

A case was brought under my notice in which it became necessary to send a sergeant to a certain town, under a certain Inspector. The position was by no means an undesirable one, and had many advantages. To use the words of a witness, it was literally "hawked" about from one sergeant to another, and was *refused* by no less than three of them. The man who was finally sent there got no option, but was told to go, and he went, and had no cause to regret it. Presumably the sergeants who refused to go had made up their minds to hang on for certain districts which each had in his eye, and they took advantage of the weakness of the system to sacrifice the interests of the service to their own desires. It would not be hazarding too much to assert that each man finally got what he wanted. Whether the result was of the fullest advantage to the service is doubtful. The only exception I would allow in the rule would be on the score of health, either of the man or members of his family, and I would require the clearest evidence of this.

A similar instance to that of the sergeants I have found in respect to the filling of the vacant station at Seddonville. A telegram was sent, "Please ascertain if Constable L. would like charge of Seddonville Station." A reply came back, "Constable L. refuses Seddonville." Another one was then sent, "Please ascertain if Constable F. would like Seddonville." Constable F. said that he respectfully declined. Then yet another, "Please wire if Constable W. would like charge of Seddonville." But Constable W. declines. Then the Commissioner sends a memorandum, "Please ask the undermentioned constables, in the order named, if they would like charge of Seddonville Station. If one accepts, there will be no need to ask the others." One was at last found obliging enough to go.

I hope that in future the system of control will provide for something more conducive to discipline than what has obtained in the past.

Transfers of officers throughout the service, with the exception of the Inspectors, Sub-Inspectors, and Chief Detectives, are far too frequent, and, in the instances which I have been able to inquire into, are made with insufficient regard to the interests of the service, and for very inadequate reasons. The cost of these transfers is very heavy, and I would suggest that a greater discretion be exercised in ordering them. In one case I found that a constable had been transferred no less than six times within two years. In some instances constables are transferred at their own request, for a variety of reasons, more or less imaginary, and occasionally at their own expense. One amusing case has been brought under my notice, where a certain constable apparently found it very hard to settle down for any time in any particular district. He seemed to be always agitating for a transfer. On one occasion he had a parent in a certain district whom he wished to take care of. Having got into a certain district, he wanted to get out of it because he had too many relations in it; and in a third district he found he could not do his duty properly because he was constantly coming across boon companions of his youth. He was finally fined for making false statements, and sent to a place where he has apparently found peace and an abiding resting-place.

Some of the sergeants have had more than their share of shifting about. Sergeant Mackenzie gives his own experiences on page 15 of the evidence. In January, 1898, he was promoted, and transferred to Queenstown Sub-district. In 1903 he was transferred to Gore, where he remained for sixteen months. From there he was transferred to Auckland, where he remained four months. He then went to Gisborne for eighteen months; and in June, 1906, he was transferred back to Gore, where he now is.

I quite recognise the fact that transfers may frequently be necessary in the interests of the service, and that in most instances the Commissioner must be the sole judge of the necessity; but transfers without apparent reason are irritating to officers, and create a feeling of insecurity which is bad for the efficiency of the Force. In many instances transfers have been ordered and never carried out; and the reasons do not appear clear. There are a great many instances to which strong exception might be taken. There has been no direct