

" (Memorandum No. 325.)

" Sub-Inspector Wilson, Greymouth.

" Police Department, Commissioner's Office,
Wellington, 17th April, 1902.

" I FORWARD you herewith a copy of my findings on the charges recently inquired into by me against Constables Durbridge and Burrell, and you will be good enough to communicate the result to the officers concerned.

" In addition to the punishments inflicted therein, Cabinet has made the following orders : viz., ' Constables Burrell and Durbridge to be called upon to resign.' You will also communicate this to the officers concerned, and direct Constables Burrell and Durbridge to submit their resignations forthwith.

" J. B. TUNBRIDGE, Commissioner of Police."

" SERGEANT MACKAY,—

" District Police Office, Greymouth, 21st April, 1902.

" Constables Burrell and Durbridge are called on to resign, and you will forward their applications here as early as possible.

" The attached correspondence is forwarded for your information, and you will please read the Commissioner's findings to the men concerned therein.

" EDWD. WILSON, Sub-Inspector."

4. That your petitioners, acting under advice, declined to resign, and applied for a public investigation under the Police Regulations. This was not granted them, and they were dismissed from the service on the 2nd day of May, 1902.

5. That your petitioners, in view of the nature of the charges alleged and the findings of the said Commissioner thereupon, are aggrieved at the severity of the treatment meted out to them by the Government.

6. That your petitioners, by such treatment as aforesaid, have been disgraced, and their future career seriously prejudiced.

7. That up to the time of the said charges your petitioners possessed a clean defaulters' sheet.

8. That your petitioners are not aware of any other offence or dereliction of duty warranting their dismissal from the service, and they urge that if any such charge or dereliction of duty has been preferred against them they have not been afforded the opportunity of meeting the same.

9. Wherefore your petitioners respectfully pray that you will cause a full investigation to be made into the subject of their petition, and afford them such relief as you may deem their merits justify.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Nelson, 15th July, 1902.

ARTHUR BURRELL.
FDK. HENRY DURBRIDGE.

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled.

THE petition of Frederick Henry Durbridge, formerly of the City of Nelson, but now of Belgrove, late police constable, humbly sheweth,—

1. That your petitioner joined the Police Force on the 1st February, 1900.

2. That in the month of March, 1902, three charges were preferred against your petitioner, and were inquired into by the Commissioner of Police; and the nature of the said charges with the findings of the said Commissioner were as follows :—

" Constable Durbridge, Charge No. 1 : Improper conduct as a police constable in going with a number of other men to the Bush Tavern, Nelson, after closing-hours (about 11.40 p.m.) one Saturday about the end of last football season, and demanding and obtaining drink from the licensee for himself and companions.

" *Finding.*—Notwithstanding the conflict of evidence as to the time, I am of opinion it was past 11 o'clock when the party reached the Bush Tavern, and that finding the place closed, the constable, although not on duty, acted improperly in going with the others to obtain drink after the place was closed. The evidence, I consider, shows that the constable was not the person who demanded or paid for the drinks. Had the constable been on duty the matter would have been more serious. It shows to me, however, that the constable has not a proper appreciation of his position of police constable. He is reprimanded and cautioned, and will perhaps be removed to some other station, where he had better not become quite so intimate with the persons amongst whom he has to perform police duty. The punishment in this case would have been more severe had it not been the first record against him.—J. B. TUNBRIDGE, Commissioner of Police."

" Constable Durbridge, Charge No. 2 : Being asleep at Nelson Police-station at 11.45 p.m., 18th November last; again at 1.15 a.m., 19th November; again at 4.15 a.m., same date; and again at 11.45 p.m., 20th November, when he should have been on duty.

" *Finding.*—This charge rests solely on the evidence of Constable Williams, whose uncorroborated statement it would be unsafe to accept, for the reason that reports and memorandum submitted by him as original and made at the time of the various occurrences were proved to have been made at subsequent dates. Under these circumstances I acquit the constable of the charge.—J. B. TUNBRIDGE, Commissioner of Police."

" Constable Durbridge, Charge No. 3 : Improperly taking into the single men's mess-room at the Nelson Police-station, in company with Constable Burrell, two females named Smith and Kitching about midnight on the 18th July last.

" *Finding.*—The facts are not denied, but, as there is no suggestion that the females were other than respectable, or that they were taken into the station for an immoral or other improper purpose, the worst that can be said is that it was a very indiscreet act on the part of the constables to take them into the station at that hour of night. It should, however, be borne in mind that