



Memorandum. Concerning the Police with Revolvers.

I have endeavoured in accordance with the wishes of the Secretary of State to ascertain the general feeling of the Constables themselves on this question and in the main it agrees with that of the Superintendent that a revolver would not be of much real protection to a Constable, that he would run a most serious risk if he used it with fatal effect and that as a rule he would be afraid to use it at all.

No doubt this arises from the extreme severity with which the use of the truncheon is visited, when serious wounds are inflicted and the men are constantly warned of the risks they incur by the too free use of the weapon both which they are armed with in self defence.

The feeling on this matter is unquestionably stronger both on the bench and in the press in London than elsewhere.

And the men seem to apprehend and I think reasonably that if death ensued by any action of theirs either in the use of a revolver or a truncheon they would be liable to very serious consequences.

Under any circumstances they feel their safety would consist in letting the Burglar

have the first shot and they do not seem to see that much advantage would accrue to them -

Opinions differed as to the effect likely to be produced by the knowledge that the Police were armed with revolvers. The timid Burglar might be discouraged but the more desperate might arise in self defence.

At the same time it is quite clear that there is a certain sense of indecency among the men who patrol at night in the suburban districts, visiting all kinds of lonely places where no help is to be got in an emergency; and the general wish seems to be that the beats should be so advanced or amalgamated that the Police could patrol in couples.

How far this may be possible in the more dangerous suburbs in the present condition of the Police funds I am not able without careful examination to say - but I do think that in a measure it may be possible to carry out some such scheme, and although the time of working the beats might be lengthened

I have little doubt that the support thus  
given would materially add to the efficiency  
of the men employed in the secluded  
localities which are naturally the places  
selected by burglars for their operations.

I have instructed a committee consisting  
of the two District Superintendants and the  
Supts of the outer divisions to go carefully into  
this question & report in the suppression of the  
Securities of State.

A return just furnished to the Home Office  
shows that Burglaries decreased from  
500 in the year 1881 (ending 29 Sept) to 467  
in 1882. & that in the former year 2 were  
accompanied by the use of fire arms and in  
the latter year 1.

J. W. Bullen.