

12. You believed what they told you?—Generally. In many instances they told me what they themselves had heard. That is what I understood.

13. Did you know that Constables Bird and Williams were antagonistic to the single constables and the sergeant?—I would not put it in that way. I understood there was jealousy in the station.

14. There was ill-feeling?—Some ill-feeling.

15. There was ill-feeling between Bird and Williams on the one hand and the single constables and the sergeant on the other?—Yes, for some time. It was not always so.

16. I am speaking of the time when you first heard of this trouble in Nelson?—That is so.

17. When Constables Bird and Williams gave you certain information?—Yes.

18. Then, at the time you knew of the ill-feeling existing between the sergeant and the single constables on the one hand and Constables Bird and Williams on the other?—No, I was not aware until later on that there was ill-feeling. I understood from them that considerable irregularities were going on, but they did not allege in any way that there was any ill-feeling between them. They said that conduct was going on that they did not approve of.

19. On that did you instruct these constables to, as it were—I will put it in the way in which it presents itself to me—spy on the sergeant and the single constables, and send you confidential reports?—I did not.

20. You did not instruct them to spy?—No, I never did.

21. Well, then, will you put it in your own words?—I instructed them to report everything they knew that had occurred in the past—what they had told me. I asked them if they had reports, and Williams said they had, and I told them to give me the reports.

22. To send those reports to you direct?—No, I did not tell them to do that. I told them to give me the reports, but for days they did not give me any. It was not until the night before I left that they handed them to me in the Masonic Hotel. I certainly asked for them; but I must take strong exception to the word "spy."

23. When they handed you those reports did you not instruct them to send you any other reports that they might have?—If anything offensive occurred; that is so.

24. Behind the back of the sergeant?—I would not say behind the back of the sergeant, but unknown to the sergeant.

25. Without his knowledge?—Yes.

26. He was their superior officer?—Yes.

27. You have already said that you believed what these constables told you to be true?—Generally; as far as I knew, I had no reason to doubt them.

28. You had no reason to doubt either of them?—Not at that time.

29. You thought they were reliable and trustworthy at that time?—Yes, on the whole. One of them I would not depend a great deal on if he was in trouble; but, on the whole, I had no reason to think that what they told me was not true.

30. When they handed you the reports you accepted them as trustworthy?—I accepted them for investigation.

31. Did you accept them as trustworthy?—I could not say until they were investigated.

32. Did you not send those reports on to me?—I did.

33. If you had had any doubts then as to the trustworthiness of these reports would you have sent them on?—Yes, I would. I sent them just as they were.

34. Is it not a fact that you can place no trust in Constable Bird?—I would not say that; but I would say that if he was in trouble I would not trust his word very much.

35. Did you say with reference to Constable Bird, in a report dated the 3rd March, 1901, "Now, whether he committed a breach of the regulations or not, he told me an untruth, and in such a way as to show that he cannot be trusted"; and later on, "I could never trust him again, and should not like to have him in my district"?—That is perfectly true.

36. Those are your own words with reference to Constable Bird, written on the 3rd March, 1901?—That is quite right.

37. There were some reports submitted where it was stated that Constable Bird acted improperly in his capacity as Police Gaoler?—Yes, that is right.

*Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones*: What was the date of the reports received by the Inspector from Constables Williams and Bird?

*Commissioner Tunbridge*: It was in 1902.

*Witness*: I would like to make an explanation about that. It looks inconsistent on the face of it, but I think I can satisfactorily explain that. On the occasion referred to just now I suggested Constable Bird's suspension for improper conduct in gaol, and I urged that he be removed from the position of Police Gaoler on account of his conduct in a particular case; and in any similar case in future I would not believe him. But that does not say that I would not believe a word he said if he was not in trouble or in a similar position.

38. *Commissioner Tunbridge*.] You say here distinctly, "I could never trust him again, and would not like to have him in my district"?—That is perfectly true.

39. Yet, notwithstanding that very strong expression with regard to his trustworthiness, you went to Constable Bird behind his sergeant's back?—Excuse me, I did not. He came to me, unknown to the sergeant, if you like.

40. And you received reports from him which reflected on the sergeant's conduct, unknown to the sergeant?—Yes.

41. You treated them as if they came from a man who could be relied upon?—I would not disbelieve every word that man said afterwards, but if he were in trouble himself I would certainly receive anything he said with great caution. I would point out that I did not deal with this case at all. I forwarded it on for investigation. Of course, it would depend on circumstances as to how much credence I would place on his statements.