

his control?—Well, the only reply to that question is that all these duties are subservient to the police duties.

825. *Colonel Pitt.*] Suppose a Court is sitting, and a report comes in that a man requires to be arrested, would the Court be adjourned?—Yes, I think the Court would be adjourned.

826. *Mr. Tunbridge.*] Have you ever found during the time you were Commissioner that constables very often excused themselves for not performing certain police work owing to being engaged in duties in connection with some other office they have held?—Yes, they certainly try to.

827. Is it not very difficult to prove that their statements are incorrect?—It is very difficult; but that does not often happen.

828. But there is always that opportunity to excuse themselves?—Yes. I would like to add that it would add an enormous cost to the country if this work was done by paid men instead of by the police.

828A. *The Chairman.*] Have you had any complaints that the civil work undertaken by constables is neglected in consequence of police duties?—Very seldom. The Under-Secretary for Justice has occasionally come to me and said, "I cannot wake up that man of yours in such-and-such a place."

829. No complaints from outsiders?—No.

830. *Mr. Tunbridge.*] You were good enough to tell the Commissioners the other day that a prison warder started at £125 a year?—Yes.

831. But you did not tell the Commissioners what the maximum was, and the way they got to the maximum?—That is rather a difficult question to answer, because they can rise to the position of gaolers.

832. I mean in their position as warders?—They can rise up to £150, and there is £20 besides as house allowance. They attain their maximum pay by service and by being transferred to a first-class prison.

833. Not by any graduated scale?—No, there is a classification for first- and second-class gaols.

834. About how long would a man be in the prison service before he would get a rise?—The chances are that he would get a rise in twelve months.

835. What would be the amount?—£10; if he was in a first-class prison he would get it in twelve months, and if he was in a second-class prison the chances are he would be transferred to a first-class prison and he would get the rise then.

836. As regards the efficiency of the Police Force: you said the other day that you considered the Police Force of the colony was thoroughly efficient, and in support of your contention you quoted the criminal returns in the Year-book?—Yes.

837. These returns you quoted apply only to the cases before the Courts?—That is so.

838. Or, in other words, detected crime?—Yes. Then, I added also that I did not think there was very much undetected crime.

839. Will you kindly turn to your last report. Now do you find that the increase of reported crimes last year was 663 over that of the preceding year?—Yes.

840. Out of a total of 14,673 offences reported?—Yes.

841. The percentage of increase therefore being as near as possible $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the year?—Yes.

842. Now, the increase of population in that year is shown in the Year-book as 1.91 per cent.?—Yes.

843. Therefore, you see that the increase of crime during the year very much exceeds the natural increase of population?—According to this table.

844. And has not this increase of crime been going on for the last seven years, although perhaps not in the same ratio as last year?—No; I cannot say that it has. I do not think this return is worth the paper it is written on, because it is not a return of crime. I furnished it, but I would like you to look at what I said in my report. In paragraph 13, I think you will see that offences have decreased, as follows: "Abortion, 5; assaults, 7; assaults and robbery, 18; burglary, 112," &c. That is what I call crime decreasing. I do not call "drunkenness, 369," crime increasing.

845. It means police work, does it not?—Yes, but I do not call it crime. Now, I think that the worst crime we have in New Zealand is forging and uttering, and there was a decrease of eight. Then there is a decrease: "Gaming offences, 13; illegally on premises, 25; malicious injury to property, 35; murder, 10," &c. That is what I call crime. I may be wrong.

846. *The Chairman.*] You mean a decrease in the most serious crimes?—Quite so.

847. *Mr. Tunbridge.*] You say that the more serious crimes are diminishing?—Yes.

848. If you look at your report for the previous year (1896), it is very strange that many of the crimes you say were lesser last year were increased that year?—That is quite probable, and yet the next year we get a bigger population and the crime goes down.

849. But is not last year altogether an exception as regards the decrease in the more serious crimes?—Well, there has been a decrease in the prisoners every year. I am not prepared to say that last year was not an exceptional year.

850. The year before (1895) many of the serious crimes were on the increase?—Yes, there was an increase.

851. In the year 1894 there was also an increase?—Yes; and just to show that these figures are not worth much, there is a decrease of drunkenness in that year of 657.

852. You spoke of bicycles being used by the police as assistance: you have never refused the use of a bicycle?—No; but they are extensively used.

853. The men using the bicycles use their own machines and pay for the wear-and-tear themselves?—Yes.