

444. Was that the only reason?—So far as I know.

445. Did you not have some words with him at the police-station in Nelson upon quite another matter?—I will tell you what took place. It was on, I think, the second day after I went there that he made these statements about communicating with the Trasks and a cabman named Brown. He had a great grievance about that. I told him that I was not afraid of any communication from anybody and I did not see why he should be. I then asked him to tell me who told him about Brown, and he said, "I will do nothing of the kind." I then ordered him to make a report of it, and he said he would not. Thereupon I went and called two strange constables to witness to my ordering him to sit down and make the report. He prevaricated by saying that he did not know what became of the man who told him. I wished to send a constable to get this person, because I doubted what he said, and he then told me.

446. Did you at any time have any conversation with Sergeant Mackay about any matter that he was inquiring into, or that the police were dealing with? Did you find fault with him over any action that he was taking in regard to any police matter?—I called on him for an explanation with regard to one matter.

447. What was that?—An arrest made by Constable Kemp.

448. No other matter?—I cannot remember any.

449. Did you criticize his action with regard to the prosecution of the Stoke Orphanage authorities?—I did not.

450. Not at any time?—Never.

451. Did you ever have any conversation with him about that?—Nothing in particular. I told him I had no reason to think he did anything wrong in the case so far as I knew at the time.

452. Is that the only conversation that took place between you on that subject?—I think so. Oh, no, it is not. There was a newspaper sent to me with a report in it of a lecture given that would appear to have been for the benefit of the boys. The boys were taken there by Constable Bird, and I called on Sergeant Mackay for an explanation. He said he never knew that such a thing occurred, and Constable Bird gave his explanation in writing and sent it to the Commissioner. Is that what you are referring to?

453. I was referring to the prosecution of the Stoke Orphanage authorities?—Never a word passed between us.

454. You never had any conversation with Sergeant Mackay about the steps he took in connection with that?—No. I did not question anything he did, except that which I have just mentioned.

455. What was the lecture the boys had been taken to?—Some lecture on Popery, or No Popery, I believe, or something of that sort. The boys had been there on, I think, a Sunday night a day or two before the inquiry came off. That is what the *Nelson Mail* said. I thought it a very extraordinary proceeding to say the least of it.

456. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] What boys are you referring to?—The Stoke boys who were witnesses and in the custody of the police at the time. I did not find fault with Sergeant Mackay for that, because he said in writing that he knew nothing about it. He said that he did not even see it in the paper.

457. *Mr. Maginnity.*] You told the Commissioner that you knew there was ill feeling at the police-station between the constables: did you yourself make any inquiry into that or into the cause of that ill feeling?—Well, my reports will go to show that, I think.

458. You did not inquire yourself?—I did not inquire further, because from what I could understand I did not see how I could, unless I interviewed all sides, and I did not wish to do that. I wished somebody else to do it.

459. Still, as Inspector you had full power?—Undoubtedly.

460. But instead of doing that you asked Constable Williams and Constable Bird for reports, unknown to Sergeant Mackay?—I have said so.

461. Was that strictly official? Did you consider that official?—Under the circumstances, as he was an accused party.

462. You consider it quite official, and fair play as well?—I did, until the matter could be investigated, because I was sending the reports on to some one else, and I expected that all these police officers would be interviewed separately, without being given a chance of making anything up. Then I would depend more on the whole result.

463. But you acted, at any rate in the preliminary stages, on the reports of Constables Bird and Williams?—Well, I forwarded the reports.

464. You told us that you would not depend a great deal on Constable Bird's statements?—Under certain circumstances.

465. You had already discovered Constable Bird to be untruthful, had you not?—Yes.

466. But, notwithstanding that, you accepted his statement in regard to the Postboy Hotel and the feeling at the station as sufficiently reliable to send on to the Commissioner?—Undoubtedly, for further investigation. I would not doubt every word that Constable Bird would say although he did tell a lie when he was in a corner. It is not such an uncommon thing.

467. You would not doubt everything he said; but, supposing Constable Bird's statements did not agree with your opinion, would you still believe him?—My opinion! I would not like to go entirely on my opinion.

468. You have in this matter?—I think everybody does more or less.

469. Where Constable Bird's statements would conflict with your opinion would you still accept it?—That would depend.

470. Where it coincided with your opinion you would admit it to be truthful without any further investigation?—No, I would not. I never said so. There is an old saying, "Try everything, and hold fast to that which is good."