

WILLIAM CAMPBELL examined on oath.

426. *The Chairman.*] You hold the rank of chief detective in the Police Force?—Yes.
427. *Mr. Taylor.*] When did you join the Force?—In 1879.
428. What districts have you served in since?—In the Wellington District ever since.
429. Have you been in Wellington City all that time?—I was stationed in the Botanical Gardens for a short period after joining.
430. With the exception of a short time in the Botanical Gardens you have been in Wellington all the time?—Yes.
431. Were you ever ordered for removal?—Yes.
432. Where to—to Christchurch?—Yes.
433. Why did you not go?—The order was countermanded. Major Gudgeon was Commissioner of Police at that time.
434. Do you know why?—Yes. There was an inquiry held in reference to Detective Kirby. A report was furnished about me by Detective Kirby, of which I had no knowledge, and subsequently, when Commissioner Hume took over the Force, the matter was investigated by Colonel Hume. The order was then countermanded, and instead of me being removed, Detective Kirby was transferred.
435. Where was he removed to?—Auckland.
436. What was the nature of the report?—I arrested a man for a certain offence, and he was committed for trial. A friend of the prisoner gave me some information, and, in the Supreme Court, Mr. Jellicoe, who appeared for the accused, asked me if it was not a fact that a friend of the prisoner had given me some information about the case. I said that was so. Detective Kirby reported me for divulging the name of a person in the Court who had supplied me with information of a confidential nature. I was not aware that he had made this report until Colonel Hume took over the Police Force, when I learned about it.
437. Was the matter recorded in your defaulter's sheet?—No; it was simply an order to be removed.
438. Then, you were to be removed because of a reported offence that you were not tried for?—That is so.
439. You were tried in Colonel Hume's time?—The matter was investigated then.
440. What report did you make against Kirby?—I did not make any report, but I told him in the presence of Colonel Hume and Inspector Thompson that it was common talk that he was in league with the keeper of a gambling-house in Wellington.
441. Was that place situated in Willis Street?—It was a tobacconist's shop, almost opposite the Oriental Hotel.
442. Was that charge investigated?—Not that I am aware of. Of course, I did not make a direct charge. I simply told him it was common talk that he was in league with the keeper of this gambling saloon in Willis Street.
443. Was it not investigated so far as you know?—No.
444. If the charge had been investigated you would have been called?—Yes.
445. Do you not think that a statement of that kind was of sufficient importance to have been investigated?—I cannot say exactly.
446. In the light of subsequent events, do you not think it ought to have been investigated?—It would have been better. Probably the Commissioner made some investigation without calling me, but I have no knowledge that an investigation was made.
447. *The Chairman.*] Was it at the inquiry you made that statement?—Yes.
448. Held by whom?—Commissioner Hume.
449. *Mr. Taylor.*] Is that the only time you have reported Detective Kirby for being mixed up with gambling?—Yes; he left the district.
450. Did you never report him for taking hush-money from the same institution?—No, I never made any official report.
451. Do you regard it as not a part of a detective's business to take cognisance of breaches of the licensing law?—It has not hitherto been the rule.
452. What do you mean—up to what date?—Up to the present. In my experience I have never known a detective to enforce the licensing law, because detectives usually get valuable information about criminals from hotelkeepers, and, if a hotelkeeper got it into his head that detectives were just watching him for breaches of the licensing law, they would not get very much more information from that quarter.
453. You are about the hotels pretty often?—Yes.
454. You see a great many breaches of the law during the course of the year?—I have seen some.
455. Knowing that you are not to report them, you do not bother about them?—No.
456. Have you ever reported a breach of the Licensing Act?—No, not since 1879.
457. Of course you would not exempt any other kind of offence; burglary and so on you regard as your duty to report on?—Yes.
458. And acts of arson?—Yes.
459. And all the criminal offences?—Yes.
460. In 1891, Colonel Hume in his report states that the Detective Force is in an unsatisfactory state. Do you remember that report?—I think I remember something about it.
461. He goes on to say, "Owing, perhaps, to the fact that men have been selected for this branch more from the number of arrests made by them when constables, or the number and verbosity of reports furnished, or worse than all, perhaps, from political influence or favouritism, instead of from special intelligence, or natural gifts and extraordinary powers." Were you aware of that dissatisfaction?—No.