examination the other day, that there was no other money paid to the police except £40 in the case of Heggarty and £10 in Parker's case. On hunting some papers, I have found that £10 was paid to Farrell in Pestridge's case. I had entirely forgotten it.

1241. Was it paid to Farrell for himself?—Yes, as far as I recollect—and the only record I have is the butt of the cheque. Farrell explained to me that he was money out of pocket by the case in hunting up witnesses and getting evidence. I spoke to the agent of the New Zealand Insurance