

*Charge No. 4.*—That the police have failed to enforce the laws of the colony.

*Finding.*—We consider this charge is, on the whole, disproved by the evidence before us; but the matter is fully dealt with in our general report. We conclude from the evidence adduced that the percentage of reported crime in the colony which is undetected is comparatively small. Where the police have “failed” to enforce the laws of the colony such failure has, in our opinion, been due to existing defects in various statutes and difficulties in obtaining evidence, and not to want of zeal or ability on the part of the police.

*Charge No. 5.*—That there has been a lax administration of the law relating to the suppression of houses of ill-fame.

*Finding.*—We do not consider this charge proved. In all districts the evidence before us has satisfied us that the police have taken all proper steps for minimising the nuisance created by houses of ill-fame, and whenever such places have become in any way disorderly houses have taken prompt measures for the prosecution of the offenders. In the present state of the law, and in the absence of any provision for more effectively regulating prostitution, the effect of police action is merely to drive the keepers of houses of ill-fame from one locality to another. This is a social question which requires to be specially dealt with by legislation, and we cannot hold the Police Force responsible for the present state of things in relation to it.

*Charge No. 6.*—That Constable Christie, of Mosgiel, did, whilst in charge of Balclutha, collect moneys for various people and engage in duties for profit outside of his police duties, and neglected to protect citizens from injuries.

*Finding.*—We find this charge not proved.

*Charge No. 7.*—That about the beginning of 1893, or thereabouts, Constable Christie did carry on the railway from Balclutha, in a passenger-car, contrary to the regulation, the dead body of a child, thereby defrauding the revenue.

*Finding.*—Constable Christie admitted that he did so carry the dead body of a child—his own child of one month old.

*Charge No. 8.*—That Sergeant O’Grady is of intemperate habits, and has been during the past five years, and is neglectful of his duty as a police officer. The following are some of the instances of neglect of duty on Sergeant O’Grady’s part: The loss of a watch by Mrs. Jane Isabel Young; the breaking of public lamps, reported by McLaren; the theft of various articles from one McLaren; the failure to suppress the larrikin nuisance.

*Finding.*—The evidence before us proves that, though Sergeant O’Grady, as he admitted, is in the habit of taking liquor when he wants it, he cannot be fairly said to be of “intemperate habits.” Nor can it be honestly said that he is neglectful of his duty as a police officer. So far as we could discover, his police duties appeared to be carried out in a proper and efficient manner.

With reference to the particular instances of neglect of duty above alleged, we have to report as follows: (a.) As to the loss of a watch by Mrs. Jane Isabel Young: There was no evidence whatever of neglect on the part of Sergeant O’Grady. This charge was, during the hearing, abandoned. (b.) As to the breaking of public lamps, reported by McLaren: We acquit Sergeant O’Grady of any neglect of duty in this matter. (c.) As to the theft of various articles from one McLaren: It appears that McLaren’s poultry mixed with some of those of his neighbours, stated to be women of the town, who, it was alleged, killed and ate such poultry. Such conduct Sergeant O’Grady was powerless to prevent. (d.) The failure to repress the larrikin nuisance: It appeared the young lads of Oamaru at times congregated of an evening near the Athenæum there, but it also appeared that the police from time to time dispersed them, and used all reasonable efforts to keep the larrikin element in Oamaru in check.

*Charge No. 9.*—That Constable Mullaney frequents licensed houses, and conducts himself in such a manner as to interfere with the efficient discharge of his duty.

*Finding.*—The evidence adduced completely exonerated Constable Mullaney from the charge made against him. The evidence given in support of the charge, as well as that given in defence, showed conclusively that Constable Mullaney is an excellent police officer, strictly temperate, and in every way a credit to the Force. The evidence on his own behalf included