

makes his battery a mere recruit or training depot. It would be to his advantage for men not to be taken from the Artillery; but I think it would be to the Commissioner's advantage to have men in the police that had undergone a certain amount of training.

14. *The Chairman.*] It is inconvenient to have men taken for the police?—As far as the battery is concerned, yes, very.

15. *Colonel Hume.*] And from a military point of view is it detrimental or otherwise to the battery?—If you are expecting trouble from the outside it would be detrimental to the battery from one point of view; but from another it would give us a certain number of fairly well-trained constables in the colony to call on in case of emergency.

16. *The Chairman.*] Would their training be of much good to them after a certain number of years in the Police Force?—I think so. If a man once knows the use of a rifle he never forgets it. Artillery training is more complicated than infantry, no doubt, but still they would be very much better than the raw material.

17. *Colonel Hume.*] From your intimate relationship with the Police Force you know pretty well, I suppose, where those police are stationed who have been trained as artillerymen?—Yes, I have a fair idea where they are stationed; although, of course, if you shift them about I have no means of knowing. When they are first shifted I know where they go to, but after that I lose sight of them, unless I see them when travelling about the country.

18. From your knowledge of their localities, do you think they could be brought to a centre in sufficient time to be of much use as gunners?—It is a difficult question to answer. If you wanted them immediately I think the greater portion of them are within twenty-four hours' journey of your four centres, and a considerable number of them less.

19. Are not some at Greymouth?—Yes, Sir; but that is a part of the Island that would scarcely be threatened.

20. But if you wanted to get them to a centre?—You could send them across to Christchurch. You could get men to Wellington from Marton, Feilding, Waverley, Wanganui, Palmerston, and up that way.

20A. What about the man at Okarito?—Oh well, he had better remain as he is, to look after the district. What I mean to say is, it is a very great advantage, I think, to have the police with a certain amount of military training, so that you can move them—that they are not a mob. Also, I think it is a very great advantage in case there was trouble with the outside world to have them to use until you could get your Volunteer artillery together. At the same time, I do not think that, from other than from a military point of view, military training is of very much advantage as regards the steadiness and morality of the police. As regards morality, police and soldiers are much the same.

21. *Colonel Pitt.*] You do not think it is?—I do not think so—only as regards discipline and military training. Of course a soldier will be a soldier.

22. *Colonel Hume.*] Have you had any conversation with the late Commandant or the present Commandant on this point?—No, but I have heard them express their opinions on the advantages or disadvantages from their point of view of taking men from the different batteries.

23. And can you tell us what their opinions were?—They were both unfavourable—that it was not an advantage to the efficiency of the battery.

24. Now, you have seen all the police recruits that have been passed through the Permanent Artillery since there was a Permanent Artillery?—Yes, nearly every man. There may have been an exception. I believe there were some taken on that did not pass through the battery.

25. Do you consider the class of recruits you are getting now-a-days are as good or better than they were two or three years ago?—If you extend the period back a little I certainly say I am quite convinced the physique and stamp of men, other than from an educational point of view, is not as good now as it was ten years ago.

26. Have you noticed any difference in their moral and general character?—I think their moral character—I am talking now of the Permanent Artillery—is not as good as it was immediately after the Armed Constabulary was formed into the Permanent Militia. We had a different stamp of men.

27. Are the number of offences dealt with at the depot nowadays greater than they used to be or less?—Very much greater. When I say lately I mean for the last four or five years. They are not the same stamp of men at all.

28. *Colonel Pitt.*] Do you attribute that to stricter discipline, or to deterioration in the class of men?—If you could put the question some other way I think I could give you an answer that would give you a better idea of what I mean.

29. Give your own reason, then?—I think that some years ago we were allowed to go into the open market and get the best possible value for the money. At present we are confined, not solely, but to a large extent, to recruits from Volunteers.

30. *The Chairman.*] From the Volunteer Force?—From men who had either served in the Volunteers or were serving then.

31. *Colonel Hume.*] You were Sub-Inspector in the Armed Constabulary, and used to take on police recruits at the depot at Mount Cook?—Yes.

32. How long did that last; when did it stop?—That was gradually done away with just previous to the death of Colonel Reader. The thin end of the wedge was introduced just before his death, and it was gradually taken out of our hands until it left us altogether. Colonel Reader died, I think, in 1885. I know he stated to me that the change was a very great mistake, and a great pity—taking the selection of the recruits out of the Commissioner's hands and the officer commanding the depot.

33. Who fixed the date as to when the Armed Constabulary men should count their service as constables from: For instance, they were constables in the Armed Constabulary Force. When