

626A. Have not other officers been dismissed for the same offence that Bennett had been guilty of?—I should think so.

627. Do you remember one case or more where men have been dismissed from the Force for the same offence?—I do not know what the circumstances were, do not you see.

628. Is it not an offence that would usually meet with the punishment of dismissal?—I could not say that.

629. I think Colonel Hume says he thinks there have been dismissals for the same offence?—I think so, but I could not say.

630. As a matter of fact, did you not have a conversation with Mr. Seddon about this man's case?—I do not think I had, or else I do not think I would have told you at first that I thought there was no case against him.

631. You do not remember having a conversation about him?—No.

632. No special instructions about him?—No.

633. Is it an oversight that such a thing was not recorded on his defaulter's sheet?—It is a civil conviction. I do not know that his having been dealt with by the Court might not be considered sufficient.

634. In all matters affecting his promotion you would judge of his merit by his defaulter's sheet?—That does not follow; but at the same time I think it ought not to be entered in his defaulter's sheet.

635. There was no entry made in either Whitty's or Wilson's sheets?—Whitty was afterwards discharged on account of ill-health, on the 23rd March, 1892, with a very good character.

636. On his own application?—Ill-health. He had to produce a medical certificate.

637. Is the application there that he sent in?—No.

638. What I wanted to see was the letter that accompanied his resignation?—That would be on a separate record.

639. *Colonel Pitt.*] You say both these had clean defaulters' sheets?—No. Whitty had not a clean one; but that offence was not recorded against either of them.

640. *Mr. Taylor.*] You remember a case of a sergeant in New Plymouth being discussed in the House last session?—Yes, Sergeant Duffin.

641. Did you see him frequently when you had charge of the department?—When I visited New Plymouth I always saw him.

642. You know why he was dismissed?—Yes.

643. Did you know for years before that he was not a sober man?—No, I did not.

644. He was never reported to you?—No. I asked the Inspector several times what sort of man he was, and he had nothing to say against him.

645. *The Chairman.*] No complaint was made to you that he was an intemperate man?—It came out. He got *delirium tremens*, I think, finally. He was dismissed, and then a prohibition order was taken out against him.

646. *Mr. Taylor.*] A remarkable thing, was it not, if he developed that suddenly?—I think I can explain that. It is only my own idea. Of course he always had an officer over him at New Plymouth. The officer suddenly died, and Duffin was left in charge of New Plymouth for two or three months, and it was during that time he got worse and worse. That is the way it was explained to me.

647. Do you remember the case of a youth named Lindegreen being drowned at Wairoa, Hawke's Bay, a few months ago?—Yes, I think I remember something about it.

648. You remember the details of it?—No.

649. Do you know Constable Ramsay, who is in charge of the station?—He is not in charge. He is stationed there.

650. Do you remember that at the inquest it was stated that Ramsay had been drinking with this youth on the night he was drowned up to nearly midnight?—Yes.

651. Was any special notice taken of that?—As soon as I read it in the paper, he was called on for an explanation through his Inspector. The Inspector reports on this: "I beg to forward for your information the attached papers, and to state I consider, from the particulars gathered by the detective, that there are no grounds for entertaining any suspicion of foul play in connection with the death of this man. I think, however, Constable Ramsay should be transferred to Napier, where he would be under the constant supervision of a sergeant. Constable Bennett, of Napier, who is a married man, would be a good constable to replace Ramsay. I also recommend that Constable Coughlan be removed from Wairoa, as I am strongly of opinion he is unfitted, through incompetence, to have charge of an isolated station. After what has taken place, I think both Constables Coughlan and Ramsay should be removed as soon as possible." This is Mr. Tunbridge's minute: "Inspector Emerson,—Detective Chrystal's is a very clear and exhaustive report. Constable Ramsay has become too familiar with a certain class in Wairoa, and he has to be removed." Then, to the Commissioner: "Constable Ramsay arrived at Napier on the 4th instant, transferred from Wairoa."

652. Do you remember any case, Colonel Hume, in which a fine having been imposed on a constable for wrongdoing, and a conviction having been duly entered on his defaulter's sheet, the fine was refunded, and the conviction deleted without reference to the Inspector who imposed the fine—tried the case?—I think I have done so myself.

653. Deleted the conviction on the defaulter's sheet?—Yes.

654. What would be the reason for so doing?—When the papers came up, and I did not think there was a case against him, I should have informed the Inspector and taken it out. I do not know what particular case Mr. Taylor is referring to, but it strikes me I have done it before now.

655. Do you remember in the case of a man named Aitcheson of a fine being imposed and refunded?—I remember something about it. I do not think I did that. I think that was done by the Minister.