

JOHN AYEARST MAN OF HONOR, SAYS ELLIOTT

Former Provincial Police
Chief Tells of Com-
plaints Made

MORE STARTLING CLAIMS

Major-General H. M. Elliott, former Commissioner of Police for Ontario, was on the stand yesterday morning before the Public Accounts Committee, and said that shortly after he assumed his duties, a little over a year ago, Inspector Hammond had come to him and made statements that some of the men recently transferred under him, having to do with the enforcement of the Ontario Temperance Act, were disloyal. Mr. Hammond had mentioned the names in this connection, said General Elliott, of Chief Provincial Inspector Ayearst, Mr. Courian and one or two others. The outstanding man Mr. Hammond had told him about was Courian.

General Elliott said that he had discussed this matter with the Attorney-General in a general way and the Attorney-General had said that it must be probed to the bottom.

Asked to Resign.

At the end of June last year General Elliott had left on two months' leave of absence, leaving Captain Collinson in charge of his office. When he came back serious charges had been bandied about between Hammond and Collinson in General Elliott's presence, and an investigation followed, which resulted in Collinson being asked to resign.

Just before the committee rose Hon. W. E. Raney asked General Elliott if he now had confidence in Mr. Ayearst. General Elliott replied that he had confidence in Mr. Ayearst's probity and honor. "The reports were groundless?" asked the Attorney-General. "Yes, sir," said General Elliott.

Lloyd Gordon, a chauffeur, formerly in the employ of the department, told of going up to Kitchener with McCutcheon, the ex-operator who gave evidence on Wednesday, and having informations laid. Coming back to Kitchener a few days later, he was told that "they had word from Toronto to send me away." He said he was given \$600 and a ticket to go to Regina, so as not to give evidence. He had been told by the man who gave him the money, a man named Struck, to come back in five or six months and he would be taken on the force again.

Was Sent to Jail.

When he came back, said witness, Hammond asked him to work for McCutcheon. Later he was given six months on a theft charge and when he came out of jail worked for the department for a week in order to complete the cases against a couple of places that witness had knowledge of before he was sent down.

Mr. Raney asked General Elliott about the charges made in the Legislature by T. H. Lennox, member for North York, and witness replied that so far as he was concerned they were not strictly in accordance with the facts. About a fortnight or so after witness took over his duties Inspector Hammond had come to him and made a statement that perturbed him exceedingly. It was to the effect that some of the men

under witness, having to do with the enforcement of the Ontario Temperance Act, were disloyal.

After the Attorney-General had told him to probe the charges to the bottom he had several conferences with Hammond.

Hammond Responsible.

He said that, while he did not wish to disclaim responsibility, he must hold Mr. Hammond responsible for the duty of looking after the special operators. He said that after he came to the department he got his first insight into the sordid methods detectives had to use to get their quarry. It was new and repellent to him. He said that one or two reports on the matter did come in to him, but he did not read them before he left in June for his leave of absence.

Regarding McCutcheon's reports to Hammond, witness said he referred them to a legal officer, Mr. Middleton, and the latter reported verbally that he did not think the reports were of any use to convict the people suspected, owing to the character and antecedents of a good many of the witnesses who had to be called. On September 29 he sent a memo to James Hales, Chairman of the License Board, saying that the idea of employing persons out on bail was objectionable. He said that every time a case was reported to him of a man being crooked, the man was ordered to be "thrown out."

Advises Using Care.

Mr. Raney then read the various memos he had sent from time to time to Gen. Elliott, emphasizing that care should be taken in ascertaining the character of men employed.

Mr. Raney then read a memo of his, dated November 2 last, suggesting the advisability of doing away with spotters. Conferences were held with inspectors on this, and Gen. Elliott said it was decided, on their advice, that this could not be done entirely. Mr. Raney read from another memo, sent on February 15, in which the Attorney-General suggested a paragraph in the regulations that an employee drunk, on or off duty, should be dismissed. "There was no question as to the policy of the department on this matter of employment?" the Attorney-General asked. "None whatever," said witness.

Mr. Raney then read from a report in an evening paper of Mr. Lennox's charge in the House that "thugs and criminals" were kept, "and were being kept today" in the enforcement of the O.T.A. "Do you know anything to support that statement?" asked Mr. Raney. "Not to my knowledge," said witness.

No One Forced In.

"Did I impose anybody on you you did not want to employ, or retain anybody in your department you wanted to dismiss?" "No."

Told to Watch Brother.

Samuel McCutcheon, a brother of the other McCutcheon who has been on the stand for several days, caused some amusement when he told the committee that Courian had said to him: "I'll give you some good advice. You look for McCutcheon for me." "So," said witness, "I used to go out and look for him."

Witness said that Courian had threatened to work a "frame" on him, and that he would get Detective Ward to help him. Witness said he saw Ward, and Ward said: "I might frame for someone, but not for Courian."

He told of a place on Waverley road where he and his brother visited. The brother had said to the woman at the door, "Do you know Provincial Officer Courian?" and she said, "Yes, I do; come in." "When he came out I smelled liquor on his breath, and he told me he could buy anything there from good liquor to apple cider." Later the place was raided, and Courian was "peevish" about it, said witness.