

309. Eleven other men were promoted to be first-class constables in the same batch. Were they all promoted according to their seniority?—Yes.

310. When was a man named William J. Rist made a second-class constable?—On the 8th February, 1892.

311. When was he made a first-class constable?—On the 1st February, 1897.

312. Were there other second-class constables who had been second-class constables before Rist was promoted in 1897?—No; he was top of the list.

313. Had he been in the Permanent Artillery?—I do not know.

314. As a matter of fact, was not Constable Flewellen entitled to promotion?—Yes.

315. When was he promoted to be a first-class constable?—Last September.

316. As a matter of fact, was not Flewellen senior to Rist?—No; Rist was reduced.

317. Why did he have preference over a man who had a clean record?—Because he goes to the top of the next list, unless he is reduced so many steps down that particular list. If it is thought that to reduce a man from first to second is not sufficient punishment, he is reduced, say, ten steps down the list; but it would be a terrible punishment to put a man at the bottom of the next list.

318. Do you not think that the rank-and-file of the Force should know why Rist is promoted, when a number of men know they are his seniors in the class?—They know they are not his seniors.

319. There was Constable Michael Hastings: When was he promoted to be a first-class constable?—In February, 1897.

320. When was he promoted to second class?—On the 1st April, 1882.

321. When was Dennis Brosnahan promoted to second class?—On the 1st April, 1882.

322. And Robert McLellan?—On the 1st April, 1882.

323. And Michael Leahy?—On the 1st July, 1882.

324. And John Hazlett?—On the 1st July, 1883.

325. And Eugene Egan?—On the 1st July, 1883.

326. And James Gleeson?—On the 1st July, 1883.

327. And William Folley?—On the 1st July, 1883.

328. And James Franklin?—On the 1st July, 1883.

329. And when were they made first-class constables?—On the 1st February, 1897.

330. I think on the 7th March, 1898, it was publicly notified that Sergeant O'Grady was to be removed from Oamaru to Invercargill. Was there any special reason for the order, other than the efficiency of the Force?—No. I think he had been a long time at Oamaru.

331. It was just to secure the efficiency of the Force?—I think so.

332. Was he removed?—No; he is still at Oamaru.

333. Can you tell me why he was not removed?—The Minister told me not to remove him.

334. Can you tell the Commission what Minister gave that order?—Hon. Mr. Thompson.

335. Did he tell you whether any members of the House had interfered on that man's behalf?—No.

336. He did not mention any names?—No.

337. Did you not have a communication from any member of the House, or from any one else?—No; I do not think so.

338. The Minister interfered with the transfer?—The Minister told me not to carry it out, personally.

339. I suppose that kind of interference happened on more than one occasion?—Oh, yes. It is perfectly impossible for any Minister to resist the pressure brought to bear in regard to these transfers. That is why I say it should be left entirely to the Commissioner of Police. I may state that Justices of the Peace, members, and everybody else, put every opposition in the way of transfers.

340. Do you not think that the result of that is that the men, recognising the Commissioner has practically no power, there is a loss of discipline and character in the Force?—Undoubtedly. If there is any disorganization in the Force, that is where it comes in, and only there.

341. You think that one is justified in supposing that sort of thing must produce disorganization?—Certainly.

342. About the same time Sergeant Macdonell was ordered for transfer from Invercargill to Oamaru?—Yes; that was consequent on the other order.

343. Was there any special consultation about this particular man?—No; the very fact of the Minister telling me to stop O'Grady naturally meant the stoppage of the man at the other end.

344. It was O'Grady who was stopped?—So far as I remember.

345. You were not told by the Minister to interfere in connection with the transfers of both these men?—No.

346. Do you remember about, some time ago, Constable Weathered, police gaoler at Timaru, being ordered to Methven?—Yes.

347. Do you remember the date?—I cannot give the date.

348. Was that order cancelled also?—Yes.

349. Do you know why?—Yes; because the Minister said it was an "Irishman's rise," and also because the constable could not manage horses. It was a mounted man's station. He would have lost about £4 per year, because he was a police gaoler, and he got a different class of pay.

350. Constable Drury, of Ashburton, some time ago was ordered to Timaru?—Yes, but because Weathered was not removed he could not be removed.

351. Which constable interfered?—Weathered.

352. Has Constable Drury since been transferred?—Yes. The reason I wanted him to go to Timaru as gaoler was because he was not qualified, according to his Inspector, for the charge of a station; and he was an old second-class constable, and I thought it rather hard lines that he should