

147. On hearsay evidence?—Of course—what else had I to go by?

148. From the man in the street?—He may be in a street or in a house. I got a great deal of information in this case from people in houses.

149. Well, you are satisfied now that the girl swore before this Committee that Durbridge was not the father of her child?—I say, from the information I received before, and from the manner in which I received it, I would not believe her if she did say so. I would like to see the telegram that was sent from Wellington.

150. The Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones asked you something about Durbridge and another constable being in the police-station at 12 o'clock at night with two girls?—Yes.

151. Do you know anything about the circumstances of the case?—I think I do. I had their own version of it, and I had other people's versions of it. That is all I know about it.

152. Were the constables ever charged with being there for immoral purposes?—I do not think so.

153. Are you aware that Durbridge has since married one of those young ladies?—I heard so.

154. And that he has gone into business with her as his wife?—I heard that he was married to her, but I did not know about going into business.

155. Would you be surprised if you were told that Commissioner Tunbridge had said publicly in Nelson that the charge laid against the constables by you were of a most trivial nature?—I could not say anything about that.

156. Did you consider the charges serious?—I did consider some of them serious and some not.

157. Do you consider that Commissioner Tunbridge was justified in dismissing virtually the whole of the charges laid by yourself?—It is not for me to pass an opinion on what Commissioner Tunbridge does.

158. If you had been in the same position as Commissioner Tunbridge, would you have exonerated the constable?—Well, if I were going to give a decision, as I sometimes do, I would consider it very carefully, and not give it at once.

159. I suppose you are aware that public meetings were held in Nelson relative to the conduct of those police officers?—Yes; I saw about that in the papers, and I saw the pamphlet this morning.

160. As far as you read the papers the verdict of public opinion in Nelson was entire exoneration of the men?—Yes; if I would judge by the papers, but perhaps I might know the writer.

161. After all that has transpired, if a recommendation was made to the Minister of Justice, for instance, that one or both of the constables should be reinstated, would you object?—I could not.

162. Would you approve of their being reinstated?—I do not think that is a fair question. I would not interfere at all.

163. Were any of the complaints made against those constables of recent date, or were they, say, six or twelve months old?—I do not think they were twelve months old, as far as I remember, but some of them were made some time previously. Some of the complaints I investigated there were made a short time before, and some of them, as I say, a considerable time before.

164. Twelve months before?—Well, perhaps so, but I should hardly think so.

165. Were they reported on at the time?—No; I did not hear of them then. I have said already that I heard nothing of these complaints, except the allegation against Durbridge, till I went to Nelson in February, at the time of the Nelson Jubilee.

166. Were any complaints made against the constables other than embodied in the report?—I referred, in my reports, to all that came to me, except in the case of one charge that was reported to me while the inquiry was going on. I did not report that in writing.

167. *Mr. Hall.*] Do you consider those two young men referred to an average sample of what the Police Force are?—No.

168. Do you consider them better?—No.

169. Then, do you consider them lower?—I consider, from what I know of them, that they are not a sample. They are not equal to the general run of constables in the New Zealand Police Force.

170. In what way?—In various ways, according to my information—assaulting people frequently without proper cause. This, of course, is in addition to the charges investigated. After doing so, if my information is correct, they have gone to people to influence them not to give evidence against them. That has been done in different cases, or else what the people told me was untrue.

171. Do you know the men they are said to have assaulted?—I know some of them; but I did not know them till this matter occurred.

172. You heard of their reputation?—Yes.

173. Is the reputation of the men assaulted a good one?—Fair, middling, and good. The reputation of some of them was good, and of others very good, as far as I am aware. With some of them it was middling, and with others it was indifferent.

174. *The Chairman.*] Was the reputation of none of them bad?—I would not say they were criminals.

175. *Mr. Hall.*] Were they the kind of men who would quarrel with policemen?—Some of them. But, in my opinion, that would not justify their being assaulted. They would be liable to be brought before the Court, but should not be assaulted.

176. You say that it is a very grave thing for a policeman to go into an hotel after hours?—Yes, for the purpose of drinking. Of course, I myself often go into an hotel after hours, but to inspect only, not to drink.