

After some discussion it was decided that the names should be given, and Mr. Skerrett read out the originals of the reports and letters on pages 13, 14, and 15 of the printed matter, supplying the names.

660. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] With reference to the anonymous letter received by you, Inspector, on the 14th November, 1901, you sent it on to Sergeant Mackay?—Yes.

661. On the 24th December?—Yes, I suppose it would be.

662. Asking him to take a certain action?—Yes.

663. The reply to that sent by Sergeant Mackay is minuted by you, "Received 9 p.m., 22/2/02"?—The sergeant never replied at all until I spoke to him about it in Nelson, and asked why he did not do it. That is to the best of my recollection. I am sure I asked him why he did not do anything in the matter.

664. *Mr. R. McKenzie.*] Do you seriously wish this Committee to believe, Inspector, that Mrs. Hall is "an untruthful old woman"?—I have given my experience of her.

665. Is that the only foundation you had for putting this in your report?—Yes. She contradicted herself.

666. I may say that this old lady is thoroughly well known in Nelson. I know her, and would not believe from the Inspector or anybody else that she is untruthful. Now, Mr. Maginnity tried to get from you whether there were any complaints made to you against the police in Nelson after the Commissioner's inquiry. I do not think you gave a satisfactory answer to that question?—I do not remember any.

667. Were any complaints made to you against the police in Nelson after the Commissioner's inquiry? You said that you left for Greymouth shortly after the inquiry?—A day or a day and a half afterwards, I think.

668. Were any complaints made?—I do not think so. As far as I can remember, there were none.

669. Can you not be sure either one way or the other?—There was no formal complaint. When I was there different people told me of things. But I cannot be positive. If I could I would tell you in a moment. There was no formal complaint made—at any rate, I cannot remember any—after the Commissioner went away.

670. *Mr. Colvin.*] You said several times, Inspector, that you disagreed with the finding of Commissioner Tunbridge in the Nelson police cases?—Yes.

671. Do you think the dismissal of the men for the faults they had committed was too severe?—If the whole of the complaints made are taken into consideration I do not.

672. Do you think that if a complaint is made against a police constable it is a fair thing not to notify the man that he has been said to be guilty of certain conduct until the case has been worked up against him?—Not until the evidence is obtained.

673. You think that you should work up the case against a constable when a complaint is made against him?—All the witnesses ought to be seen. That is done every day in the year.

674. Do you not think that the constable should have the right to meet his accuser face to face?—No; because I think that it would defeat the ends of justice. I saw a case quite recently where accusations were made against a constable, and where if he had had the information given to him right away he would be in the Police Force to-day, but he is not. After leaving the Force he got testimonials from the Justices and all the people around, who did not know anything at all about why he was forced to leave the Force. That happened within the last four weeks. If he had got the evidence in the first place he would be there to-day, and would be able to defy everybody.

675. Do you not think that if a man makes a charge against another they ought to be brought face to face?—Ultimately the man making the charge would have to be brought face to face with the constable charged.

676. In your opinion is it right that, if a man makes a charge against another, the man accused should have the same opportunity to get evidence to clear himself as the accuser has to work up the evidence to support the charge?—Undoubtedly, but not at the start.

677. With regard to the regulations, do you think it possible for any person—constable or officer—to carry them out in their literal sense—to carry them out without making some breaches. For instance, the Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones read out a regulation that no civilians are allowed to go to the barracks habitually: is it possible to keep them away?—It would be possible, but it is not done.

678. It is never done in the service?—No. The police are allowed to take their friends in with them at reasonable hours. I never saw them prohibited from taking a person in.

679. Do you think it was unreasonable for the two constables to take the girls into the barracks when they were going home from the social?—I do; girls at any time.

680. *Mr. Lawry.*] Do you think that if you allowed a constable to know what he was charged with at the primary stages there would be collusion in the evidence?—Yes.

681. That is the impression you want to convey to the Committee?—I stated my conviction on what I have often known to happen. I do not think it would be so in every case; but we want to prevent the possibility of collusion if we wish to get at the truth.

*Mr. Graham:* Mr. Chairman, I did not wish to interrupt at the moment, but I was rather joined as an accomplice by the witness on one point. When he was asked to give the name of the alleged untruthful old woman he said he could not remember it, but that Mr. Graham knew it quite well.

*Witness:* That is not exactly what I said.

682. *Mr. Graham.*] Is it near enough?—Yes.

683. I asked him how he knew that I knew the lady, and he said because he knew that I had made some complaint in connection with this. Now, what complaint did I make, and to whom did I make it?—I have told you already.