

nature against the police, especially where the alleged offence has been committed by a constable *not on duty*, I make it a rule to refer the complainant to a Magistrate, unless the offence is a serious one and reported within a reasonable period of the commission, when I should direct the police officer of the district himself to lay an information against the offending member.

The inquiry also discloses the fact that Constable Bird made a frivolous charge against Sergeant Mackay, which the evidence proved to be baseless, and that Constable Williams's word cannot be relied upon; indeed, he was so carried away by his desire to prove cases against his fellow-constables that in three instances he produced reports and memoranda in support of his statements which he said were made at the times of the several occurrences; but these reports, &c., proved they were made at some subsequent date, probably, in my opinion, just prior to the inquiry, with the express intention of creating a wrong impression.

Taking all the circumstances into consideration, I am of opinion that other stations should be found for Constables Bird and Williams, as well as Durbridge, Kemp, and Burrell, irrespective of whether or not Sergeant Mackay remains at Nelson.

The remaining two constables (McGrath and Fanthorpe), the latter just transferred to Nelson, can, I think, be allowed to remain.

J. B. TUNBRIDGE,
Commissioner of Police.

In Cabinet, 13th April, 1902.—Sergeant Mackay to be removed from Nelson, and not to have charge of a station for six months thereafter. Constables Burrell and Durbridge to be called upon to resign; Constable Kemp to be removed from Nelson.—ALEX. WILLIS, Secretary.

All other parties engaged in the quarrel to be removed.—J. McG. 16/4/02.

In Cabinet, 16th April, 1902.—Approved.—A. WILLIS, Secretary.

(Urgent.)

Premier's Office, Wellington, 25th March, 1902.

Memorandum for the Commissioner of Police.

WITH reference to your memorandum on my application to have the Nelson police papers for Cabinet, you ask the question if you are "to submit the files without first submitting them to the Minister, who has not been made acquainted with the result of the inquiry into the Nelson matter."

The rule governing the question is that His Excellency the Governor, through any Minister, is entitled to see any papers and at any time. The Premier and any other Minister have the same right. It may happen that the Minister in charge of any particular Department may be absent, and a question of great urgency arise demanding immediate attention, and if the papers were unobtainable in the absence of that Minister it might lead to considerable trouble. In the absence of your Minister you are right in asking the question, but I spoke to Hon. Mr. McGowan before he left Wellington, informing him I should like to see the papers, and he said you were at Nelson and the inquiry was not complete, but that I should have the papers on your return.

R. J. SEDDON.

Premier's Office, Wellington, 25th March, 1902.

Memorandum for the Commissioner of Police.

KINDLY let me have the papers connected with the police in Nelson, together with those on the subject of Constable Culinane being sent to the Coast. As these are required for Cabinet, I shall be glad to receive them at your earliest convenience.

R. J. SEDDON, Defence Minister.

Right Hon. the Premier.

As the Hon. the Minister of Justice is now absent from Wellington, I beg to be informed if I am to submit the files named above without first submitting them to the Minister, who has not yet been made acquainted with the result of the inquiry into the Nelson matter.

J. B. TUNBRIDGE, Commissioner. 24/3/02.

SIR,—

Nelson, 13th March, 1902.

Hearing that your visit to Nelson is practically for the purpose of holding an inquiry into the conduct and efficacy of the Police Force in this city, I beg you will permit me, as this city's Chief Magistrate, and one whose duty it is to closely watch and note any defect or misconduct upon the part of any member of the Force, to lay before you my observations, and also to direct your attention to other matters which are, however, based upon general information, but without, so far as I am concerned, positive proof. At the same time you will please pardon my intrusion, and understand that it is not my desire or intention to attempt to interfere with a matter affecting your own Department (an interference on my part which would undoubtedly meet with a well-deserved rebuke at your hands).

Of the purpose of this inquiry I know nothing, but I do happen to know that certain private citizens are trying to use their influence (the reasons for which I need not here discuss) to punish certain members of the police staff who have presumably incurred their displeasure, and who, I am informed, have openly expressed their intention of using their assumed political influence in the direction of doing them a positive injury.

I had hoped to receive this evidence in writing, but so far I have not received it; otherwise I would, in fairness to our Police Force, long ere this have laid the matter before yourself or the Minister of Justice for investigation.