

206. As to the question of uniform, you are strongly of opinion they should get their uniforms free?—I have never given the matter much consideration.

207. And the house-rent for constables?—That is a very big item.

208. Sergeants get an allowance of 10s. a week towards their house-rent, whilst a constable on a smaller rate of pay has to pay his house-rent without any assistance at all?—Yes.

209. Constables are under the necessity of answering all fire alarms?—I reduced it down to one-half of those off duty.

210. Is that a fresh regulation?—It was in February, 1896.

210A. In regard to the reporting of offences of constables, I think Colonel Hume said the report was prepared, and then the constable was allowed to see the charge that was made against him now?—Yes.

211. And then he makes a reply?—Yes.

212. Is there any official report by his Inspector that he does not see?—I believe a case has happened lately in which it was not shown. I think it ought to have been shown. I may say it was against the regulations. It ought to have been shown. I refer, of course, to Chief Detective Henderson's case. It ought to be shown in every case.

213. The Inspector's comment on the charge to the Commissioner should be shown?—No, I do not think so.

214. Seeing the man's rate of pay is involved, and his status in the Force, why should not the Inspector's comment on the report be shown to the constable affected by it?—If that were done it would destroy discipline altogether. If you did that you might as well show the Commissioner's minute to the Minister, and the Minister's direction to the Commissioner. I do not think the constable should see that; but I will add this: that all the time I was Commissioner, if a man asked to see it it was never refused.

215. *Mr. Poynton.*] He had no right to see it?—That is my idea. He should not be able to claim the right. There might be things in it that the constable should not see.

216. *The Chairman.*] I suppose Inspectors' remarks are taken almost as conclusive? You do not hold any other inquiry?—It all depends what the punishment is. If it is only punishment, not attended with dismissal, there is generally an end of it. Chief Detective Henderson's case is a case in point.

217. But that was an appeal by petition to Parliament?—Yes. However, I would say this, in answer to that question: I think the Commissioners will be able to judge when they see the offences, and the punishments that have been awarded, by the records.

218. *Mr. Taylor.*] I know of cases in the Canterbury District where the Inspector has been at loggerheads with men, and for a considerable time there has been great feeling between the Inspector and certain men. A man has been reported for an offence by the sergeant; the man has been shown the sergeant's complaint and made his reply. Then the Inspector has also made a report on the case, and sent it on to the Commissioner, but the man has never seen the Inspector's report?—If it is not on the defaulter's sheet it is not worth talking about.

219. But when it is on the defaulter's sheet it has gone too far then?—It may seem a matter of opinion, but I believe it would be detrimental to discipline. In just the same way there is an agitation about disclosing probation officers' reports, in regard to which I believe a Bill was introduced into Parliament. I believe it would be detrimental to publish them.

220. *The Chairman.*] What does the Commissioner decide upon? How does he get the facts to decide upon?—I was not entirely guided by any Inspectors' reports. I generally knew something about the case. Of course I cannot say exactly. Mr. Taylor will not name any particular case. All I say is this: that a man has ample opportunity of coming to this Commission and stating his grievance. There will be no black mark against the man for doing so.

221. *Mr. Taylor.*] I would like to know whether Colonel Hume, in cases just referred to, attaches much importance to the Inspectors' comment?—It all depends who the Inspector is.

222. Did I correctly understand you to say that there were some men retained in the Force, who were incapable from old age, simply because there was no superannuation scheme or retiring-allowance?—Yes, I think I can say that.

223. There are men in the Force who are incompetent?—Well, no; they are not incompetent, because they are given billets which they can fill. I have one in my mind's eye at present. I found him at the Bay of Islands struggling to get on a horse, and he was given the billet of Inspector of Weights and Measures at Auckland, which he can carry out, so that he is not altogether a "drag."

224. Are there not a number of men whom you would like to retire if you could make superannuation provision for them?—Undoubtedly.

224A. They are retained because there is no superannuation fund?—That is it.

225. Colonel Hume said he thought it was a mistake to give the Force a Parliamentary vote, because of the influence at elections. There are only 500 of them altogether, spread all over the colony. Do you not think they would be as much a political power if disfranchised, as they are now, probably more?—No. A candidate goes to a man, and says, "Are you going to vote for me?" That man has a certain lien on the politician if he gets in.

226. You have said: "I consider the Force thoroughly efficient; no disorganization exists"?—Yes.

227. In your report for 1891, there is this paragraph:—

The Detective Force is in an unsatisfactory state, owing perhaps to the fact that men have been selected for this branch more from the number of arrests made by them when constables, or the number and verbosity of reports furnished, or, worse than all perhaps, from political influence or favouritism, instead of from special intelligence, or natural gifts and extraordinary powers.

That is deliberately stated in your report of 1891. Does that not mean disorganization? How do you reconcile the two statements?—I flatter myself that I have wiped all that out.