

267. When you wrote in reply to Green's application for reinstatement you said then the case had been fully gone into. Did you not study the case up then?—I probably read these papers. I had a long conversation with the man, and he put a very different complexion on things; and then I think I saw Sergeant Geerin afterwards, and had a talk with him about it. I cannot remember how I got my information, but I got it.

268. Did the fact that Mr. Kelly wrote to you about it have an influence on the matter?—Undoubtedly. He had been all through the papers, and it naturally made me go through the case again.

269. When was he reinstated?—On the 1st July, 1891.

270. Who was Defence Minister?—Mr. Seddon.

271. He was reduced by Captain Russell and reinstated by Mr. Seddon?—Yes. But it is clear to me that Captain Russell had some doubt, because he would not even carry out the Commissioner's recommendation.

272. Was Green's promotion gazetted?—I should think so.

273. Can you tell me?—I cannot tell you right off. I will let you know.

274. Have you Constable Ramsay's papers?—Yes.

275. Was he convicted for drunkenness in Christchurch?—Yes, on the 9th April, 1894; "drunk in barracks." I should like, in justice to this man, as this case of drunkenness has come up, to explain his case. On the 9th April, 1894, Sergeant-major Mason reports: "I beg to report that I found second-class Constable William Ramsay, No. 488, drunk in barracks at 2.20 p.m. this day. This constable is on night duty, and had been attending Court this morning as evidence against a female prisoner for using obscene language." The Inspector minuted this: "Let the constable be suspended from duty." The constable reported: "I plead guilty to being drunk owing to ill-health. I produce a doctor's certificate to prove it. I attended Court that morning and gave evidence. I brought a prisoner named Hutton to Madras Street South. I got his fine. I went from there to Dr. Prins. I was suffering from a severe attack of diarrhoea, and told the doctor so. Dr. Prins ordered me to get a couple of glasses of brandy and go home. I went into the Zetland Arms Hotel and got two glasses of brandy, and came straight home, and was in barracks at 1.15 p.m. On account of being on night duty and having no breakfast that morning, and weak from diarrhoea, and not being used to drink, the brandy took effect on me." This was forwarded to me by the Inspector, and I minuted the papers: "The constable is fined 10s., and cautioned not to take too much liquor in future, even if ill.—A. HUME, 16/4/94."

276. Was he removed for that?—I do not think so.

277. Is he still in the Force?—Yes.

278. I should like to ask, Colonel Hume, what has been your general policy during your term of office in regard to the "tote-shops" in the principal centres?—Try and catch them if you can.

279. Do you think the men have been fairly successful in coping with the evil?—I think so, as the law stands.

280. What is the law?—They stand in Christchurch in front of the Empire Hotel, and in Wellington in front of the Empire Hotel, and you can go there and make your bets; and if a constable comes along you have only to step off into the street, and you cannot possibly touch them.

281. I do not refer to the "walking totes," as they are called. I refer to the tote-shops, such as tobacconists, &c. Do you know there are such places existing?—Yes. We have raided them on several occasions, but we cannot get at them. They keep no books.

282. Did you not get some in Dunedin while the session was on?—We raided two men, but we could not get at them.

283. That is to say, they are superior in acumen to the Detective Force?—I did not say that.

284. You cannot get at them?—Not as the law stands.

285. The law says "any place or building used for the purpose of carrying on betting"?—The places are not used for the purpose of carrying on betting; they are used as hairdressers' shops, and so forth.

286. Were you in office, Colonel Hume, when a man named Scott, a tobacconist in Christchurch, was charged with keeping a gambling-shop within the last four months?—I rather fancy I was in office.

287. Do you remember whether Scott was ostensibly a tobacconist?—I think he was.

288. You have never taken any special steps, as Commissioner, with a view to collecting evidence necessary to convict the proprietors of these shops?—I have spoken to every Inspector, and asked them to make a raid. I said to them to make a raid on a day when the telegraph office was closed, so that warnings might not be sent to different places. We tried it, but we could not catch them. We got convictions here and there, but every difficulty was put in the way. I think we have tried to put down the evil as well as it can be put down.

289. Practically, the police are powerless?—I do not say that; I think they have got a fair number of convictions.

290. Do you think an occasional conviction is dealing with the evil effectively?—I think so long as people have money they will get drink and gamble.

291. That is a very dangerous principle for the Commissioner of Police to hold?—I am not Commissioner of Police.

292. Generally speaking, you think it is almost impossible to effectively administer the gaming laws?—You can put it down that way if you like.

293. As a resident in Wellington, do you think there are more of the spicing fraternity in Wellington than any other town in the colony?—I do not know. I think, for the size of it, Hastings comes first, and next to that Christchurch, and next to that Dunedin. That is only my idea; I have really nothing to go on.