

68. I would like to ask whether his defaulter's sheet does not contain an entry for allowing a prisoner to escape?—Yes; on the 19th September, 1892, "Allowing Carl Moeller, prisoner, to escape from steamship 'Hauroto.'" He was cautioned to be more careful in future. That punishment was awarded by the Hon. the Defence Minister. The escaped prisoner was drowned, and his body was found next day. An inquest was held, and a verdict of "Found drowned" was returned, with a rider to the effect that Constable McGill took every care of the prisoner, and was in no degree to blame. That inquest was held before Mr. H. W. Robinson.

69. Is there a conviction for drunkenness on the defaulter's sheet?—Yes.

70. What was the date?—On the 9th October, 1883, "Drunk whilst on duty at the Hawke's Bay Jockey Club races at Hastings." He was fined £1 by Colonel Reader, Commissioner.

71. Is there any record there for neglect of duty?—Yes; two. The first is on the 1st May, 1886, "Neglect of duty in not searching lunatic prisoner." He was cautioned by Inspector Bullen; and the other one on the 2nd July, 1886, "Neglect of duty in not arresting Louisa Bredon for using obscene and profane language within his hearing." He was reprimanded by Inspector Bullen. These four entries constitute the whole of the charges on his sheet. There is one entry on his merit sheet, on the 14th February, 1888, "In recognition of tact and energy in connection with the prosecution of Thomas Aitken, fined £5 and costs for sly-grog selling. Reward, £3."

72. When was he made a second-class constable?—He was never a second-class constable.

73. What is his rank now?—First-class; he went from third to first.

74. When was he promoted from third to first?—On the 1st March, 1895.

75. Is it customary to promote a constable from third to first class?—It is not.

76. What were the special circumstances connected with that particular promotion?—This man McGill was transferred from Napier to Wellington as a third-class constable, and after some time he was put into the District Inspector's office here as second clerk. Then I was hard up for a man in my office, and I took McGill into my office. He was a very good clerk. Then, some time ago, and while he was in my office, there was a vacancy for a district clerk at New Plymouth, and he was transferred there as district clerk.

77. Was the fact of his being appointed district clerk at New Plymouth the reason for his promotion?—I do not think so, because I think he was promoted before he was transferred.

78. Do you remember the reason for his special promotion?—I know it had something to do with the work in my office.

79. Are there many instances of constables being promoted from third class to first class?—Very few. Apparently McGill did not ask for promotion to first class but to second class, because I find his application to his District Inspector reads as follows:—

Police Office, 12th September, 1894.

I BEG to state that I regret the Commissioner cannot see his way to promote me to second-class constable. I cannot help feeling that it is very hard indeed to see junior after junior in the service (and not for any meritorious conduct that I am aware of) promoted over me. I have marks on my sheet, but I respectfully submit that my general conduct in the police will compare very favourably with any of those recently promoted. Many of those promoted, and almost all of those senior on the roll to me, were transferred to the police years after I joined, and if they had served with the same officers and were placed in similar circumstances it is a question if their defaulters' sheets would have been as clean as mine. I, however, trust the Commissioner will see his way to place my name amongst the first promotions he makes.

WM. MCGILL.

That raises the question which I pointed out to the Commission some days ago, and which I said was bound to crop up. This man evidently thinks his police appointment should date from the date he joined the A.C. Force, and that is what he means when he says juniors are going over his head.

80. You think he added his eighteen months of A.C. service to his service of twelve years in the police in his application for promotion?—That is what I imagine; or it might be that some of those Clerks of Court might have gone over his head.

81. Did you make any note on this application?—Yes, as follows: "Inspector Pender.—I regret I can do nothing for the constable. I have recorded my protest against the way promotions have been made, and hope and believe it will not be repeated. As this constable is now 15 on the seniority list, I hope he may not have to wait very much longer for promotion.—A. HUME, Commissioner." That protest referred to the promotion of Clerks of Court. It was made public in my reports.

82. *The Chairman.*] Six months after that he was promoted from third to first class?—Yes.

83. *Colonel Pitt.*] What is the date of that minute in which you protested against the way promotions were made?—The 13th September, 1894.

84. *The Chairman.*] Who made the promotions?—I was ordered to promote all Clerks of Court to second-class rank, and all men with clean sheets and seven years' service.

85. That was in 1895?—It was before this.

85A. *Mr. Taylor.*] Your protest was against indiscriminate promotions?—That is discriminate promotion.

86. Without considering individual merits at all, they were promoted in batches?—Quite so; but is discriminated to the extent that they must have seven years' service with clean sheets. That is discrimination.

87. *The Chairman.*] You say, "I protested against the way promotions were made, and hoped they would not be repeated"?—Because he wanted to go over men's heads.

88. He complains they went over his head?—But they did not, unless as I say it was in this particular batch that I referred to. In my report of 1894 there is the following paragraph:—

Every man who enters the Police Force of the colony should have an incentive to rise and be made to feel that assiduity and efficiency will meet with due recognition and advancement; but, owing to the higher ranks being in excess of the required numbers, there has been little promotion for some years past, and, in order to relieve the stagnation, I was instructed to promote to second-class rank all third-class constables who had served seven years in the Force with clean defaulter's sheets; and shortly afterwards I was directed to promote to second-class