

upon that. Is it desirable, in your opinion, that the men should have the right to vote, or do you think having the right to vote interferes with their independence, or subjects them to suspicion, or is in any way detrimental to the Force?—My experience of the matter is that it is not detrimental to the Force, in this way: that it is not from the mere fact of a man having a vote at an election that gives him any influence at all. The influence simply comes from his friends, and I think that as the franchise has been extended to the police, they can use their own judgment the same as other men in voting. They can select their candidate, and vote for that candidate without having recourse to anybody to advise them. I speak for myself. I have been here during three or four elections, and I have never yet been asked for my vote by one side or the other, nor has any suggestion been made from outside the Force. We might talk about the matter in the barracks amongst ourselves, but I have never been approached by any outsider.

76. You do not think yourself that it exposes you to any influences, or that you are likely to be made use of in any way for political purposes?—Not the slightest. It is not through having the franchise that the harm comes, when you talk about influence. I know nothing about influence; but it is the people who have a lot of friends who cause the mischief, and they use these friends to get advancement in the Force and for other purposes.

77. It has been suggested that men in your position having the right to vote would feel bound to vote for the party in power?—Oh, not at all. You can go to the ballot-box, and there is nothing to compel you to vote for any one. You can vote for whom you please.

78. You think there is no fear?—Not at all. I would not care if you could turn up my voting-paper to-morrow.

79. You feel no embarrassment in that way?—Not the slightest.

80. Can you tell me, then, that the feeling of the Force is that they are free from any pressure?—Yes. The men do not care. They have no fear in a matter of that sort. They are never influenced in any way to vote except in the way they choose themselves.

81. Have you ever heard any hints from your officers as to how the men are expected to vote?—Never. I have never heard the Inspector here speak of anything of the kind.

82. *Colonel Pitt.*] In Wellington, what instruction do the Police Force get in their duties?—The Sergeant-major (Mason) holds classes once a week, every Thursday afternoon from 2.30 to 3.30. That is, for every one who can possibly attend. Of course, if he does not attend, the senior sergeant is supposed to take over the class.

83. What is the instruction given?—Generally a lecture from the sergeant-major on discipline, and various other things. The men may ask him a lot of questions.

84. Are you instructed what you ought to do or ought not to do in stated cases?—Oh, yes.

85. *The Chairman.*] Do you get another instruction monthly?—If anything has occurred that is worth mentioning the Inspector generally gives instruction as to whether it was well done, or whether it was not done to his satisfaction, and then he points out what should have been done.

86. You get instruction from the Inspector illustrating cases?—Yes.

87. *Colonel Pitt.*] How many men on an average attend these classes weekly?—I suppose there would be about twenty—all the men who are off duty and can attend, both married and single.

88. We were told that all the men in the Force now have to insure their lives?—Yes.

89. Supposing the Government paid the premium of the life insurance, would that meet the grievance you say you have in reference to the long-service pay?—Of course, it would be a relief in one way, no doubt. I think it would hardly be adequate.

90. *Mr. Poynton.*] Is there any discontent about the uncertainty of getting a retiring-allowance?—Yes. Of course, the men would be satisfied if there was a permanent retiring-allowance of one month's pay for each year of service, after four or five years of service.

91. To get it as a right?—Yes.

92. *Colonel Hume.*] You lost 1s. a day, did you not, by being transferred from the Permanent Artillery to the Armed Constabulary Force before coming into the police?—Yes, when I was transferred.

93. Now, had any officer connected with the police anything to do with that loss at all?—No.

94. When you came into the police you knew exactly what pay you were going to get, and knew you were not to get the long-service pay?—Yes.

95. You came in with your eyes wide open?—Yes.

96. Everybody else came in on the same terms?—Of course, we could not all join at the same time.

97. You knew when you joined the Force that you would not get any long-service pay?—I did not know I was not going to get it; I knew it was not then in force.

98. You knew an order had done away with it?—Yes.

99. Did you ever see a scheme that I made out?—I have heard about it.

100. How would that suit the men: that is, increment for service?—That would have been satisfactory to the men no doubt, had it been tried, in the absence of anything else.

101. It would be better than the way it is now?—Certainly.

102. A man would get his increase in the ordinary course of things?—It almost amounted to the long-service pay system.

103. Now, where did you see Mr. Hutchison's scheme?—In the barracks.

104. Were you not paraded before Mr. Hutchison?—Yes; he came into the barrack-room one afternoon and explained the system to us.

105. Do you happen to know whether District Clerk Wright was present on that occasion?—He was not in Wellington then.

106. You say there are men junior to you drawing long-service pay?—Junior in rank, yes.

107. You might have told the Commissioners why that is: did you not get special promotion for gallant conduct?—Yes; I was promoted in 1892 for the arrest of a man named Findlay.