

REPORT

OF

THE PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE

WITH REFERENCE TO

A COMMUNICATION MADE TO MR. SPEAKER BY THE HONORABLE
MEMBER FOR GREY VALLEY (MR. HARRISON);

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AND EVIDENCE.

REPORT BROUGHT UP 17TH OCTOBER, 1872, AND ORDERED TO BE PRINTED.

WELLINGTON.

—
1872.

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

[No. 1.]

FRIDAY, THE 4TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 1872.

Ordered, That a Committee of Privilege be appointed to take into consideration all such matters as may come in question in reference to a certain communication, made to Mr. Speaker by the Honorable Member for Grey Valley, and by Mr. Speaker communicated to this House, and to report their proceedings, with their opinions thereupon, to the House. The Committee to have power to send for persons, papers, and records, and to report within one week. The Committee to consist of Sir D. Monro, Mr. Fox, the Hon. Mr. Gillies, Mr. McLean, Sir J. C. Wilson, Mr. Andrew, Mr. Rolleston, Mr. O'Rorke, Mr. Sheehan, Mr. Pearce, and Mr. G. P. Parker; seven to be a quorum.

A true extract.

F. E. CAMPBELL, Clerk, House of Representatives.

[No. 2.]

TUESDAY, THE 8TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 1872.

Ordered, That the Committee of Privilege have leave to postpone the bringing up their Report for one week from the date originally appointed.

Ordered, That Mr. Holt be permitted to appear by Counsel before the Committee of Privilege of the House of Representatives; also that Mr. Speaker be respectfully requested to secure the services of Counsel, to watch the proceedings on behalf of the House.

A true extract.

F. E. CAMPBELL, Clerk, House of Representatives.

REPORT OF THE PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE.

THE Committee to whom it was referred to take into consideration all such matters as may come in question in reference to a certain communication made to Mr. Speaker by the Honorable Member for Grey Valley, and by Mr. Speaker communicated to this House, and to report their proceedings, with their opinions thereupon, to the House, beg to submit to the House as their Report three Resolutions which they have agreed to:—

1. *Resolved*, That, in the opinion of this Committee, no proposals derogatory to the character or position of any Member of the House were made by, or by authority of Mr. Brogden.

2. *Resolved*, That the evidence taken before the Committee, while it raises a suspicion of an unhealthy state of things, is not sufficient to establish proof of violation of the Privileges of the House by Mr. Holt.

3. *Resolved*, That the Committee regrets that Mr. Harrison should have made such charges as those contained in his letter to the Speaker, founded on private conversation.

The evidence taken by the Committee is appended.

D. MONRO,
Chairman.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

SATURDAY, 5TH OCTOBER, 1872.

Committee met pursuant to notice.

PRESENT :

Sir D. Monro,
Mr. Rolleston,
Mr. Fox,
Hon. Mr. Gillies,

Sir Cracroft Wilson,
Mr. Andrew,
Mr. G. B. Parker,
Mr. Pearce.

Sir D. Monro in the Chair.

Order of reference read.

On the motion of Sir Cracroft Wilson, *Resolved*, That Sir D. Monro do take the chair.

On the motion of Sir Cracroft Wilson, *Resolved*, That Mr. Harrison, Mr. Brogden, and Mr. Holt be summoned to attend the Committee at its next sitting.

On the motion of Mr. Fox, *Resolved*, That in case either Mr. Brogden, Mr. Holt, or Mr. Harrison should apply to be represented before the Committee by Counsel, the Chairman do ascertain by reference to precedents what is the practice of the Imperial Parliament on such applications in cases of a similar character, and that this Committee will act in accordance therewith.

Committee then adjourned until 11 a.m. on Monday.

MONDAY, 7TH OCTOBER, 1872.

Committee met pursuant to adjournment.

PRESENT :

Sir D. Monro,
Mr. Andrew,
Mr. Rolleston,
Mr. Sheehan,
Mr. G. B. Parker,
Sir Cracroft Wilson,

Mr. Pearce,
Mr. Fox,
Hon. Mr. Gillies,
Mr. O'Rorke,
Mr. McLean.

Sir D. Monro in the Chair.

Minutes of the previous meeting read and confirmed.

Mr. Harrison examined on oath; evidence taken by short-hand reporter.

Committee then adjourned until after the rising of the House on Tuesday, the 8th instant.

TUESDAY, 8TH OCTOBER, 1872.

Committee met pursuant to adjournment.

PRESENT :

Sir D. Monro,
Mr. Andrew,
Mr. Rolleston,
Mr. O'Rorke,
Sir Cracroft Wilson,

Mr. Fox,
Mr. Pearce,
Mr. Sheehan,
Mr. G. B. Parker.

Sir D. Monro in the Chair.

Minutes of the previous meeting read and confirmed.

Two resolutions, dated the 8th day of October, 1872, were laid before the Committee, and read by the Chairman.

Mr. Harrison was in attendance before the Committee, and complained that the evidence given by him and taken by a short-hand reporter at the previous meeting was not correctly taken by said reporter. A discussion took place thereon: some portion of the said evidence was read to the Committee by the Chairman, when it was resolved that Mr. Harrison's evidence should be given to him to revise previous to its being laid before the Committee.

The Attorney-General attended before the Committee, at the request of the Chairman, when it was arranged that he should attend at the future meetings of the Committee to watch the proceedings on the part of the House.

Resolved, That Mr. Brogden and Mr. Holt be requested to attend before the Committee at the next meeting. After some deliberation on the part of the Committee, it was resolved to adjourn until to-morrow (Wednesday), at 10.30.

The Committee then adjourned.

WEDNESDAY, 9TH OCTOBER, 1872.

Committee met pursuant to adjournment.

PRESENT :

Sir D. Monro,
Mr. McLean,
Mr. Sheehan,
Hon. Mr. Gillies,
Mr. Rolleston,

Mr. Andrew,
Mr. Pearce,
Mr. Fox,
Mr. G. B. Parker,
Sir Cracroft Wilson.

Sir D. Monro in the Chair.

Minutes of the previous meeting read and confirmed.

Mr. Harrison was in attendance. A discussion took place relative to Mr. Harrison's evidence. The Committee deliberated, when, on the motion of Sir Cracroft Wilson, it was *Resolved*, That the Committee should adjourn until the rising of the House.

On the rising of the House, Committee met pursuant to adjournment.

PRESENT :

Sir D. Monro,
Mr. O'Rorke,
Mr. McLean,
Mr. Fox,
Mr. Pearce,
Mr. Sheehan,

Hon. Mr. Gillies,
Mr. Rolleston,
Mr. G. B. Parker,
Mr. Andrew,
Sir Cracroft Wilson.

Sir D. Monro in the Chair.

Mr. Harrison was in attendance on the Committee.

Mr. Harrison's evidence again came under the consideration of the Committee.

The Chairman read to the Committee the alterations made in the evidence by Mr. Harrison. Mr. Harrison objected to the short-hand reporter taking any more evidence, and requested the Chairman that a reporter from the *Hansard* staff might be employed. A discussion took place thereon. Mr. Harrison and the reporter were requested by the Chairman to withdraw, while the Committee deliberated, when Mr. Rolleston moved the following Resolution:—

“That the Committee, not desiring to cast the slightest reflection on the present reporter, but in accordance with Mr. Harrison's request, resolve to apply to Mr. Barron for the services of one of the ablest *Hansard* reporters.”

Carried.

Mr. Harrison and the reporter were then recalled. The consideration of Mr. Harrison's evidence was again resumed. Mr. Holt, with his Counsel Mr. Travers, attended before the Committee at the request of the Chairman.

The Attorney-General was also in attendance to watch the proceedings on the part of the House.

The Chairman stated that Mr. Harrison's evidence having not yet been corrected, he was unable to hand a copy to Counsel; but if Mr. Travers wished to cross-examine Mr. Harrison in the meantime, he was at liberty to do so.

It was then arranged that Mr. Travers should examine Mr. Harrison.

Mr. Harrison cross-examined by Mr. Travers.

Mr. Harrison was also examined by Mr. Gillies.

The Attorney-General also questioned Mr. Harrison;

After which these gentlemen withdrew.

The Committee deliberated, when it was *Resolved*, That Mr. Harrison's evidence should be printed.

On the motion of Mr. Sheehan, it was *Resolved*, That Mr. Vogel, Mr. Tribe, and Mr. Reynolds be requested to attend before the Committee to-morrow, at 11 o'clock.

The Committee then adjourned until Thursday, at 11 o'clock.

THURSDAY, 10TH OCTOBER, 1872.

Committee met pursuant to adjournment.

PRESENT :

Sir D. Monro,	Mr. Rolleston,
Mr. Fox,	Mr. McLean,
Mr. Andrew,	Mr. G. B. Parker,
Mr. Sheehan,	Mr. Pearce,
Hon. Mr. Gillies,	Sir Cracroft Wilson.

Sir D. Monro in the Chair.

Minutes of the previous meeting read and confirmed.

Mr. Harrison was in attendance before the Committee, and was examined.

Mr. Reynolds attended before the Committee for the purpose of giving evidence. A discuss on took place as to whether the evidence of Mr. Reynolds should be taken, when it was determined to do so.

Mr. Reynolds then withdrew.

Mr. Tribe was in attendance, and gave evidence.

Mr. Tribe then withdrew.

The Hon. the Speaker attended before the Committee, at the request of the Chairman, and gave evidence.

Mr. Speaker was thanked by the Chairman, and withdrew.

Resolved, That the Committee adjourn until to-morrow at 11 o'clock, and that Mr. Vogel, Mr. Holt, and Mr. Brogden, should be summoned to attend.

The Committee then adjourned.

TUESDAY, 11TH OCTOBER, 1872.

Committee met pursuant to adjournment.

PRESENT :

Sir D. Monro,	Mr. Sheehan,
Sir Cracroft Wilson,	Hon. Mr. Gillies,
Mr. G. B. Parker,	Mr. Fox,
Mr. Andrew,	Mr. Pearce.
Mr. Rolleston,	

Sir D. Monro in the chair.

Minutes of the previous meeting read and confirmed.

Mr. Holt and Mr. Travers were in attendance.

Mr. Travers, as Counsel for Mr. Holt, stated that he had an application to make, before the business of the Committee was proceeded with. He produced an Auckland paper, in which a telegram appeared, relating to the letter forwarded by Mr. Harrison to the Speaker, and desired that the Telegraphic officer should be summoned before the Committee, and requested to produce for inspection the original order for such telegram; when, on the motion of Mr. Fox, it was *Resolved*, That Mr. Lemon, the head of the Telegraph Department, be directed to attend, in order to ascertain from him how far he is in a position to communicate contents of telegrams, or produce the same for inspection of the Committee.

Resolved, That a letter be sent to Mr. Lemon, requesting his immediate attendance, and desiring him to bring up all precedents and authorities for and against producing telegrams in evidence.

The letter was written, and sent.

Mr. Lemon attended before the Committee, and stated that the summons had just been put into his hands, and, before complying with it, requested to be allowed to consult with the Attorney-General.

The request was granted.

Resolved, That the Committee adjourn until 12.30.

The Committee adjourned.

In consequence of there being no quorum, the Chairman adjourned the Committee until to-morrow (Saturday), at 11 o'clock.

SATURDAY, 12TH OCTOBER, 1872.

Committee met pursuant to adjournment.

PRESENT :

Sir Cracroft Wilson,	Mr. Rolleston,
Mr. Fox,	Mr. G. B. Parker,
Mr. Sheehan,	Mr. Gillies,
Mr. Andrew,	Mr. Pearce.
Sir D. Monro,	

Sir D. Monro in the Chair.

Minutes of the previous meeting read and confirmed.

Mr. Holt and Mr. Travers in attendance.

REPORT OF THE PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE.

Hon. Mr. Vogel attended before the Committee for the purpose of giving evidence.

Mr. Vogel was thanked, and withdrew.

The Attorney-General was in attendance, and made a statement to Committee relative to producing telegrams in evidence.

Mr. Lemon was in attendance before the Committee, and was examined.

Mr. Holt was about to be examined, but in consequence of Mr. Harrison not being able to attend, examination was postponed.

Mr. Harrison informed the Committee that he would be able to attend on Monday.

Resolved, That the Committee adjourn until Monday, at 10.30.

Committee adjourned.

MONDAY, 14TH OCTOBER, 1872.

Committee met pursuant to adjournment.

PRESENT :

Sir D. Monro,	Mr. Fox,
Mr. G. B. Parker,	Mr. Pearce,
Mr. Gillies,	Mr. Andrew,
Sir Cracroft Wilson,	Mr. Sheehan.
Mr. Rolleston,	

Sir D. Monro in the Chair.

Minutes of the previous meeting read and confirmed.

Mr. Holt, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Travers, and the Attorney-General in attendance.

Mr. Holt was examined.

In consequence of some remarks from the Chairman relative to the examination of Mr. Holt by Mr. Fox, strangers were requested to withdraw while Mr. Fox explained to the Committee his motive for the line of examination he adopted with Mr. Holt.

A discussion took place thereon, when Mr. Holt was recalled, and examination resumed.

Mr. Holt then withdrew.

Mr. Brodgen was in attendance before the Committee, and was examined.

Mr. Brodgen was thanked, and withdrew.

Resolved, That the Committee should adjourn until Tuesday next, at 10 o'clock.

Committee then adjourned.

TUESDAY, 15TH OCTOBER, 1872.

Committee met pursuant to adjournment.

PRESENT :

Sir D. Monro,	Mr. Andrew,
Mr. Gillies,	Mr. Sheehan,
Mr. Rolleston,	Mr. Pearce,
Mr. G. B. Parker,	Mr. Fox.
Sir Cracroft Wilson,	

Sir D. Monro in the Chair.

Minutes of previous meeting read and confirmed.

Mr. Travers laid before the Committee two numbers of the *Southern Cross* newspaper, dated respectively Friday, 4th October, and Saturday, 5th October, 1872, and read extracts from them. Mr. Travers then addressed the Committee. The Attorney-General also addressed the Committee; after which Mr. Holt, Mr. Travers, and the Attorney-General withdrew.

The Committee deliberated, when, on the motion of Mr. Sheehan, it was resolved to adjourn until to-morrow, the 16th instant, at 10.30.

Committee then adjourned.

WEDNESDAY, 16TH OCTOBER, 1872.

Committee met pursuant to adjournment.

PRESENT :

Sir D. Monro,	Hon. Mr. McLean,
Sir Cracroft Wilson,	Mr. Andrew,
Mr. G. B. Parker,	Mr. Rolleston,
Mr. Gillies,	Mr. Sheehan,
Mr. Fox,	Mr. Pearce.

Sir D. Monro in the Chair.

Minutes of the previous meeting read and confirmed.

Letter from Mr. Tribe to Messrs. Brodgen laid before the Committee and read.

On the motion of Mr. Fox, it was *Resolved*, That the speeches of Mr. Travers and the Attorney-General be printed and submitted for correction to those gentlemen, and printed with evidence.

The Committee deliberated.

On the motion of Mr. Gillies, it was *Resolved*, That, in the opinion of this Committee, no

proposals derogatory to the character or position of any Member of the House were made by or by authority of Mr. Brogden.

Mr. Gillies moved, That the charges made by Mr. Harrison against Mr. Holt have not been substantiated.

Mr. Fox moved, as an amendment, That, notwithstanding some discrepancies in the evidence of Mr. Harrison, the evidence of Mr. Holt is not sufficient to satisfy this Committee that the charges made by Mr. Harrison were without foundation or substantially untrue; while Mr. Holt's admission, and the evidence of Mr. Tribe, go to prove that there were circumstances in the case which justified the inquiry for which the Committee was appointed.

Resolution by Mr. Gillies, and amendment proposed by Mr. Fox thereto, withdrawn by leave of the Committee.

It was then moved by Mr. Andrew, That the evidence taken before the Committee, while it raises a suspicion of an unhealthy state of things, is not sufficient to establish proof of violation of the privileges of the House by Mr. Holt.

A discussion ensued thereon.

And the Question being put, it passed in the affirmative.

Moved by Mr. Gillies, That the Committee regrets that Mr. Harrison should have made such charges as those contained in his letter to the Speaker, founded on private conversation.

And the Question being put, the Committee divided, and the names were taken down as follows:—

<i>Ayes, 4.</i>		<i>Noes, 2.</i>
Mr. Gillies,		Mr. Sheehan,
Mr. Parker,		Mr. Fox.
Mr. Rolleston,		
Sir Cracroft Wilson.		

So it passed in the affirmative.

Moved by Mr. Parker, That the discrepancies between Mr. Harrison's evidence, his letters, statements, and the evidence of other persons, compel your Committee to come to the conclusion that he has not been acting straightforwardly.

Motion made by Mr. Fox, and Question proposed that the Committee do now adjourn.

And the question of adjournment being put, the Committee divided, when the names were taken down as follows:—

<i>Ayes, 5.</i>		<i>Noes, 4.</i>
Mr. Sheehan,		Mr. Gillies,
Hon. Mr. McLean,		Mr. Parker,
Mr. Fox,		Mr. Rolleston,
Mr. Pearce,		Sir C. Wilson.
Mr. Andrew.		

So it passed in the affirmative.

The Committee then adjourned until to-morrow (Thursday), at 11 o'clock.

THURSDAY, 17TH OCTOBER, 1872.

Committee met pursuant to adjournment.

PRESENT:

Sir D. Monro,		Hon. Mr. McLean,
Mr. Rolleston,		Mr. Fox,
Mr. Parker,		Mr. O'Rorke,
Mr. Andrew,		Mr. Gillies,
Mr. Pearce,		Mr. Sheehan.

Sir D. Monro in the Chair.

Minutes of the previous meeting read and confirmed.

The motion of Mr. Parker, moved at the previous meeting, having again come under consideration, was, with the consent of the Committee, withdrawn.

The Committee deliberated, when it was *Resolved*, That the following Report be adopted, and presented to the House. (See page 3.)

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

MONDAY, 7th OCTOBER, 1872.

W. H. HARRISON, Esq., a Member of the House of Representatives for the Grey Valley District, was in attendance, and on being sworn was examined as follows:—

Mr. Harrison.

7th Oct., 1872.

1. *The Chairman.*] You are here to give evidence with regard to a certain interview which took place between you and Mr. Holt, the purport of which was communicated by you to the Speaker. Before putting any questions to you, perhaps you would prefer making a statement of what took place on the occasion referred to?—On Monday morning last, Mr. Holt, Mr. Brogden's secretary, called at my house to see me, before I was up. As near as I can form an opinion, this would be about half-past nine o'clock. I came down to the Government Buildings about half-past ten. After I left home, Mr. Holt called at my house again. I met him in the lobby of the House at about ten minutes to eleven the same day. He stated that he had been looking for me, as he wished to see me. I told him I was going down his way to see some experiments that were to be made with a flax machine, and would walk down with him. After talking upon some general subjects, he said that it had occurred to them, —meaning, as I understood, the firm of Brogden and Sons—that arrangements might be made for securing my services in furtherance of some of their undertakings; such as the water supply scheme, construction of railways, and such other works as they might bring forward. I gave him to understand that I saw no objection to make some arrangements with them. By this time we had reached the reclaimed ground. I agreed to go down during the day to see him about it. I told him that I was then going to Mills' foundry, but that I would call and see him later in the day. He said he had an engagement with Mr. Tribe, a Member of the House of Representatives, at two o'clock, and after some further consideration I arranged to call at his office between three and four o'clock, and that, as it might be too late to finish our conversation there, it was agreed he would come and dine with me, and we would finish it then. I then proceeded on to Mills' foundry, where I saw Mr. Tribe, who told me he had an engagement with Mr. Holt, at two o'clock, with regard to business connected with Mr. Brogden's firm. I returned to the Government Buildings about half-past two, and sent word home to Mrs. Harrison, by one of the House messengers, that Mr. Holt and I would be to dinner that afternoon. I went down to Brogden's office about twenty minutes or half-past three o'clock. Mr. Tribe was then there. He left in a few minutes. Mr. Holt and I resumed the conversation we had begun in the morning. He told me that what was wanted was, that I should write certain articles for publication, explaining generally and advocating such works as might be contemplated by the firm, with a view of having them ventilated. I stated that my own opinion was in favour of the original proposal of Messrs. Brogden to construct railways in New Zealand, but that, as editor of the *Independent*, I could not recommend such in that journal until after the Session. I further told him, that as the newspaper was looked upon as the organ of a certain political party, I did not feel at liberty to express my own individual opinions upon such matters, because they might be regarded as the opinions of the party. I further stated to him that I believed I could obtain the publication of my articles upon these subjects in most of the newspapers published in the Colony. In regard to my declining to publish these articles in the *Independent*, I stated that I had no option in the matter. I stated that I could not possibly consent to do anything which might compromise the party with which I was connected, and which the paper of which I was editor supported, but if I had not been a Member of the House the thing would be different. Mr. Holt replied, "It is because you are a Member that your services will be useful." I then said, that under no circumstances would I agree to any arrangements which might fetter my action as a Member of the House; to which Mr. Holt said, "We have no desire to control your vote in any way, but we thought you might use your influence to prevent any motion being brought forward by the Opposition this Session which might lead to a change of Government." His exact words, as near as I can recollect, were, "You have considerable influence with Vogel, and you can persuade him not to bring any vote against the Government this year." He (Mr. Holt) proceeded to say: "Hang it, man, you have had your turn; let them have their innings. We want no further change to take place this Session. Mr. Brogden," he said "had kept aloof from party politics during the late debate; but now that they had got a Government that they could work with, they were anxious that they should remain in power this Session." Some conversation then ensued with respect to proposals I stated I had heard Brogden had made to the Government with regard to the construction of railways. When the conversation assumed this phase, I thought that he had no idea of the gravity of the proposal, and said that the conversation should now be dropped. I simply regarded Mr. Holt in the matter as the representative of Messrs. Brogden. The conversation was not again referred to, nor have I had any opportunity of conversing with Mr. Holt since we parted on the Monday evening. At the time I left Mr. Holt, I did not realize the gravity of the proposal made to me; and it was only after certain other facts had come to my knowledge, that I felt that an attempt had been made to influence me as a Member improperly. I was strengthened in this opinion by what fell from Mr. Tribe, to whom I told in general terms what had taken place. I said to him, "I suppose that something of the sort was suggested to you." He said, "Yes, something of the same sort." I wish to make one statement which I have omitted from the consecutive narrative: I told Mr. Holt that I thought Mr. Brogden was foolish in taking up the position he did; that I thought he was more likely to receive fair treatment from Mr. Vogel, who had brought him out, than with a Ministry which I thought was not favourable to the Public Works policy. To which Mr. Holt replied, that Vogel had not behaved well, that he had

Mr. Harrison.
7th Oct., 1872.

deceived him in respect to No. 1 contract, and that he was satisfied they could work better under the present Government. On the following Tuesday morning I mentioned casually to Mr. Vogel what had taken place. He said it was a serious matter, and he thought I was bound to mention it to the Speaker. I wrote to the Speaker to accord me an interview, and he fixed the following morning, at eleven o'clock, at which time I attended in his room. I then related to him in general terms what had taken place; and he told me that I was not only justified in the course I had adopted, but that I had no option but to bring the matter before the House. He then desired me to write a letter to him, which he might read to the House. I wrote that letter, and delivered it on Thursday morning, and it was read on Thursday evening. In all my conversations with Mr. Holt on the occasions referred to, I considered that Mr. Holt was acting as Mr. Brogden's secretary, and not in his private capacity.

2. Did he say in so many words that he had any direct authority to make you any offer from Mr. Brogden?—No, he did not. I think he said it was first spoken of by Mr. Brogden, and that the matter had been talked over by Mr. Brogden before he went to Picton. He (Mr. Holt) did not upon any occasion say directly that he had been authorized to make any offer.

3. *Sir J. C. Wilson.*] Was anything said with reference to secrecy; I mean did anything pass between you and Mr. Holt?—Yes.

4. At what stage was the matter of secrecy mentioned?—At the commencement, or directly afterwards.

5. In the lobby of the House?—No; in Mr. Holt's private office, at the interview in the afternoon.

6. At what hour did you dine at your house?—At six o'clock.

7. How soon after the dinner hour did it strike you that an insulting proposal had been made to you; or, rather, when did you adopt the view that what had passed between you and Mr. Holt was derogatory to you? At what time was that opinion formed by you?—After I had spoken to Mr. Tribe, in the evening.

8. Do you recollect at what time you saw Mr. Tribe?—I cannot fix the hour. It was either at Bellamy's or the Metropolitan Hotel, but I cannot say the time.

9. About what time?—I really cannot fix the time.

10. Had the House met?—The House had not met. It was on a Monday, and the House does not meet on Monday.

11. You had parted from Holt. At what time did you part from Mr. Holt?—About a quarter or half-past five; he walked with me as far as the corner of the street in which I lived, as he had some business to attend to before dinner.

12. How do you account for the fact that when it struck you that an offensive proposal had been made by Mr. Holt, you sat at the table and took food with him?—I have stated that as soon as the conversation assumed a dangerous character it ceased, and that I did not regard Mr. Holt as having acted except as an agent.

13. *Mr. Fox.*] Do you recollect what hour Mr. Holt left you after having dined with you?—I have already stated that it was about seven o'clock.

14. Did any other person dine with you?—No; we dined all alone.

15. *Mr. Rolleston.*] Did you, on that day, communicate to any one else what passed between you and Mr. Holt, with the exception of Mr. Tribe?—No; not to any one else.

16. You said in your evidence that other facts had come to your knowledge, which influenced you in forming your opinion that the proposal as made was derogatory to you. What were these other facts?—There was one circumstance to my mind very conclusive: for some time previously Mr. Tribe had been acting as agent for Messrs. Brogden and Co., at Ross, for the purpose of obtaining certain concessions from the local authorities for the construction of water races. Finding that the thing was likely to hang on indefinitely, Mr. Tribe saw Mr. Brogden's chief engineer, Mr. Henderson, and had some communication with him on the subject, in the course of which he (Henderson) said they never allowed anybody to work for their firm for nothing; what did he consider a fair thing for the work done for them? Mr. Tribe replied that he had never expected any remuneration. What he had done was simply done to see the water race for his district constructed, but if Mr. Henderson thought he was fairly entitled to some remuneration for his trouble, probably £20 or £30 would be sufficient remuneration. Mr. Henderson said that it was far too little, and they would not think of giving less than £100, as his services were worth £100. I know nothing further of what took place. It was the knowledge of that fact had a tendency to confirm me in the opinion I formed at the nature of the proposal which had been made to me.

17. Any other facts besides these?—The general conversation I had with Mr. Holt relative to the state of political parties, likewise combined to form my opinion upon the point. I am likewise told that Mr. Reynolds, Captain Fraser, and Colonel Brett are able to state some things which will probably corroborate the correctness of the impression formed upon my mind.

18. *Mr. Fox.*] You are drawing a distinction between casual interviews and the formal interview you had with Mr. Holt in Mr. Brogden's office?—Certainly; most distinctly I do.

19. *Mr. Rolleston.*] Did you give any intimation to Mr. Holt that you were dissatisfied with the proposal made by him?—No further intimation than I said to him that we had better stop the conversation, and say nothing more until after the Session.

20. *The Chairman.*] This conversation took place under promise of secrecy, did it not?—It did; but the promise of secrecy related to the offer made to me in the morning, and did not apply to the attempt made to compromise me.

21. When you left that interview, did you intimate that you considered your promise of secrecy at an end?—No; I did not.

22. *Mr. Fox.*] Did you understand that promise of secrecy to involve any particular action in the House?—I simply thought that it related to the offer made for my professional services in my capacity as a private individual.

23. Is it unusual for gentlemen in your profession who place their services at the disposal of another to take precaution against the fact being made public?—It is, certainly.

24. *Mr. Rolleston.*] Did Mr. Tribe intimate to you that he held the same view as to the impropriety of the offer as you held yourself?—I simply told him the view which suggested itself to my mind. In doing so I said, "I suppose something of the kind was said to you?" He replied, "Yes; something of the sort." I afterwards told him the course I intended to take, and he said he thought I was very foolish.

25. When did this interview take place between you and Mr. Tribe?—Some time during the Monday evening.

26. *Mr. O'Rorke.*] When this proposal was made, did you understand that it was made with the authority of Mr. Brogden?—Certainly.

27. *Mr. Parker.*] Did you not consider the promise of secrecy sufficiently binding on you to prevent you communicating with Mr. Tribe or Mr. Vogel on the subject?—After the turn the subject had taken, I did not consider the pledge of secrecy was so binding as to prevent my mentioning it to confidential friends.

28. *The Chairman.*] When you discovered the nature of the proposition Mr. Holt had made to you, did you tell him that you did not consider the pledge of secrecy binding any longer upon you?—No, I did not. When I discovered that the offer really intended was of a dishonourable character, I considered further conversation dangerous, and ceased it.

29. *Mr. Sheehan.*] On going to Mr. Brogden's office at half-past three you found Mr. Tribe there. You have told us that you said to Mr. Tribe, "I suppose something of the same kind was said to you." Did you refer to something that had taken place during the interview when you found him there?—Yes, certainly.

30. You understood Mr. Tribe's answers to mean that at that interview Mr. Holt had made similar proposals to him?—I did.

31. *Sir J. C. Wilson.*] Did you tell Mr. Tribe that evening that you intended to make the whole thing public?—No, I did not then.

32. Then, in fact, it was not until after you saw Mr. Vogel in the morning, and he had told you to go to the Speaker, that you determined upon the course you would pursue?—Yes.

33. *Mr. Sheehan.*] I understood you to say that you had told Mr. Tribe, and he said he thought you were very foolish?—No, I had not told him at that time.

34. *Mr. Rolleston.*] What object had you in making this communication to Mr. Vogel?—So much had been said about the possibility of large contractors interfering with the independence of Parliament that I thought it right to take his advice upon the subject.

35. You consulted with him, in order that you might obtain his advice as to the course you ought to take in the matter?—Exactly.

36. *Mr. Fox.*] You have been on intimate terms with Mr. Vogel for a considerable number of years, have you not?—I have been on intimate terms with him for the last nine or ten years.

37. And you have had professional relations with him?—Yes; during four years of that time.

The witness went on to say:—I wish to add to my statement that I endeavoured to persuade him (Mr. Holt) that there was no necessity whatever for influencing Mr. Vogel as to bringing forward a motion of "no confidence" in the Government. I said to him that he might make himself perfectly easy on the subject, as there was not the slightest chance of any motion of this kind being brought forward unless it was absolutely certain of being carried successfully.

38. *Mr. Fox.*] In your conversation with Mr. Holt, was there anything said as to the value of your services, or was there anything said about remuneration?—No question of remuneration was raised, but he stated incidentally that he supposed I found the daily paper very irksome, and that I would be glad to get out of it, supposing that a liberal arrangement could be entered into. Nothing, however, was specified. Still, I understood that if any permanent arrangement were made, I was to receive a salary quite equal to the one I receive in my present capacity.

39. When Captain Holt used the word "we," to whom do you consider he referred?—Brogden and Sons. During the whole of the interview nothing whatever was said which led me to believe that he referred to himself as an individual. I certainly regarded him as agent for Brogden and Sons, and what took place I did not look upon as having taken place with Mr. Holt in his private capacity.

40. *The Chairman.*] In what capacity did you understand that your services were to be employed?—To further the interests of the firm generally; to describe and advocate their undertakings in the newspapers. The drawing of prospectuses was, I think, also talked of.

41. *Mr. Sheehan.*] Was any reference made to these matters, or did any conversation take place on the subject at the dinner to which you have referred?—No, not a word.

[Reference was made to a previous answer of the witness's, in which he stated that no other person was present at the dinner. He (witness) explained that he intended to except Mrs. Harrison when he made that answer. He added:—Not a word was said in my private house; in fact, Mrs. Harrison knew nothing whatever about the matter until the following day.]

42. *Mr. Parker.*] Had you an opportunity of referring to the interview after dinner. Were you alone at any time?—No; we sat in the same room with Mrs. Harrison. She was present most of the time.

43. *Mr. Sheehan.*] You say that Mr. Holt called upon you before you were up, and afterwards called after you left the house?—Yes; he called twice that morning.

44. How are you aware of that?—From my servant.

WEDNESDAY, 9TH OCTOBER, 1872.

W. H. HARRISON, Esq., was in attendance, and, on being sworn, was re-examined as follows:—

45. *The Hon. Mr. Gillies.*] How long have you been acquainted with Mr. Holt? On what

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terms have you been with him? Have you been on confidential terms?—I have only known Mr. Holt for a few months: since he came from Auckland, and before he entered into the service of Messrs. Brogden and Sons. I really forget when I was introduced to him. It is a few months since—about a month before the commencement of the present Session.

46. During that time have you been on confidential relations with him?—I have.

47. Was the communication you made to Mr. Vogel made inside the House or outside?—I am not quite sure whether it was made outside the House or in the lobbies of the building.

48. At what hour was it made?—I cannot say. It was made some time before the House met on the Tuesday.

49. *Sir J. C. Wilson.*] Between what hours would you say? Between twelve and half-past two, or when?—I really cannot say. It was between one and two, I think. It was some time previous to half-past two, I know. That is as near as I can specify the time.

50. *The Hon. Mr. Gillies.*] You had the previous evening mentioned the circumstance to Mr. Tribe?—I did mention what took place to Mr. Tribe.

51. Did you, prior to consulting with the Speaker in his room on Wednesday morning, mention the matter to any other person excepting Mr. Tribe and Mr. Vogel?—I will not be positive. I think the matter was not mentioned by myself, but by Mr. Vogel; and I think I was asked if certain things had taken place.

52. Am I to understand then, that, so far as you remember, no mention was made of the matter to any other person but Messrs. Tribe and Vogel until after you had consulted with the Speaker on Wednesday morning?—I have no remembrance of having made a voluntary statement to any other person, excepting it may have been in answer to a question put to me as to whether certain matters had taken place.

53. On the Tuesday you consulted Mr. Vogel on the subject. Was there any other person present at that time?—No.

54. No one present at all?—No one at all.

55. Did you then inform Mr. Vogel that you were under the pledge of secrecy?—I cannot say. I do not remember exactly, but I think I did.

56. Subsequently to your consulting with the Speaker, did you again consult with Mr. Vogel before writing the letter?—No, I did not.

57. Did you communicate with any other person on the subject before you wrote that letter to the Speaker?—With no one whatever.

58. Did any one see that letter, or any draft of it?—No one saw the letter.

59. *Mr. Travers, as Counsel for Mr. Holt.*] Do you know the objects for which your professional services were sought?—Yes.

60. What were they?—In furtherance of the objects of the Company in their endeavour to form water supplies for the gold fields, and generally for the furtherance of such undertakings connected with the mining interest which might be undertaken by the firm, or which the firm might contemplate the construction of, in New Zealand.

61. What were the character of the services you were to render?—Simply to explain and describe the nature and object of these undertakings, and generally to assist in furthering the views of the Company with regard to these undertakings.

62. You were, generally speaking, well acquainted with the nature of these undertakings?—I had a general acquaintance with them.

63. Did you approve of them?—I did.

64. Then you were simply asked to advocate matters quite in consonance with your own views?—Yes.

65. Did you not in your conversation say that you did not know whether these undertakings would meet with the support of the party with whom you were working?—No, that was not said.

66. Did you not say, that if the object of these undertakings conformed with the views of your party you would advocate them in the House?—No, I did not say so. I said that I would not advocate them in the *Wellington Independent*. I said also that I was to have perfect freedom of action in the House, and that I was to be free to take what course I thought proper.

67. When you said that, were you urged to take any other course?—No.

68. Then am I to understand the matter thus: The subjects you were to advocate were subjects you yourself approved of, and had no hesitation in advocating?—Yes.

69. Even as a Member of the House, and irrespective altogether of parties?—Yes, irrespective of parties.

70. As a matter of fact, have you not in the columns of the *Independent* advocated the same things already?—I have.

71. I see in your evidence already taken a reply to an honorable Member's question, Whether anything was said about the proposal, at dinner at your house,—you say, "No, nothing was said about it there"?—No; the subject was not mentioned at dinner.

72. Was anything said about it after dinner?—No; Mr. Holt and I had no conversation on matters relating to business during the afternoon.

73. Your conversation, then, was general, probably respecting political matters?—Yes.

74. You asked Mr. Holt to dine with you. When did you do so?—I had invited him before the interview took place in the afternoon.

75. Am I to understand that up to the time of your communication with Mr. Tribe you had seen nothing improper, insulting, or derogatory in what Mr. Holt had said?—The notes you have got of my evidence are not quite correct. What I stated was, that it was not until after I had seen Mr. Tribe that I discovered there had been an attempt made to influence me as a Member of the House.

76. Am I to understand that it was not until after you had seen Mr. Tribe that the proposal struck you as being an improper one?—I do not say that; when I found the conversation assuming a dangerous character, I said that it better be dropped until after the end of the Session.

77. Did you state to Mr. Holt that you considered the conversation was of a character in some degree dangerous or improper?—I did not.

78. It was after that that he dined with you?—Yes.

79. Am I to understand, then, that you never communicated to Mr. Holt that you placed such a construction upon his conversation?—I did not.

80. Did you never ask him for any explanations?—No. No further communication passed between us after Monday night.

81. Do you remember the exact terms in which you communicated with Mr. Tribe regarding this interview? When did you first see Mr. Tribe in reference to this conversation?—Some time the same evening. I cannot, however, fix the precise time. It was after I parted with Mr. Holt. I told Mr. Tribe what had taken place between myself and Mr. Holt.

82. Did you then, on communication with Mr. Tribe, put such a construction upon it as would lead him to suppose that overtures of an improper character had been made?—It is impossible for me to give the exact words. What I communicated to him was to the effect that Brogden was desirous of receiving political support. I spoke more particularly of what had been said by Mr. Holt with regard to the advisability of persuading Mr. Vogel not to bring forward a want-of-confidence motion during the present Session.

83. You say you told Mr. Tribe that Mr. Brogden wished to obtain your political support in the House?—What I gave Mr. Tribe to understand was, that Mr. Brogden desired to keep the present Government in office.

84. As far as the proposal to secure your services went, you consider that a perfectly proper thing?—Yes.

85. It was something entirely outside of that which led you to believe that you had been tampered with?—I object to the word "tampered." It was something outside of the proposal that induced me to take the view of the matter which I did.

86. You state that Mr. Holt wished you to use your influence to prevent Mr. Vogel turning out Mr. Stafford and his colleagues?—Yes.

87. Did Mr. Holt make any offer to you of remuneration of any kind for the influence you should bring to bear on Mr. Vogel?—No; none at all.

88. In what respect did you consider the proposal was one which involved improper suggestion to you?—That view was taken in connection with the surrounding circumstances.

89. The proposal was made for your services to further the undertakings referred to by you?—Yes.

90. You looked then at the one thing as being tacked on to the other?—Yes.

91. Are you aware that Mr. Holt has sent a letter to the Speaker, denying your accusations?—Yes, I have heard that he has done so.

92. In the face of that denial, do you still persist in your opinion that he attempted unduly to influence your conduct?—In all my communications with Mr. Holt, I regarded him simply as an agent for Messrs. Brogden and Sons, and not as Mr. Holt as an individual.

93. Assuming then that he was not acting as an agent for Messrs. Brogden and Sons, do you still persist in believing that an attempt was made unduly to influence your conduct as a Member of the House?—No; I would be very sorry indeed.

94. With the explanations before you, do you still persist in believing that an improper attempt was made to influence you as a Member of the House?—If the communication was made to me by Mr. Holt as a private individual, I can no longer consider that an attempt was made to influence me as such. I can simply regard it as a conversation with a private individual.

95. Am I to understand, then, that it was the circumstances of the supposed agency that you laid the great stress upon?—Exactly so.

96. What special reason had you for supposing Mr. Holt acted as the agent of Messrs. Brogden and Sons?—I had no other reason than the general tenor of the conversation. He (Mr. Holt) generally made use of the terms "we," "us," and "the firm," which led me to believe that he was acting in his business capacity.

97. Had Mr. Brogden himself ever had any conversation with you upon this matter?—None at all, further than he has had a conversation with me with regard to works of this kind in actual progress or to be undertaken.

98. Did he ever propose to you to use your professional services in this matter?—No, never.

99. Then am I to presume that the conversations you have held with Mr. Brogden were simply those of a person interested, or presumably interested, in these matters?—Certainly.

100. Then am I to understand that Mr. Brogden never made any overtures to you for your professional services?—No, none at all.

101. In your experience has it not very often occurred that in conversations of this character the words "we" and "the firm" are used when it is not intended to convey the impression of an actual agency?—I think it is very possible.

102. In editing a paper, is the paper not often spoken of as "we"?—Oh! yes, it is.

103. The delivery boy, for instance, might use the word "we," and still you would not infer an agency?—The meeting on this occasion took place by special appointment in Messrs. Brogden's office.

104. Was not the office the most convenient place—perhaps more convenient than any other place in town?—Oh, yes.

105. Did not you yourself mention that you would call at the office and discuss the matter?—No; it was Mr. Holt wanted to go there. He wanted me to go to it there and then, and when I told him I had other engagements, he asked me to come in the afternoon.

106. And you went to the office in the afternoon?—Yes.

107. When you went to consult the Speaker, in his room, did you tell him, in the first instance, that the conversation was confidential?—I did.

108. When you communicated what had transpired, the Speaker said that you had no other option

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than to bring the matter before the House; and he led you to believe that if you did not, he would. Is that correct?—That was the impression conveyed to my mind.

109. The impression was that the Speaker would bring the matter before the House, if you did not?—He told me that I had no option in the matter.

110. Did he lead you to believe that he would bring the matter before the House, if you did not?—Yes, that is the impression on my mind.

111. Did the Speaker advise you to consult any other of your friends?—No; he advised me to communicate formally to him what had been said.

112. Had you been advised by any other person to make a formal communication to the House?—No.

113. Did not Mr. Vogel advise you to that?—No; he simply advised me to see the Speaker on the subject. I believe he had communicated with the Speaker before I went there.

114. Had you any communication with the Hon. Mr. Reeves?—Not until after I had seen the Speaker.

115. Did you see Messrs. Vogel and Reeves on the evening of Monday?—I do not think so.

116. Do you remember a dinner given by Mr. Brogden to a number of gentlemen in the Club?—Yes.

117. Were you in Wellington at the time?—I was.

118. Were you invited?—No, I think not.

119. You were not at it?—No, I was not.

120. Did Mr. Tribe, at the time you communicated to him what had transpired, state to you generally the nature of the proposals he said had been made to him?—No, he did not. He only told me in a general way what had taken place, but he never communicated to me its exact nature.

121. Therefore you do not know upon what he founded his opinion on the subject?—No.

122. In your evidence you stated something about some money paid by Mr. Brogden to Mr. Tribe?—I stated that Mr. Tribe had rendered some services to Mr. Brogden on the West Coast, and that at an interview he had with Mr. Henderson, Mr. Brogden's chief engineer, he suggested that he should receive some payment for these services. On the matter being discussed, Mr. Henderson named a sum double that proposed by Mr. Tribe himself.

123. That is, Mr. Henderson considered the remuneration suggested to be below the mark?—Yes.

124. Did Mr. Tribe inform you that he looked upon that as an improper attempt to influence him?—No, not at all.

125. Do you consider that he was fairly entitled to remuneration for his services?—Yes, I think so.

126. Was it then communicated to you for the first time at the interview on Monday that an attempt of this kind had been made?—I think it was. I may state that I have not heard that Mr. Tribe actually received remuneration for these services.

127. You had sufficient knowledge of the services rendered to justify you in believing that he was entitled to remuneration. Do you think that the amount he asked for was enough?—I think so.

128. Therefore, you infer that it was improper on Mr. Brogden's part to estimate these labours at a higher rate?—No, that is not the case. The circumstance simply confirmed other suspicions that existed on my mind at the time.

129. Was it at your house that this passed; I mean the conversation between you and Mr. Tribe?—No, it was either in Bellamy's or at the Metropolitan Hotel.

130. With the exception of what took place on that occasion, has anything derogatory to your position been proposed to you by Mr. Holt?—Certainly not.

131. How long have you been engaged in connection with the newspaper press?—More or less for the last seventeen years.

132. How long, I mean, in New Zealand?—Since 1861.

133. Where were you first connected with newspapers in New Zealand?—In Dunedin.

134. Was that upon a newspaper which Mr. Vogel had the direction of?—Yes.

135. Have you not been more or less connected with Mr. Vogel for a considerable period?—Eight or nine years.

136. Has there ever been anything in your communications with Mr. Holt which led you to believe that he was not a man whose word was trustworthy?—No, certainly not.

137. I understand that the alleged agency has been denied by Mr. Holt, and that in this denial he is corroborated by Mr. Brogden. Do you still adhere to the opinion that he was acting as an agent?—Mr. Holt has stated that no such proposal was made; that is a very different thing from denying the agency.

138. In the face of that denial, which has, I believe, been published, do you still persist in the view you have taken?—I do not, since the explicit denial was made. I have already stated that I am perfectly certain that Mr. Holt himself was not aware of the full extent of the gravity of the matter introduced.

139. You did not point out to him that he was treading upon dangerous ground?—No, I did not.

140. *The Attorney-General.*] Mr. Harrison stated that he said nothing to Mr. Holt showing that he considered the proposal an improper one. Mr. Harrison has also stated that he said to Mr. Holt that the further consideration of the matter must be postponed until after the close of the Session. I would ask an explanation of what led him to postpone the matter till after the Session?—I stated to Mr. Holt that it was quite evident that I would not enter into any arrangement with the firm that was likely to interfere with my political action; it would therefore be as well to drop all negotiations until after the Session.

141. You state in your letter to the Speaker,—“It was specially intimated that, whilst I need not commit the *Wellington Independent* (of which paper I am the editor) to any direct support of the present Government, nor that I should vote in that direction in the House, I should do what I could to influence the Hon. Mr. Vogel not to bring down this Session a motion which might involve the defeat

of the Government, the reason alleged being, that it was to Mr. Brogden's interest that Mr. Stafford's Government should remain in power for at least the current year." As I understand it, that was to be made a condition of your engagement?—No, it was not to be made a condition. As I understood it, it was to be part of any arrangement that might be come to between us.

142. Let me point out to you that you used the word "condition"?—That is correct as regards furthering the undertakings; as a Member of the House I was to use my influence to prevent any motion being brought forward. That is the interpretation I placed upon what took place.

THURSDAY, 10TH OCTOBER, 1872.

WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON, Esq., M.H.R., re-called, and examined.

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143. *The Attorney-General.*] Yesterday, in the course of examination by Mr. Travers, you stated that you had said nothing to Mr. Holt which indicated that you considered his proposals improper, and afterwards you also stated to Mr. Travers that you did tell Mr. Holt that the proposals had better be postponed until after the Session. I pointed out to you, on putting a question to you, that I considered that those answers seemed to be inconsistent. I ask you now, was anything said by you to Mr. Holt that indicated that you did consider the proposals such as ought not to be entertained by you?—All that was said was, that I thought the conversation on the subject of the proposals had better be dropped until after the Session.

144. Did you say anything with regard to the promise which you had given of secrecy?—No, I did not.

145. I understand you to say that you did not tell Mr. Holt, or did not say anything to Mr. Holt which indicated that you considered that he had behaved improperly in extracting the promise he did from you?—No.

146. Do you recollect whether or not you made use of this expression to Mr. Holt: that you considered you had been entrapped?—No, I did not say so.

147. Do you recollect whether or not, in the interview you had with Mr. Speaker, you told him that you had used that expression?—No; but I believe I said to the Speaker that I saw that I had been entrapped, or that I thought I had been entrapped, and that I stopped the conversation. I did not tell Mr. Speaker or anybody else that I said to Mr. Holt that I thought I had been entrapped.

148. *Mr. Fox.*] You said to Mr. Speaker that you thought you had been entrapped, but you did not say so to Mr. Holt?—I may have said to the Speaker that I thought I had been entrapped, or that I felt I had been entrapped.

149. *Mr. Sheehan.*] Do you remember, in the conversation just referred to, saying that you told Mr. Holt that you now considered the conversation was assuming a turn which would be likely to fetter your political action, and that you therefore wished that it should cease?—I said so, or words to that effect.

150. *Mr. Travers.*] You suggested that three gentlemen should be sent for as witnesses—Colonel Brett, Captain Fraser, and Mr. Reynolds, intimating that they could give evidence which would in some degree corroborate your suspicion?—Yes, I think so.

151. When did you first hear from any of these gentlemen upon the subject upon which you suggested that they should give evidence?—Since the appointment of this Committee by the House.

152. Had what you heard from them any influence upon you in arriving at the conclusion you did?—No; it could not.

WILLIAM HUNTER REYNOLDS, Esq., M.H.R., in attendance, and having been sworn, was examined.

Mr. Reynolds.

153. *The Chairman.*] You are a Member of the House of Representatives for Dunedin City?—Yes.

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154. Do you desire to make any statement to the Committee?—I do. I met Mr. Brogden—I think it was on Monday last—in the lobby. He told me that I would have to give evidence before the Committee. I told him that I knew nothing at all about this case; that the only evidence I could give was the conversation which had taken place with himself, believing that was the evidence I was required to give. I wrote it down, and afterwards submitted it to Colonel Brett and Captain Fraser, who were present at the time of the conversation, and I understood them to say that it was correct.

155. May I ask you, have you had Colonel Brett's permission to make use of this, because I put myself in communication with Colonel Brett yesterday, and he positively declines to attend before the Committee to give evidence, alleging that he could not do so, as all the evidence he could give related to a conversation which he regarded to be of a private character. I mention this in order that you may see how far you are justified in bringing Colonel Brett's name into the matter, as he seems personally to object to it?—I showed this statement to Colonel Brett and Captain Fraser.

156. Colonel Brett objects to appear to give this evidence before the Committee, because he says it is a private and confidential conversation. I have now told you what his views are, and it is for you to exercise your own judgment in the matter.

157. *Witness.*] Well, I shall simply read the statement to the Committee:—

"Colonel Brett, Captain Fraser, and I were walking up Molesworth Street, on Sunday, 29th ultimo; met Mr. Brogden and Mr. McGlashan; the latter walked on. Colonel Brett then accused Mr. Brogden of having used his influence to turn out the Fox Government. He denied it, but said that he came out to the Colony in the interest of his firm, and that, although he did not care what Government might be in power, yet that he would bring all his influence to bear in order to strengthen his position. After parting with Mr. Brogden, I remarked to Colonel Brett and Captain Fraser that I had inwardly taken a note of his remarks which I did not at all like, as it appeared to me that he intended using his influence with Members, and possibly at elections."

158. *Mr. Rolleston.*] You say that he (Colonel Brett) accused Mr. Brogden?—Yes, he said that Mr. Brogden had used his influence to get Mr. Fox's Government out of office.

- Mr. Reynolds.* 159. Was the conversation of a nature of a serious accusation?—Well, I certainly understood it as such.
- 10th Oct., 1872. 160. *Mr. Fox.*] Did Mr. Brogden seem to understand it as such?—I cannot say whether Mr. Brogden understood it as such, but it seemed to me that he understood it as such.
161. *Mr. Parker.*] I want to ask you whether they were laughing; whether it was a joking conversation, or whether it was really meant?—I do not think it was a joking conversation.
162. Were any of them laughing?—No; I do not think it was a joking conversation; it seemed to be entirely serious—the whole conversation. I did not take any part in it; I merely heard it. After parting with Mr. Brogden, I made use of the observations I have just read to Captain Fraser and Colonel Brett.
163. *Sir J. C. Wilson.*] Did Colonel Brett accuse Mr. Brogden at once when they met, or was there any conversation preliminary to this?—We shook hands with Mr. Brogden; Mr. McGlashan walked on down to the House; Mr. Brogden turned and walked as far as the Galatea Hotel with us. Then Colonel Brett said to Mr. Brogden, “You have used all your influence to get the Fox Ministry turned out.” I cannot say the exact words. That is the purport of them, and I have given them in writing.
164. *Mr. Travers.*] I should like to ask you, Mr. Reynolds, whether, as Mr. Brogden approached yourself and the other gentlemen with you, Colonel Brett did not call out, “Ha! here comes the man who has turned out the Ministry.” Was that not the expression he used?—I believe, now you have called my attention to it, that he did say something like that; but I could not be quite certain about the exact words.
165. You were close enough to hear what was said?—It was said to Mr. Brogden. I was speaking to Mr. McGlashan, and asking him whether he was going out for a walk.
166. Mr. Brogden at once denied it, and said he had not done anything of the kind?—Yes; I have given it in writing.
167. What you have put down is your recollection of the purport of the conversation, and not the exact words?—I cannot say positively that they are the exact words, but I think they are the exact words.
168. That he would use any influence he possessed to strengthen his position?—Yes, to strengthen his position.
169. He did not say anything which would directly imply that he intended to use indirect and undue influence?—Certainly not; he said nothing to imply anything further than what I have given in that statement. Of course a person might infer from that whatever he thought proper.
170. *Mr. Fox.*] It was spoken in reply to the allegation that he had turned out the previous Ministry, was it not?—Yes.
- Witness was thanked and withdrew.

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- GEORGE HENRY TRIBE, Esq., M.H.R., in attendance, and having been sworn, was examined.
171. *The Chairman.*] You are a Member of the House of Representatives for Totara?—Yes.
172. The Committee is informed that you can give them some information with reference to this charge brought by Mr. Harrison against Mr. Holt, of making improper propositions to him, which are entirely inconsistent with his proper and honourable position as a Member of the House of Representatives. Do you know anything about it? If you know anything about it, perhaps you will have the kindness to make a statement to the Committee, and then the members of the Committee, if they desire further information, can put questions to you?—I was with Mr. Harrison—I think it was on Monday week—at Mr. Brogden’s office, and saw Mr. Holt there. We had some conversation as to the state of politics and political affairs just then. Mr. Holt evidently showed that he would prefer that the Stafford Ministry remained in office, and argued that the Members of the House ought to give them fair play; that they at all events could prevent the bringing forward of a motion to turn out the Ministry. I regarded it merely as a conversation. I went down to see Mr. Holt respecting the formation of a water company, and to obtain information. I looked upon it simply as a conversation. Mr. Harrison dropped in while I was there, and the conversation turned on that subject. I do not know of anything further I have to say. I know, further, that Mr. Harrison had told me that Mr. Holt had offered him—had invited him to negotiate as to giving his professional services on behalf of Messrs. Brogden. I left Mr. Harrison with Mr. Holt, and they went away together, about four o’clock in the afternoon, to Mr. Brogden’s office, to have a talk about the arrangement for Mr. Harrison’s professional services.
173. Had any suggestions or propositions been made to you, Mr. Tribe, that you felt bound to resent as being of an insulting character?—None whatever.
174. *Sir J. C. Wilson.*] At what place did this conversation take place?—I mentioned in the early part of the evidence that I met Mr. Holt at Mr. Brogden’s office, but we left the office and went away to have a glass of sherry together. I left Mr. Harrison and Mr. Holt, who were to go back to Mr. Brogden’s office, and I went home.
175. Did Mr. Harrison ever speak to you, after that four o’clock on the Monday evening, to the effect that he was of opinion that improper proposals had been made to him by Mr. Holt or Mr. Brogden?—Yes, he did, and I am rather puzzled as to the date; at all events it was the evening before he told me he had an appointment to meet the Speaker of the House at eleven o’clock next morning. That fixes the date. I think I had not seen Mr. Harrison again on the Monday.
176. *Mr. Parker.*] Are you sure you did not see Mr. Harrison on Monday night?—I feel confident I did not. The night I saw him was after he had written to Mr. Speaker about the promised appointment, to have an interview with Mr. Speaker next morning.
177. *Sir J. C. Wilson.*] On that Tuesday evening, did Mr. Harrison state to you, in fact, that an improper proposal had been made to him, and did he enlarge upon that?—He told me that Mr. Holt had gone beyond the scope of the interview which was arranged, and had made propositions to him, which he thought he was bound to report to the Speaker.

178. You are quite certain that, between Monday evening and the Tuesday evening, he did not say anything to you of that sort?—I cannot be quite certain. I am pretty sure I did not see him on the Monday evening. I may have been with him on the Tuesday; I may have been with him all day on Tuesday.

179. *The Hon. Mr. Gillies.*] Did Mr. Harrison tell you about this proposal which he had from Mr. Holt previous to his having communicated with the Speaker?—I think he did.

180. Did he tell you of it previous to his having communicated it to the Speaker—before the sending of his letter to the Speaker?—I think he did. I am not very confident upon that point.

181. *Mr. Rolleston.*] When Mr. Harrison told you of the course he intended to take of meeting the Speaker, did you express any opinion upon that course?—Yes; I advised him not to do so; I was averse to his doing so.

182. Did you intimate to Mr. Harrison that any overtures or proposals of any character had been made to you by Mr. Brogden?—I did not intimate that any proposal having a political bearing had been made by Mr. Brogden, or any one connected with the firm.

183. Can you state what you did inform Mr. Harrison of?—Yes; I cannot be sure of the date, but I think it was Monday morning that I saw Mr. Henderson at his own house. We had some conversation about negotiations that I had been trying to manage for Mr. Brogden, for the attainment of water concessions in Westland, and Mr. Henderson asked me what I would charge for the services I had rendered. I replied that I had not thought of making any charge; that my whole and sole object was to get a race made for the benefit of the district. Mr. Henderson replied, "You have had a vast deal of trouble, and it is not our custom to accept gratuitous services, and I think it right to make you a present of £100." Mr. Henderson is chief engineer to Mr. Brogden.

184. Were you asked to name a sum yourself as remuneration?—Mr. Henderson pressed me to name a sum, and I said, "If you press it upon me I cannot well refuse; will £50 be too much?" It was after that he said it was too little; he would make me a present of £100. I had been acting for Mr. Brogden in this matter of applications for water race, and in the matter of railway concessions, since last Session; I have been corresponding with him.

185. Did you receive the sum?—No; I have received no money from him for my services.

186. When Mr. Harrison told you of the view he took of the Messrs. Brogden's proposals from Mr. Holt, did you intimate to him that you took the same view of the proposals that had been made to you?—No.

187. You did not intimate that you considered that they were of the same character as those to yourself?—No; I cannot recollect what did pass between us. I probably said something to this effect: that if the £100 offered had anything to do with influencing my political action, that I should decline it.

188. *Sir J. C. Wilson.*] You did not understand that it was to influence your political action. You had been working for a year in trying to get concessions for water races, and concessions for railways. Did you consider, until you heard that tale from Mr. Harrison, that that £100 was offered for the purpose of exercising an improper influence over you?—I did not.

189. *Mr. Parker.*] Do you now consider that it was offered in an improper manner?—I do not.

190. *Sir J. C. Wilson.*] You say that you did not think so, and that you do not think so now. Had you thought so, would you not have resented it on the spot? Would you not have said, "I am not the man that you can deal with in this way?"—If it had been put very obviously, I should have done so certainly.

191. *Mr. Rolleston.*] Did you, at the time of the conversation with Mr. Harrison, intimate that Mr. Brogden's proposals then, in your mind, bore that aspect?—I might have gone so far as to say possibly there might have been some ulterior object in the offer, but I never thought so.

192. Did you make use of any such expression as that some view of the kind presented itself to your mind?—I do not think so.

193. *Mr. Fox.*] At the time when Mr. Henderson made this offer to you, were those negotiations complete? Had they been brought to a final conclusion?—No; they are not yet.

194. Had the negotiations arrived at any stage which made the offer of remuneration particularly appropriate?—I cannot say that they had.

195. Would you have felt that Mr. Brogden was not sufficiently prompt in recognizing your services if he had allowed the offer of remuneration to stand over until the end of the Session?—I should not.

196. *The Hon. Mr. Gillies.*] When Mr. Harrison first informed you of the offers that had been made to him by Mr. Holt, did he inform you whether he had consulted any one else before he consulted you?—Yes, he did.

197. Whom did he say he had consulted?—I do not know whether it is right to answer that question.

198. *The Chairman.*] It is your duty to answer the question.

Witness.] Mr. Vogel.

199. *The Hon. Mr. Gillies.*] Did he state to you his opinion on the subject?—My impression is that it was on Mr. Vogel's advice that he went to the Speaker.

200. Did he state to you what Mr. Vogel's opinion on the subject was?—I think he said Mr. Vogel stated that he ought to consult the Speaker on the matter.

201. Is that all?—That is all that I can recollect.

202. Did he not state to you what Mr. Vogel's own opinion upon the subject of the offer was?—I do not think he did.

203. At this first interview that you had with Mr. Harrison—the first time he told you about this affair with Mr. Holt, are you quite clear that at that time he had already consulted Mr. Vogel, and intended to consult the Speaker?—No, I am not clear upon that point. I have rather an impression that I saw Mr. Harrison in the afternoon before he saw Mr. Vogel.

204. In the afternoon of Tuesday?—I think so.

Mr. Tribe.

10th Oct., 1872.

Mr. Tribe.

10th Oct., 1872.

205. But if it were on Tuesday morning that he consulted Mr. Vogel, then your interview with him would be subsequent to that?—I have no clear recollection when Mr. Harrison first mentioned the matter to me; but I know that he told me the day before he had appointed to meet the Speaker.

206. But you do not remember particularly upon what time that day?—No, I do not.

207. *Mr. Parker.*] Had he appointed to meet the Speaker when he told you?—The conversation I refer to was at all events after he had appointed to have the interview with the Speaker. I am with Mr. Harrison every day of my life, and whether I heard it before I cannot say.

208. *Mr. Rolleston.*] Do I understand you that the conversation left upon your mind the impression that it was from Mr. Vogel's advice that Mr. Harrison went to the Speaker?—Yes.

209. *Mr. Fox.*] Was it your impression that Mr. Harrison had consulted with Mr. Vogel as to whether he should appeal to the Speaker?—Yes.

210. *Mr. Parker.*] I want to know in what capacity your services were employed by Mr. Brogden; was it as surveyor, or in connection with a newspaper?—In neither of these capacities, but simply as agent.

211. *Mr. Fox.*] I understand you were really the representative man in the interests of the West Coast water races and the gold fields people?—Yes.

212. *Sir J. C. Wilson.*] I understand you to say that you have really worked hard for a year in endeavouring to get these concessions for water race and railways, intended to benefit the people of Westland—that you have really worked hard to that effect for a year past?—I can hardly call it working hard; I have been engaged in very large correspondence during the past year in this matter.

213. *Mr. Rolleston.*] The Company you endeavoured to form had failed?—Yes. The Company called the Mikonui Water Company had been wound up prior to my negotiation with Mr. Brogden.

214. *Mr. Sheehan.*] Was it on the same day that you saw Mr. Henderson that you afterwards saw Mr. Holt?—No, I now remember, it was not on that Monday morning; it was the morning following the Members' ball.

215. Was that water supply subject in which you were engaged being affected prejudicially, or otherwise, by a change of Government?—No; I cannot think that it would have been affected in any way.

216. You stated that the object of your calling on Mr. Holt was purely a business one in reference to that particular matter?—Mr. Holt invited me down to help him to draw up a prospectus for the Half-Million Company.

217. Was it by yourself or by Mr. Holt that the political conversation was commenced?—I do not recollect how it was, but it was subsequent to Mr. Harrison coming into the room.

218. Did it take place in Mr. Harrison's presence then?—Yes.

219. *Mr. Fox.*] The concessions which it was your object to obtain in behalf of Mr. Brogden or his Company, I believe, were concessions from the County Government, and not from the General Government?—Yes; but I understood that if the reserves were made, the matter would be referred to the Attorney-General to arrange the conditions upon which a lease could be obtained.

220. You say you do not believe that it affected the result what Government might be in power?—No, not in the slightest degree.

221. *Mr. Harrison.*] I wish to ask you, whether, before I came into Mr. Holt's office, you had any conversation upon political subjects with Mr. Holt?—No, I think not.

222. Was it in my presence that Mr. Holt suggested that we should endeavour to prevent Mr. Vogel bringing forward a motion of want of confidence in the Government this Session?—I think it was; I am sure it was.

223. Do you remember seeing me at half-past five o'clock that evening—on that Monday evening in the Metropolitan Hotel?—I cannot be sure whether it was Monday or Tuesday.

224. Did I not tell you on Monday evening what had taken place between myself and Mr. Holt?—I am under the impression that I did not see you on the Monday evening.

225. Be good enough to refresh your memory, for it is rather important?—I have been trying to think over it, but I cannot recollect of it being on a Monday evening.

226. Did you know the general purport of what had taken place between Mr. Holt and myself before I told you that it was my intention to take any steps in relation to it?—I think I did. I think I knew the nature of your interview prior to your telling me what steps you were going to take.

227. Had I informed you of the general nature of the proposals before I informed you of the action I proposed to take?—I think you had.

228. It was not until after I had seen Mr. Vogel that I told you what steps I was about to take?—That is so.

229. Then it must have been prior to that time that I told you generally the nature of the proposals?—I think you told me prior to that time the nature of the proposals.

230. Then you must have seen me either on Monday evening or Tuesday morning?—My memory does not serve me whether I did, or not; but the deduction might be drawn from what I have said before.

231. Had you not expressed yourself to me as being in doubt as to the earnestness of Mr. Brogden in carrying out the Mikonui water race?—I had; and I had written to Mr. Brogden, pressing him to give me an answer on the subject, whether he intended to go on with the water race or not.

232. You wrote a letter to Mr. Brogden on this particular subject?—Yes; and have not received an answer; the letter was written a fortnight ago.

233. On the day that you went to see Mr. Henderson, did you not go with the determination to have the thing settled, yea or nay?—That was my intention, to get a positive answer.

234. That was the occasion on which the suggestion of the payment of £100 was made?—Yes.

235. You have heard nothing definite from the firm since?—No.

236. *Mr. Travers.*] Did you, in the letter referred to, mention that you had been put to a good deal of expense in the matter?—Not expense, but pecuniary loss.

237. That you had suffered pecuniary loss in the matter?—Yes; I have a copy of the letter in my lodgings. I think I said it would cause me pecuniary loss. I should like the letter to be produced.

238. Was it in reference to that part of your letter that Mr. Henderson said, "We do not wish you to be put to any expense on our account?"—It was. *Mr. Tribe.*
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239. Had you, in any part of your negotiations with Mr. Brogden, or any person connected with his firm, any proposals made to you that you looked upon as affecting your position as a Member?—None whatever.

240. Had you, until the conversation with Mr. Harrison, entertained any suspicion that any proposal made to you, or any conversation with you, tended in that direction?—I may have gone so far as to say, in reference to the offer of remuneration by Mr. Henderson, "Surely it cannot be thought in any way to influence my political action."

241. Had you any suspicion yourself that it was intended?—No, I had not.

242. Had you expressed to anybody at all that such an idea had crossed your mind until after your communication with Mr. Harrison?—I did not speak to any person on the subject, except to Mr. Harrison.

243. May I ask you, did you intimate to Mr. Harrison that such an idea crossed your mind before his communication to you?—I do not think so; I do not think such a suspicion had crossed my mind until that interview.

244. You did not consider, in point of fact, that the offer to pay you £100 was one intended in any degree to operate unduly upon your mind as a Member?—No.

245. I understand that when Mr. Harrison communicated with you, the idea crossed your mind and you said, "Surely the offer to pay me money could not have such an object as that which is suggested?"—That is how the matter occurred to me, I believe.

246. And only in consequence of Mr. Harrison's communication?—I think so.

247. During the political part of the conversation, when Mr. Harrison and yourself were present in Mr. Holt's room, was there any suggestion on the part of Mr. Holt that he wished the matter to be kept private?—No.

248. Have you had at any time conversations with private gentlemen opposed to the Government of Mr. Fox—the late Government?—Oh, yes.

249. Have any of them expressed a desire to see them out?—Yes.

250. I ask you whether, in those private conversations with the opponents of the late Government, or the supporters of Mr. Stafford's Government, somewhat similar remarks have not been made?—Oh, yes; unimportant remarks.

251. Did Mr. Holt at any time suggest to you that, in the interests of Mr. Brogden, he would ask you to take such a course?—He never went as far as that, but he said it would be for the interest of Mr. Brogden to retain the Stafford Government in office.

252. He gave that as his opinion?—Yes.

253. I presume, as far as his opinions and suggestions went, he wished to make you a convert to those opinions?—Yes.

254. I suppose other people have tried to convert you too?—Yes.

255. *Mr. Fox.*] The allegation made by Mr. Holt, that it would be to the advantage of Mr. Brogden that the Stafford Government should remain in, I understand was made during the interview in Mr. Holt's office, when Mr. Holt was conversing with you on a matter of business as Mr. Brogden's representative?—Yes.

256. *Mr. Parker.*] Was it after Mr. Harrison came in that this conversation began?—Yes.

257. And after your business conversation was concluded?—No; our business conversation was not concluded, but there was an interruption by the appearance of Mr. Harrison.

258. Did it go on after Mr. Harrison came in?—No, it did not; Mr. Harrison invited us out to have some sherry.

259. *Mr. Fox.*] You met Mr. Holt at Mr. Brogden's office, as his representative, for the purpose of conversing on a matter of business?—Yes.

260. And it was during that conversation, and after the arrival of Mr. Harrison, that Mr. Holt made the remark about its being to Mr. Brogden's interest that the Stafford Government should remain in power?—The business was the formation of a water company, and that was interrupted by the arrival of Mr. Harrison, when the conversation took a political turn.

Witness was thanked, and withdrew.

The Hon. FRANCIS DILLON BELL, Speaker of the House of Representatives, in attendance, and *Hon. F. D. Bell.*
examined. 10th Oct., 1872.

261. *The Chairman.*] I think you are aware, Mr. Speaker, of the object of our inquiry here?—I am, Sir.

262. I think, probably, the best course I can take in the matter would be to ask you to make a statement of what transpired between yourself and Mr. Harrison upon the subject?—I made an appointment, at Mr. Harrison's request, to receive him on the morning of the day before I made the statement in the House; that is, on the morning of the 2nd October. On Mr. Harrison's coming into the room, he told me that his object was to consult me as to whether he was bound to maintain secrecy with respect to a communication that had been made to him by Mr. Holt, which communication he would repeat to me. He then said that some arrangement had been proposed to him by Mr. Holt for employing the paper of which he was the editor to give information upon certain projects that Messrs. Brogden had in view respecting public works, especially with reference to some matters of water supply; which arrangement he considered to be quite legitimate. That at some time subsequently to the original proposal of that arrangement, he went to Mr. Brogden's office to see, as I understood, Mr. Brogden himself, but he saw Mr. Holt. That after some conversation on the subject of the proposal for employing his professional services as editor of the paper, he said to Mr. Holt, "I suppose, then, there is nothing more?" whereupon Mr. Holt said to him, "That it must be understood he was to give his vote in the House in such a way as was necessary for Mr. Brogden's

Hon. F. D. Bell. interests." Mr. Harrison then stated that he immediately said, "Then I have been entrapped here under false pretences." And it was, I think, at that point of the conversation that Mr. Harrison repeated that he had been asked to maintain secrecy with respect to the conversation, and he asked me whether, in my opinion, he was bound to maintain that secrecy. I told him that, in my opinion, such a proposal was a disgraceful one to make, and that he was, in my judgment, not bound by any secrecy with respect to it; but, at any rate, having made that communication to me, I was not going to be a possessor of such a secret, and that it was necessary he should take one of two alternatives—either to write me a letter stating officially what he had then stated to me, or be prepared for me to report to the House what had taken place. I expressed an opinion that it was creditable to him to have at once put a stop to such a proposal; and that if he would write me a letter, I would lay it before the House. I did not receive any communication from Mr. Harrison that day, nor until the next morning. Then I found the letter from him which I afterwards read to the House, on my table, and I had hardly read it before Mr. Harrison came into the room. I pointed out to him that there was one paragraph in it which was different from what he said to me, in this way: The paragraph said that "it had transpired," in the conversation between him and Mr. Holt, that he was expected to use his influence as a Member. I said to him, "That is not the statement that you made to me yesterday: you said Mr. Holt had said so, not that 'it transpired;'" and then Mr. Harrison took the letter, and corrected it by making the statement, "It was intimated to me by Mr. Holt." It was only on reading the letter afterwards again, that I noticed that the letter was different in two points from the statement which Mr. Harrison had made to me, and I therefore returned the reply to him which has been printed, pointing out those differences. I was especially struck by the statement in the letter, which had not been made to me verbally, with respect to Mr. Stafford's maintenance in office; because no party question had ever crossed my mind in the course of the interview with Mr. Harrison. I think that is all that took place, so far as I remember. I then brought the matter before the House.

263. I observe, Mr. Bell, in the letter which was written to you by Mr. Harrison, and in your reply, that there is a statement, or rather there are two statements, which do not tally. Mr. Harrison says, "It was specially intimated that, whilst I need not commit the *Wellington Independent*, of which paper I am the editor, to any direct support of the present Government, nor that I should vote in that direction in the House." Now I observe that, in your reply to Mr. Harrison, you say that "What the Speaker understood Mr. Harrison to state was, that the condition of the proposed agreement between Mr. Harrison and Messrs. Brogden was to be that Mr. Harrison should vote in the House in such manner as was necessary for Messrs. Brogden's interests." Do you still observe the same difference, or has anything taken place which enables you to reconcile the conflict between these two statements?—I cannot see that there is a conflict between the two statements. The one statement is a statement which Mr. Harrison made to me, that he was to be expected to vote in such a way as was necessary for Mr. Brogden's interests. The other statement in the letter is, that he was to vote to retain Mr. Stafford in office. The statement in Mr. Harrison's letter is, that he was not to be committed to any direct support of the Government, nor to vote in that direction in the House. The two questions are quite different, one question being as to voting in such a way as was necessary to Mr. Brogden's interest, and the other question being as to voting for Mr. Stafford's Government. These questions might in fact be antagonistic. I only pointed out to Mr. Harrison, in my reply, that the statement of "voting" as was necessary for Mr. Brogden's interests, and that of "using his influence" for the same purpose, was not exactly the same, although I did not think there was a material difference.

264. I understand the words in Mr. Harrison's letter—"It was specially intimated that, whilst I need not commit the *Wellington Independent*, of which paper I am the editor, to any direct support of the present Government, nor that I should vote in that direction in the House." Well, Mr. Harrison gives it to be understood there, that it was no part of the bargain, if there was a bargain with him, that he should vote in a particular direction; but I understand, from your answer to him, that, when he had the interview with you, he told you that he was expected to vote in a particular direction?—Not in the direction of supporting Mr. Stafford.

265. Mr. Harrison says he was not expected to vote in any particular direction?—He says he was not expected to vote in the direction of supporting Mr. Stafford's Government.

266. I think you point out a conflict in the statements; you point out that his written statement does not agree with the verbal statement he made to you?—What I pointed out is this: Mr. Harrison, in his letter to me, says, "It, however, was intimated to me by Mr. Holt that, should any agreement be made between myself and the firm of Brogden and Sons, it was to be a condition that I should, as a Member of the House, use my influence to further the interests of the firm." I pointed out to Mr. Harrison that what he had said to me was, that the condition was to be that he (Mr. Harrison) should "vote in the House" in such a manner as was necessary for Messrs. Brogden's interests. I pointed out that, although that was somewhat different from the condition as stated in the letter to me, it did not appear to me to be a very material difference. That is quite a different thing from the question of his voting to maintain Mr. Stafford's Government in office. It might or might not be essential, in Mr. Brogden's opinion, for his interests, that Mr. Stafford should be retained in office or turned out of office. Although the inference from what is stated is, that Mr. Holt considered Mr. Brogden's interests would be secured by Mr. Stafford remaining in office, I could form no judgment on that, for the simple reason that nothing of the sort was said to me.

267. *The Hon. Mr. Gillies.*] Would it have made any difference in your advice to Mr. Harrison had he disclosed to you, in the first instance, that the offers made related to the maintenance or defeat of Mr. Stafford's Government?—I do not think it would have made any difference; I should have considered that any proposal by Mr. Brogden's representative, which interfered with the action of a Member in that respect as well as the other, would have been a disgraceful one to make.

268. When Mr. Harrison laid the matter before you conversationally, in the first instance, did he inform you that he had previously consulted any other person on the subject?—Yes, I think so; I think he told me he had spoken to Mr. Vogel. I am sure that Mr. Harrison told me that he had

spoken to Mr. Vogel. In the course of that day several Members spoke to me about it, so that it must have been the subject of some conversation before I received the letter from Mr. Harrison. *Hon. F. D. Bell.*

269. Had Mr. Vogel any conversation with you on the subject?—Yes. *10th Oct., 1872.*

270. Then I understand from that, that previous to your giving Mr. Harrison the advice that he was at liberty to disclose the facts related, and bound to do so, the matter was evidently abroad and known to other persons?—I could not say, because it was in the course of the same day that several Members spoke to me; I could not say that it was before I saw Mr. Harrison, because I only saw him at eleven o'clock on the morning of Wednesday.

271. It was on Wednesday, about eleven o'clock, that you were originally consulted in the matter?—Yes; and to the best of my knowledge I had no conversation with Mr. Harrison of any kind on the subject before that time.

272. When did you hear from any other person about it?—I cannot be sure whether it was before or after I saw Mr. Harrison, that several Members asked me whether I had heard anything of this, and spoke to me about it; but I did not enter into conversation with anybody on the subject till afterwards: I should not have felt it right to do so.

273. Can you recollect whether Mr. Vogel spoke to you on the subject prior to Mr. Harrison speaking to you on the subject?—I think he did, but I cannot be sure.

274. *Mr. Travers.*] Mr. Bell has stated this: "I should have considered any proposition by Mr. Brogden's representative in the direction indicated as a disgraceful one."—Did you understand from Mr. Harrison that the proposition was made by Mr. Holt in the character of Mr. Brogden's representative?—Certainly, I understood so; but I am not sure whether he said so.

275. But you were led to understand that Mr. Holt was then acting with Mr. Brogden's authority in making the proposal?—I was led to understand that that was Mr. Harrison's belief. In my own case, I did not suspect Mr. Brogden of anything of the sort.

276. You understood that it was Mr. Harrison's belief that Mr. Holt was acting in the character of an authorized agent?—Precisely.

277. May I ask you, whether you advised Mr. Harrison to make any direct inquiry from Mr. Brogden himself, as to whether such a proposition as that reported to you was made with his sanction or previous authority?—No, I did not.

278. You, I presume, acted upon the belief or supposition that Mr. Harrison's belief was a well-founded one in regard to the representative character of Mr. Holt?—No, I cannot say that I did. My own belief in the matter was this: that a very disgraceful proposal had been made to Mr. Harrison, and that if Mr. Brogden were mixed up in it, it would be a thing that ought to be stamped out at once.

279. You have known Mr. Brogden for some time, so far as his connection with New Zealand?—Yes.

280. You have known him for a considerable period?—Yes.

281. Have you any reason to think that Mr. Brogden would make such a proposal?—No, not at all.

282. I believe you have known Mr. Holt for some years?—Yes.

283. Was he not for a long period an officer in the Civil Service?—Yes.

284. Had you known anything of him to lead you to suppose that he would do such an act as that which has been suggested?—Certainly not; and I told Mr. Harrison he was making a very grave charge against a gentleman who had held a high position, and that it was a very serious matter for him to make that charge.

285. *Mr. Harrison.*] You have stated to the Committee that I told you that, at a certain stage of the conversation between myself and Mr. Holt, I said to Mr. Holt that I had been entrapped under false pretences. I ask you if your memory is sufficiently clear with regard to what took place between us in that interview, that it might not be possible for you to have misunderstood me, and that I said to you, "that I felt, at a particular period of the conversation with Mr. Holt, that I had been entrapped under false pretences?"—It is of course possible I may have misunderstood Mr. Harrison; but my recollection is perfectly clear on the point, and for this reason: that it was the use of that phrase that at once established in my mind the idea that Mr. Harrison deserved great credit for having forthwith put a stop to so disgraceful a proposal.

286. *Mr. Fox.*] Would not the impression have been equally made on your mind whether Mr. Harrison stated to you that he told Mr. Holt that he had been entrapped, or whether he only said to you that, feeling entrapped, he told Mr. Holt the conversation should cease? Would not that have equally brought to your mind the idea that Mr. Harrison had done right in putting an end to the negotiation, whatever it was?—I dare say it would; but the impression was strikingly made upon me by the statement that an immediate stop, in those terms, was put to the interview.

287. An immediate stop being put to the interview was that which had force in making you think that Mr. Harrison had done right in putting a stop to the conversation?—No, but its being done in those terms; however, I should have equally thought so if the conversation had been summarily put a stop to.

Witness was thanked, and withdrew.

The Committee then adjourned.

SATURDAY, 12th OCTOBER, 1872.

Mr. CHARLES LEMON was in attendance, and, on being sworn, was examined as follows:—

288. *Mr. Travers* (as Counsel for Mr. Holt)] You are the Manager of the Telegraph Department?—Yes. *Mr. Lemon.*

12th Oct., 1872.

289. Is it not the custom of the officer receiving a telegraphic message, to mark the hour at which it is received at the office?—Yes.

290. That is part of the ordinary duty of the person receiving the telegram?—Yes.

291. Have you the original message of a telegram delivered for transmission to the *Daily Southern Cross*?—I have not got it along with me.

Mr. Lemon. 292. Can you obtain it?—Yes, if ordered to produce it. [The witness was ordered to produce the original message; and, on the examination being resumed, he deposed in answer to the question put by Mr. Travers, “What hour was that message received?” he replied, “Eight, p.m.]

293. *Mr. Gillies.*] Eight p.m. of what date?—The 3rd October.

294. *Mr. Travers.*] What hour do you say it was received?—It was received at eight p.m., and finished at twelve minutes past nine at Auckland. It was handed in at the window to the counter clerk at eight p.m.

Hon. Mr. Vogel. The Honorable JULIUS VOGEL was in attendance, and, on being sworn, was examined as follows:—

295. *The Chairman.*] You know the object of the inquiry?—Yes.

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296. Would you be kind enough to make a statement of what you know in the matter?—Some day—I cannot fix the exact time; my impression is that it was the day before the matter came before the House—Mr. Harrison spoke to me on the subject without my inviting any statement of the kind. He told me what had taken place between himself and Mr. Holt, in confidence, as I understood it. He then asked my advice, which I gave him. My advice was that he should at once apply to the Speaker for his advice. I did that because I did not feel myself called upon to give an authoritative opinion on the subject, and I thought he should ask the Speaker's advice. I cannot charge my memory with all that took place, but the impression I formed at the time (and I believe I still maintain that impression), is that it was a very great secret to bear about with one. I felt placed in pretty much the same position as Mr. Harrison himself. It struck me that at some future time this desire to secure the services of a Member of Parliament might crop out. I had no desire to carry about with me a confidence of this kind, and the only course I could adopt was to recommend that the Speaker's advice should be asked upon the subject. Subsequently Mr. Harrison told me he had written to or else seen the Speaker—I am not certain which. I then asked him if he had any objection to my seeing the Speaker, and on his replying in the negative, I did see the Speaker, and simply told him my share in the matter. I have one other remark to make. I do not know whether it is altogether pertinent to the question at issue. In the report in the *Independent* of some remarks made by me on the subject in the House, the impression would seem to be conveyed that I had formed some opinion as to the result of this inquiry. What I did say in the House would not bear that interpretation. What I did say was to this effect: without expressing any opinion as to the truth or otherwise of the subject matter of investigation, it is clear that Messrs. Brogden and Sons did not object to a change of Government. I consider that fact to be admitted by Mr. Holt in his letter, although he denied the charge as stated by Mr. Harrison.

297. Did Mr. Harrison lead you to believe that the conversation which had taken place between himself and Mr. Holt was understood to be confidential and secret?—That was the whole point of the question. What he wanted to arrive at was, whether the communication should be considered in confidence.

298. Did you hear anything before from any other person, or was the first you heard of it from Mr. Harrison?—I am under the impression I heard some one say that Mr. Harrison had received a startling communication. I am not positive on the point; but my impression is that I had heard something of the kind.

299. The secret, then, appears to have been broken before Mr. Harrison spoke to you?—I will not say positively.

300. *Mr. Rolleston.*] In what way did Mr. Harrison seem to object to the proposal?—I understood that Mr. Harrison had gone to Mr. Holt on the understanding that a proposal was simply to be made for his professional services in the way of writing prospectuses and articles; but that the proposal was made so as to include his political aid, and affect him in his character as a Member of the House—that he should give his vote along with his other services. No; I think it was stated that that was not what was desired. He was to try to use his influence to prevent a certain vote from being brought forward.

301. Did Mr. Harrison tell you that Mr. Brogden desired that the Stafford Government should remain in office?—Distinctly so. As I understood it, Mr. Harrison stated to Mr. Holt that he meant to support Mr. Vogel, and Mr. Holt replied, “You make a great mistake. Mr. Brogden is discontented with Mr. Vogel.”

302. *Mr. Parker.*] When Mr. Harrison came to you, did he seem to treat it as a grave matter, and one upon which he desired to consult with you?—Certainly, he did.

303. Did you see Mr. Bell, the Speaker, on the subject before he took action in the matter?—I saw the Speaker subsequently, with Mr. Harrison's approval. I think it was the same evening.

304. *Mr. Rolleston.*] Not before you had received Mr. Harrison's first communication?—I knew nothing about the matter until then, so I could not have seen the Speaker about it.

305. *Mr. Gillies.*] Did you not see Mr. Bell after you saw Mr. Harrison, but before Mr. Harrison had seen Mr. Bell, and then on again seeing Mr. Harrison did you not advise him to consult the Speaker?—No, certainly not. I advised him to see the Speaker at the time he made the first communication to me.

306. I presume, Mr. Vogel, Mr. Harrison informed you that Mr. Brogden wished to keep Mr. Stafford's Government in its position for a time at least. When he gave you that information, you perceived at once, no doubt, the political effect its promulgation would have?—I cannot say that I did. A good many Members spoke to me subsequently, and said I ought to feel gratified with this expression of Mr. Brogden's desire.

307. That is no answer to the question. What I asked you is, whether you did not see that this statement of Mr. Harrison's would damage the Stafford Government if promulgated?—No, I cannot say that that was the view I took. It did not for one moment strike me that Mr. Brogden supposed that he could exercise a corrupt influence over that Government. The impression left on my mind was that he looked upon Mr. Stafford's Government as composed of soft and easy-going gentlemen, and that he would succeed in making better terms with them than he would otherwise be able to do.

308. What I asked you, Mr. Vogel, is, At the time you received that communication from Mr. Harrison, did you perceive that it could be made, if promulgated, to have a damaging effect in regard to Mr. Stafford's Government?—My impression is that I did not think so. *Hon. Mr. Vogel.*
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309. Did you not advise Mr. Harrison to make this matter public, for the purpose of damaging a certain political party?—Certainly not: nothing of the kind. All I did was to advise Mr. Harrison to place the matter directly in the Speaker's hands.

310. Did it not occur to you that it would be a proper thing to ascertain the accuracy of Mr. Harrison's statement before promulgating it?—It never struck me that I was called upon to investigate the statement at all. It only struck me that I had no right to carry a secret of this kind about with me, and accordingly I advised Mr. Harrison to consult the Speaker. I wish to add that although I advised Mr. Harrison to be guided by the Speaker, and not by my advice, I did not conceal from him that in my opinion, supposing his impression of the conversation with Mr. Holt was correct, it was not incumbent on him to consider it confidential. But I wished him to be guided by the Speaker's opinion and not mine.

MONDAY, 14TH OCTOBER, 1872.

Mr. HOLT, Private Secretary to Mr. Brogden, was in attendance, and, on being sworn, was examined as follows: *Mr. Holt.*

311. *Mr. Travers.*] You are at present and you have been for some time past private secretary to Mr. Brogden, of the firm of Messrs. Brogden and Sons?—Yes. 14th Oct., 1872.

312. Do you remember Monday, the 30th of September last?—I do.

313. Where was Mr. Brogden on that day?—He was at Picton.

314. He was absent then from Wellington?—Yes.

315. You had, I believe, some interviews with Mr. Harrison on that day?—Yes.

316. Had you received any instructions from Mr. Brogden in reference to these interviews?—None whatever.

317. Had you made Mr. Brogden aware of your intention of holding these interviews with Mr. Harrison?—I had not.

318. You have been acquainted, have you not, with Mr. Harrison for some months past?—I knew him slightly last year, but I have been better acquainted with him this year.

319. Then am I to understand that the interviews you held with Mr. Harrison were entirely the result of your own act?—They were entirely my own act.

320. I observe that Mr. Harrison has stated the objects of these interviews. You have heard his statement. Was the nature and objects of these interviews as he has stated them?—Yes, so far as the writing of articles and prospectuses is concerned.

321. Portions of these interviews took place in Mr. Brogden's office, did they not?—Yes.

322. Was there any other person present when they took place?—Yes, Mr. Tribe was there, at least part of the time.

323. Mr. Tribe, I believe, was there on business?—Yes.

324. Had you a conversation with Mr. Harrison, while Mr. Tribe was present, on political matters, apart from the actual business in which you were engaged?—I think we had. I know I had a talk with Mr. Tribe regarding political matters generally, and it is very likely I had such a conversation with Mr. Harrison too, as they were both present at the time.

325. Had you any instructions from Mr. Brogden in reference to the discussion of political matters with these gentlemen?—Certainly not.

326. Or to make any proposals to them in reference to political matters?—No.

327. What was your object in having this interview with Mr. Harrison?—The object was mainly with the view of getting certain articles connected with the projects of the firm prepared for insertion in the Colonial press.

328. I believe it was the intention of the firm to employ some one in that capacity?—Yes, another person had been named. It was purely out of friendship to Mr. Harrison that I made the suggestion to him. He had been civil to me in getting an article inserted in the *Illustrated London News*, and I thought Mr. Harrison might as well have the work as any one else.

329. Have what, do you say?—Have the writing of these articles.

330. What, then, was the actual purpose of the interview, so far as it went?—It was merely to suggest the thing to him, and having started the matter with Mr. Harrison, it was then my intention to speak to Mr. Brogden, and then leave Mr. Brogden to decide the question for himself.

331. In the course of these conversations did you make any proposition whatsoever involving Mr. Harrison's political character as a Member of the House?—No, decidedly not. It was understood from the very first that his vote and action as a Member of the House were to be entirely unfettered. These were the very words that were used.

332. Did he, in the course of these conversations, say anything respecting his position as a Member of the House?—He did. He said something of this kind, at all events this is the substance of it: If I was not a Member of the House I would go into the thing at once. I replied I did not think that made any difference either one way or the other. He then said, Leave the thing over until after the Session.

333. Did Mr. Harrison at any time intimate to you that you had made a proposition during the interview derogatory to his character and position as a Member of the House?—No, certainly not.

334. Did he make any intimation of that kind at any time?—None whatever.

335. Did you dine with Mr. Harrison after that interview?—I did.

336. How long did you remain in his company after dinner?—I remained in his company until I left to go home and dress for Government House. I think it was about half-past eight o'clock.

337. Did anything occur which led you to believe that Mr. Harrison looked upon or believed that the propositions you had made to him were improper?—No, nothing at all. I never was more surprised in all my life than when I heard that that was the view he had taken of the matter.

Mr. Holt.

338. Was the interview sought by you?—It was.

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339. In your letter to the Speaker you state that Mr. Harrison came to you?—That referred to my meeting with him. I had gone to the Government Buildings to see Mr. Haughton on the same business as I had seen Mr. Tribe. I then saw Mr. Harrison in the House, or else coming out of the House. I said, I have been looking for you. He replied, I am going down your way to see a flax machine. He then went down part of the way with me, and turned off at Mills' foundry. I then went on to the office. Before we parted he asked when he could see me that afternoon. I said, Mr. Tribe is coming at two o'clock, and you had better come at half-past four o'clock.

340. Had you had any previous conversation with Mr. Harrison on the subject of these proposals?—No, none whatever before that day.

341. What did the proposals chiefly relate to?—I wanted him to let the public know the character of the proposals Mr. Brogden had made to the Government; and Mr. Harrison having already advocated these proposals, I thought, more particularly from his local knowledge of the West Coast, that he would be enabled to render valuable assistance in furtherance of these matters. His acquaintance also with the editors of the press would, I thought, enable him to get these articles inserted. That was mainly the reason that induced me to speak to him.

342. Was anything said about secrecy?—Absolutely not one word. At a subsequent part of the conversation, when the political position of parties came to be talked of, then Mr. Harrison made certain statements to me under a promise of secrecy. The secrecy, however, referred to the political position of parties, but not one word of secrecy was mentioned with regard to these proposals.

343. The promise of secrecy, then, did not refer to the proposals made to Mr. Harrison?—Not at all. There was no secrecy to be maintained regarding the writing for the press. The secrecy referred to other matters altogether.

344. Had you made any proposals to Mr. Harrison requiring secrecy?—None whatever. The proposals which were made seemed to me perfectly legitimate. I understood that they were to stand over to the end of the Session.

345. Mr. Harrison has stated that you asked him to use his influence to prevent a hostile vote being brought down against the Stafford Government?—I may have said so. I spoke in that way to Mr. Tribe and many others, but that was entirely a thing of my own doing; I was not prompted to it by any one else.

346. You were under no instructions in the matter?—None whatever.

347. Mr. Harrison has stated that throughout the conversation you made use of the word "we."—Very likely. It is a very common thing for every one in the office to use the word "we," and it is very possible I did make use of the word.

348. In the course of your conversation with Mr. Harrison did you state to him that you had been authorized by any one to make these proposals, or did you say anything to lead him to believe that such was the case?—Nothing whatever. I distinctly remember that I avoided such an inference, simply because I had no authority for making it.

349. You state most distinctly that you did not make any proposals to Mr. Harrison which could be considered improper proposals?—Certainly I do.

350. *Mr. Harrison.*] Will you state whether or not you made use of the words "That it is because you are a Member of the House that your services will be the more useful?—No, I did not.

351. With regard to the pledge of secrecy, you have stated that it did not relate to the business part of the conversation, but that it was made with regard to the political part?—Yes.

352. Did you not exact any pledge of secrecy from me?—No. You volunteered a pledge of secrecy to me.

353. *The Attorney-General.*] Have you never had any other conversations with Mr. Harrison with reference to the writing up of these schemes excepting upon that occasion?—None, excepting on that day. The conversation extended over three portions of the day. First, when I saw Mr. Harrison on the Beach, the second time at the office, and the third time after dinner. Upon no other occasion excepting that day was the proposal mentioned by me to Mr. Harrison.

354. You had not at any other time asked Mr. Harrison to write for Messrs. Brogden on behalf of their schemes?—No, unless it was during the early part of the Session when I asked him to put in the original proposals laid before the House. But that was only a reprint article, with his comments on them.

355. Previous to Mr. Brogden leaving for Picton had you any conversation with him regarding the employment of Mr. Harrison?—We had some general conversation about the employment of Mr. Harrison, as well as about the employment of other persons, in this particular capacity.

356. Then before Mr. Brogden went to Picton you had some conversation with him with reference to the employment of Mr. Harrison as well as other persons. When did that conversation take place?—I think it was a week or so before he left for Picton. The subject was mentioned in a general way, and I mentioned Mr. Harrison's name to Mr. Brogden.

357. Had not some steps been taken previously with the view of having the gold fields water schemes worked?—Yes.

358. Had not a meeting of promoters taken place?—I think so. I was not, however, present at any meeting.

359. Were you not exceedingly urgent to see Mr. Harrison that morning?—No, I was not. I live in the same street with him, just across the road, and I thought I would walk down with him. When I found he was not out of bed, I walked down to near the building lately occupied by Dr. Featherston, and afterwards went back to Mr. Harrison's house. It was rather an idle day with me. Both Mr. Brogden and Mr. Henderson were away, and I thought it would be a good opportunity for having the conversation with Mr. Harrison.

360. Had you business to transact at Dr. Featherston's?—No; I went down, I think, to see my washerwoman.

361. Mr. Tribe has said in his evidence that, you said "You can prevent Mr. Vogel bringing on a

vote of want of confidence?"—I think that this was said more in reference to Mr. Harrison's statement about the tactics of his party.

362. Mr. Tribe has said that you used this language, "You can prevent Mr. Vogel bringing on a vote of want of confidence." Is that correct?—I then thought Mr. Harrison had some influence with Mr. Vogel.

363. Did you say you thought he had?—I daresay I did.

364. Then you were anxious that a vote of that kind should not be brought on?—Personally, my feelings were in favour of Mr. Stafford's Government. It is a well-known fact amongst my friends that my sympathies were in that direction, and I thought I had a perfect right to express my opinions on the point. It was the first time I had expressed my political views; and now that I was independent of the Government, I thought I had a perfect right to do so.

365. Were you not acting as an extra clerk in the Government offices at the commencement of the present Session?—No; I was assisting Mr. Haughton for ten days or so.

366. When Mr. Harrison said that the further consideration of the proposals should stand over until the end of the Session, was there any objection made?—No; it was agreed at once that it should be so.

367. You say you did not infer from Mr. Harrison's manner or tone that he considered your proposals to be of an improper character?—No; certainly not.

368. When you expressed the desire to Mr. Harrison that this particular vote should not be brought down, did you not use the word "we," meaning Mr. Brogden, were anxious the then Government should remain in office?—No; I did not put it in that way. I said to Mr. Harrison, "If your party are sure of a good working majority, then by all means vote with them; but do not let us have a 'see-saw' Government, incapable of entertaining any of the proposals that may be made to it."

369. Then you state the "we" did not refer to Mr. Brogden at all?—No; it did not.

370. It was simply made use of as a general expression, in order that the Public Works undertakings might not be prevented from being gone on with?—It was simply a desire to have a Government that could entertain these large proposals.

371. Was not this pledge of secrecy mentioned until after Mr. Harrison and yourself had returned from having a glass of sherry?—No; it was not mentioned at all until after then.

372. Mr. Harrison is not correct then in stating that it was made early in the day?—No; not one word was said about secrecy early in the day.

373. Were the matters for which the confidence was bespoke matters of very great importance?—No; not of very great importance. It related to the tactics that were going on, and what had taken place at certain caucuses. The expression made use of on that occasion was, to the best of my recollection, as follows:—"Now, what I am going to tell you now is between us and the four walls." These are the very words. I then spoke confidentially to him on the strength of that pledge.

374. Did Mr. Harrison know that you had spoken to Mr. Brogden with regard to him?—No; I do not think he did.

375. Are you aware of any other proposals having been made to Mr. Brogden to employ Mr. Harrison to write up these proposals?—I am not aware of any other proposal having been made excepting my own intimation to Mr. Brogden.

376. *Mr. Harrison.*] You stated that I extracted a pledge of secrecy from you. Will you just tell us under what circumstances; what did I say?—You began by using the expression "What I am now going to state is to be kept between us and the four walls." You then went on to state what was to take place at a certain caucus. That unless Mr. Vogel had a pledged majority of not less than four you would not support him. You would be no party to a factious opposition.

377. I stated then that I would not give my support to any vote of want of confidence unless there was an assured majority?—Yes.

378. I also told you I would be no party to any factious opposition?—You did.

379. Was there anything in that which rendered it necessary to exact a pledge of secrecy?—I really don't know. The fact remains that you did exact this promise of secrecy.

380. *The Hon. Mr. Fox.*] I want to know how much of Mr. Harrison's statement you admit, and how much of it you deny. In Mr. Harrison's evidence, page 1, he states: "Mr. Holt replied, It is because you are a Member that your services will be useful." Is that correct? Did you say so?—No; I did not.

381. Again, you are reported to have said, "We have no desire to control your vote in any way, but we thought you might use your influence to prevent any motion being brought forward by the Opposition this Session which might lead to a change of Government." Is that correct?—I want to say that I did not make use of the word "we" in that sense. If I had, I would have used the word Brogden. At that part of the conversation, I believe, Mr. Tribe was present.

382. In what sense, then, did you use the "we"?—I used the "we" as one of a political party.

383. Oh, are you then one of a political party?—I am, in the sense that you would speak of one of your own party.

384. I have been the acknowledged leader of a political party for many years back. Do you mean that you are one of a political party in that sense of the word?—No.

385. I cannot see, then, what you meant by using the word "we,"?—I said one of a party, I think. I meant that; but I have had no communication of any kind with Mr. Stafford.

386. Is it correct that you stated, "You have considerable influence over Mr. Vogel. You can prevent him bringing in a vote against the Government this year." Is that the case?—Yes.

387. Did you say, "Hang it, man, you have had your turn, let them have their innings. We want no further change to take place this Session"?—I do not think I put the "we" in there. I did not put the "we" in the last sentence.

388. How much, then, did you put in, and how much did you leave out? That is what I want to find out. "Innings," is that right?—Very likely.

389. "Any further change of Government," is that correct?—I do not think I put that in.

Mr. Holt.

14th Oct., 1872.

Mr. Holt.

14th Oct., 1872.

390. Did you say, "Mr. Brogden has kept aloof from party politics during the late debate"?—
I did.
391. Did you add, "Now that they have got a Government they can work with, they are anxious that they should remain in power during the present Session?"—I deny that absolutely.
392. You have stated that your political sympathies went with Mr. Stafford's party?—Yes.
393. Is it since you got into Mr. Brogden's office that you felt yourself at liberty to express these opinions?—I may state that Mr. Brogden makes it a rule never to interfere with his employés either as regards their religion or their politics.
394. You have told us that it is only since you got into Mr. Brogden's office that you have found yourself at liberty to ventilate these opinions?—Yes.
395. In the direction of Mr. Stafford's party?—In favour of that party.
396. During this time you were in Mr. Brogden's employment—in his paid service?—Yes.
397. You knew Mr. Brogden was in terms of negotiation, and had actually accepted contracts from the Government of that day?—Yes.
398. Did you pause to consider how far your action towards the Government to which your employers stood in such a relation was consistent with your loyalty towards your employers?—No, I did not; because, as I have already informed you, Mr. Brogden never interferes with the politics of his employers.
399. You never paused to ask yourself if the course you were pursuing was in accordance with Mr. Brogden's interest or not; I mean in reference to the retention of the Government in power?—No, I did not think it was necessary to do so. If I talked to Mr. Brogden about politics, he would laugh at me, and say I was too hot, or something of that kind.
400. When you made the proposal to Mr. Harrison, and talked to him about keeping Mr. Stafford's Government in office, did you do so irrespective altogether of its results to Mr. Brogden?—Yes.
401. You had no idea whether it would be agreeable to Mr. Brogden or not?—I think Mr. Brogden should answer that question for himself.
402. I wish your answer, Mr. Holt, to the question?—I did not at that time.
403. In reference to the negotiations entered into with Mr. Harrison, you say that some conversation took place between you and Mr. Brogden, in which you suggested the matter to him a week or two before he (Mr. Brogden) went to Picton. Was there anything in the circumstances which pointed to that particular time to enter upon the negotiations with Mr. Harrison. Anything that made it particularly appropriate for you to select that particular time?—It looks as if there were, but that is not the case. I wanted to do Mr. Harrison a good turn, and I went to him on that day as I knew that another person, not a Member of the House, would be spoken to on the subject, and I wanted to see Mr. Harrison before anyone else was spoken to. Then the day happened to be an idle one, as both Mr. Henderson and Mr. Brogden had gone away to Picton.
404. When did you enter into your present engagement as private secretary to Mr. Brogden?... I believe it was on the day of the meeting of the Assembly, or a day or two afterwards.
405. Have you had any previous acquaintance with the construction of railways or public works, or things of that sort?—No; but as private secretary I have.
406. You have a large acquaintance with the Members of the House, and you have got the run of the public offices, I believe?—No; not particularly so now. I have been a long time out of the employment of the Government.
407. Still, you know a great number of the Members, and you have got the run of the lobbies, have you not?—As a clerk last year I had it.
408. You say you have had no previous acquaintance with the construction of public works and railways. Is that correct?—No previous acquaintance.
409. You entered into Mr. Brogden's service when the Session had commenced?—Yes; but I did so quite free from political reasons. He had just then got the contracts decided upon, and was about to begin them.
410. *Mr. Harrison.*] With respect to the opinion Mr. Brogden entertained towards Mr. Vogel, did I not say that he was more likely to receive better terms at his hand than at the hands of another Government?—No. What you said was "Mr. Vogel had done a good deal better for Mr. Brogden than for other people. He had given him No. 1 Contract." I remarked, "Yes, but he had withdrawn it away."
411. Did I not say that Mr. Brogden was likely to get better terms at Mr. Vogel's hands than at the hands of another Government?—No, you did not. What you said was what I have stated.
412. You admit you said that Messrs. Brogden considered it was desirable the then Ministry should remain in power?—No; nothing of the kind.
413. *Sir J. C. Wilson.*] How long were you in the Civil Service of the Colony?—For thirteen and a half years.
414. Did you ever act as Secretary during that time?—Yes; with General Wynyard for part of his year of office; for five years with Sir Gore Browne, as Assistant Private Secretary; then A.D.C. to Sir George Grey; then as Under Secretary for Defence.
415. *Mr. Parker.*] Did this conversation about "You have had your turn" take place after Mr. Tribe left or not?—I do not know. I know I have said something of the same kind to Mr. Tribe as well as to Mr. Harrison.
416. There was some conversation, you admit, as to his action as a Member of the House being fettered?—No; it was to be perfectly unfettered.
417. Was Mr. Tribe there then?—No.
418. *Mr. Travers.*] You have stated that you had some conversation with Mr. Brogden in reference to the employment of Mr. Harrison. Did Mr. Brogden express any opinion regarding that proposal?—Well, yes; he was rather opposed to Mr. Harrison's employment; I thought Mr. Brogden would have preferred any other person.
419. You say Mr. Brogden was opposed to Mr. Harrison's employment. Did he express any opinion on the subject?—No; I think he said that he would rather have some one else.
420. And you tried rather to induce him to employ Mr. Harrison instead of another person?—Exactly so.
421. As a matter of friendship to Mr. Harrison?—Yes; I wanted to do him a good turn.

422. Between the persons you refer to, did you consider Mr. Harrison the best qualified for the work?—Yes; his local knowledge, and his acquaintance with the newspaper editors down South, pointed to him as being the best qualified.

Mr. Holt.

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423. You believed, then, that he was the best suited for the work?—Yes.

424. Did Mr. Harrison at any time use such words as "I have been entrapped by false pretences"?—No; he never used a single word of the kind.

Mr. JAMES BROGDEN was in attendance, and, on being sworn, was examined as follows:—

Mr. Brogden.

14th Oct., 1872.

425. Mr. Travers.] I believe you are acquainted generally with the nature of this inquiry?—Yes.

426. Mr. Holt, is I believe, your private secretary?—Yes.

427. How long has he been your secretary?—Since about the time of the commencement of Parliament.

428. Were you acquainted with him before that time?—Oh, yes.

429. Had he applied to you for employment?—He had been recommended to me by Mr. Gisborne some time before, and when I got the contracts I engaged him.

430. He had been previously recommended to you, and as soon as the work was ready you engaged him?—Yes.

431. You know Mr. Harrison, Member for the Grey, and editor of the *Independent*?—Yes.

432. Did you ever give Mr. Holt authority to negotiate any matter on your behalf or on the part of your firm with Mr. Harrison?—No.

433. Either for his professional services or his political services?—No; for neither.

434. Did Mr. Holt suggest to you at any time the employment of Mr. Harrison?—Mr. Holt suggested we should have some representation made in the papers generally advocating our projects, so that people might be made much more fully acquainted with them, and the public mind thereby educated as regards their utility. Mr. Holt suggested on one occasion Mr. Harrison was a suitable man. I objected to the whole thing. I never made use of any paper in the country.

435. You did not authorize him to employ Mr. Harrison or negotiate for his services?—No, certainly not.

436. When did you return from Picton?—On the following day.

437. Did Mr. Holt intimate to you that he had a conversation with Mr. Harrison about this matter?—I do not remember that he did.

438. Did you ever suggest to Mr. Holt to use his influence with Mr. Harrison, as a Member, to retain the Stafford Government in office, or in support of your projects then under consideration?—No; certainly not.

439. Did you ever say anything to him that would induce him to believe that you wished to support the Stafford Administration?—No; I do not think I have.

440. You did not particularly use any expression in favour of either one Ministry or the other?—I did not. I have spoken of Ministers in their individual character.

441. You never did anything that would suggest the use of any improper influence?—I would be extremely sorry to bias the mind of any one in such a way.

442. The Attorney-General.] Did you always object to employ the press in that way?—Yes.

443. And your objection still remains the same?—Yes; I have not felt the necessity for such employment.

444. If Mr. Harrison had not accepted the employment, were you inclined to employ some other gentleman to do the work?—No; never.

445. Mr. Parker.] When Mr. Holt suggested Mr. Harrison, was your reply that some other person should be employed?—No; I did not put it in that way. If I remember right, I did express some objections to Mr. Harrison himself.

446. When you objected to Mr. Harrison, did you not say that you would prefer that some one else should be employed?—No; I did not.

447. Mr. Rolles on.] As a matter of fact, were you not negotiating with some one else?—No; nothing of the kind. So far as I am personally concerned, I always set my face against every suggestion of the kind.

448. Mr. Travers.] Did not Mr. Henderson suggest the employment of some other person?—Yes, Mr. Henderson and others were strongly in favour of adopting this course, and advised that it should be adopted.

449. Was it not suggested that a gentleman connected with the *Evening Post* should be employed in connection with the writing of prospectuses, &c.?—No.

450. Mr. Reynolds has made a statement to this Committee of a conversation which took place between yourself, Colonel Brett, Captain Fraser, and him (Mr. Reynolds). The statement is as follows: Colonel Brett, Captain Fraser, and myself were walking up Molesworth Street on Sunday, 29th ultimo; met Mr. Brogden and Mr. McGlashan. The latter walked on. Colonel Brett then accused Mr. Brogden of having used his influence to turn out the Fox Government. He denied it; but said that he came out to the Colony in the interest of his firm, and although he did not care what Government might be in power, yet that he would bring all his influence to bear in order to strengthen his position. After parting with Mr. Brogden, I remarked to Colonel Brett and Captain Fraser that I had inwardly taken a note of his remarks, which I did not at all like, as it appeared to me he intended to use his influence with Members. Now, state what took place on that occasion?—I think what took place on that occasion does not at all bear on the evidence before the Committee. I do not think the words will bear an interpretation of that kind. I certainly did say that I did come out to the Colony in the interests of my firm, but not in the way that Mr. Reynolds has interpreted the words. The conversation was a casual one, and did not at all relate to the Harrison affair.

451. With whom did the conversation originate?—With Colonel Brett.

452. In what way?—He said, "Here comes the man who turned out the Government." He was smiling at the time. I said "No, not so. I had done nothing which could lead him to suppose that I had done such a thing." The conversation went on, and I said I had been partially blamed by both sides, a fact which went to prove my strict neutrality.

[Mr. Holt said that it must have been Mr. Henderson who had suggested some other person than Mr. Harrison to write. I thought it was the same thing, as Mr. Henderson would be the head man as soon as Mr. Brogden left the Colony.]

WEDNESDAY, 16TH OCTOBER, 1872.

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Mr. Travers addressed the Committee on behalf of Mr. Holt. In doing so he called their attention to two copies of the *Daily Southern Cross*, dated respectively 4th and 5th October last. Under the title "Parliament News," he said there appeared—under the somewhat sensational heading, "Extraordinary offers by Mr. Brogden. The Stafford Government necessary to Mr. Brogden's schemes. Questionable proposals to a Member of the House"—the following article:—"Wellington, Thursday, 3 p.m.—It is rumoured that extraordinary revelations respecting offers on Mr. Brogden's part to a Member of the House will be made to-day. 8 p.m.—Mr. Harrison, M.G.A., has sent a letter to the Speaker, stating that Mr. Holt, private secretary to Mr. Brogden, desired to arrange with him, on behalf of Mr. Brogden, to assist in securing the impress of the Colony to Mr. Brogden's Gold Fields Waterworks Scheme, which proposed to obtain capital from the Home country towards the expenses to be incurred. The letter says further, that in the course of the negotiations Mr. Holt informed Mr. Harrison, that if he received remuneration he would be expected to support Mr. Brogden in the House, and also to use his influence with Mr. Vogel to prevent him from bringing on any motion that would involve the defeat of the Government, as it was for Messrs. Brogden and Company's interest that the Stafford Government should remain in office for at least the current year. The Speaker is now narrating the facts to the House." He (Mr. Travers) also quoted from the paper of the 5th, as follows:—"Extraordinary Revelations. Mr. Brogden's attempt to influence Members of the House. The Speaker read a letter from Mr. Harrison, M.G.A. (editor of the *Wellington Independent*), stating that on Monday last Mr. Holt, Mr. Brogden's private secretary, had interviewed him, and offered, on behalf of the firm, to enter into an arrangement for the use of Mr. Harrison's services as a journalist in furthering, through the Press of the Colony, certain undertakings contemplated by the firm, particularly for water supply of the Gold Fields and the construction of railways by a Company. He (Mr. Harrison) was willing to enter into an arrangement, but Mr. Holt then added as a condition, that he should, as a Member of the House of Representatives, use his influence to forward the interests of the firm; and, while not committing the *Independent* to support the present Government or vote for the Government himself, he should use his interest to prevent Mr. Vogel from bringing down any motion likely to involve the defeat of the Government. The whole tenor of the proposal was, that the receipt of remuneration from Mr. Brogden would involve his services as a Member of the House. The interview had commenced by his giving Mr. Holt a pledge of secrecy; but on this dishonorable proposal being made, he felt it to be his duty to consult the Speaker as to what he should do. The Speaker advised him that when two men voluntarily entered into secrecy it rested on the basis that the communication was honorable to both parties; and if one proposed anything disgraceful or dishonorable, the other was fully justified in considering the pledge of secrecy at an end. He also advised him that his clear duty was to bring the matter before the House." He (Mr. Travers) also called attention to an item of "Shipping News," published in the paper of the 4th October, in which it was stated that "The mail steamer 'Nebraska' will take her departure this morning with the English Mail, having been delayed waiting the arrival of the English steamer." It would thus be seen that the papers containing these remarkable and sensational statements would go home as part of the ordinary mail, and in all probability this account of the transaction would come under the notice of Mr. Brogden's firm at home. In the course of the remarks he intended to make, it would be necessary for him to call their attention to the papers now before them as part of these proceedings. The inquiry they were directed to make was into certain allegations charging Mr. Holt with having been guilty of a gross breach of the privileges of the House, in the shape of an attempt to influence the conduct of an honorable Member of the House in a manner entirely opposed to propriety and public policy. They would observe, from the evidence adduced, that the proposal alleged to have been submitted to Mr. Harrison was narrated by him to several persons. It would appear, however, that a somewhat different version of what that proposal was, had been given to each of these parties. Mr. Tribe was the first person connected with the matter. Mr. Tribe had told them in his evidence that Mr. Harrison had stated to him, in a general way, that some propositions of an improper character had been made, but he does not state what the exact nature of these propositions were. The next person to whom Mr. Harrison appears to have confided the matter was the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer. The Colonial Treasurer, however, does not state the character of the communication made to him by Mr. Harrison. In the evidence he gave, he does state that he understood that an attempt was made unduly to influence Mr. Harrison's conduct, but the particular language made use of is not mentioned. After seeing Mr. Vogel, it would appear that Mr. Harrison communicated on the subject with the Hon. the Speaker. It will be seen by the evidence, that the Speaker gave a detailed and specific account of the language in which Mr. Harrison made the communication to him. To this detailed account it would be his (Mr. Travers) duty to call the special attention of the Committee. The next statement of the matter appears in a letter addressed by Mr. Harrison to the Speaker, in consequence of advice tendered to him by the Speaker, which letter was read to the House of Representatives, and formed, in point of fact, the basis of this inquiry. The next statement is the statement made by Mr. Harrison on oath before this Committee. It would be his duty to call attention to each of these three statements, in order to show that the written ones varied considerably from that tendered on oath. In fact, the statement in the letter as read in the House of Representatives varied so very considerably from the others as to throw discredit upon the whole thing. The statement given in evidence by the Speaker was given with very great precision. At page 11 of the printed evidence, Mr. Bell is reported to have said—"That, after some conversation on the subject of the proposal for employing his professional services as editor of the paper, he (Mr. Harrison) said to Mr. Holt, 'I suppose then there is nothing more?' Whereupon Mr. Holt said to him, 'That it must be understood he was to give his vote in the House in such a way as was necessary for Mr. Brogden's interests,' and that Mr. Harrison then stated that he immediately said, 'Then I have been entrapped here under false pretences.'" It would be in the recollection of the Committee that the Hon. the Speaker was cross-examined very closely by Mr. Harrison, more particularly as regards the latter part of that statement, but the Speaker, whose special attention was directed to this matter, stated that his recollection

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on the point was perfectly clear and distinct—in fact, it was that part of the proposal which struck him most forcibly that Mr. Harrison had acted with the greatest propriety in the circumstances. Counsel next referred to Mr. Harrison's letter to the Speaker, from which he read the following quotation:—"It, however, was intimated to me by Mr. Holt that should any agreement be made between myself and the firm of Brogden and Sons, it was to be a condition that I should, as a Member of the House, use my interests to further the interest of the firm. It was specially intimated that while I need not commit the *Wellington Independent* (of which paper I am the editor) to any direct support of the present Government, nor that I should vote in that direction in the House, I should do what I could to influence the Honorable Mr. Vogel not to bring down this Session a motion which might involve the defeat of the Government, the reason alleged being that it was to Mr. Brogden's interest that Mr. Stafford's Government should remain in power for at least the current year. The whole tenor of the proposal submitted to me was, that if I received any remuneration from Messrs. Brogden and Sons it would involve my services as a Member of the House." That was very much the same language as was used in the interview with the Speaker. There was a discrepancy, however, which was alluded to by the Speaker in his letter of reply to Mr. Harrison, which letter was read to the House. Between these statements, however, and that made on oath by Mr. Harrison, the Committee would find the most extraordinary variances. That fact is the more remarkable when it is kept in view that the last statement was made on oath, and made, too, after the whole thing had been ventilated; made indeed by Mr. Harrison with his own letter to the Speaker before him. Yet, notwithstanding that fact, we find Mr. Harrison's evidence totally at variance with his former account. In his sworn testimony, Mr. Harrison says—"I went down to Messrs. Brogden's office about twenty minutes or half-past 3 o'clock. Mr. Tribe was then there. He left in a few minutes. Mr. Holt and I resumed the conversation we had had in the morning. He told me that what was wanted was, that I should write certain articles for publication, explaining generally and advocating such works as might be contemplated by the firm with a view of having them ventilated. I stated that my opinion was in favour of the original proposal of Messrs. Brogden to construct railways in New Zealand, but that, as editor of the *Independent*, I could not recommend such in that journal until after the Session. I further told him that as the newspaper was looked upon as the organ of the political party I did not feel at liberty to express my own individual opinions upon such matters, because they might be regarded as the opinions of the party. I further stated to him that I believed I could obtain the publication of my articles upon these subjects in most of the newspapers published in the Colony. In regard to my declining to publish these articles in the *Independent*, I stated that I had no option in the matter. I stated that I could not possibly consent to do anything to compromise the party with which I was connected, and which the paper of which I was editor supported; but if I had not been a Member of the House the thing would have been different. Mr. Holt replied, 'It is because you are a Member that your services will be useful.' I then said that under no circumstances would I agree to any arrangement that might fetter my action as a Member of the House; to which Mr. Holt said, '*We have no desire to control your vote in any way*, but we thought you might use your influence to prevent any motion being brought forward by the Opposition this Session which might lead to a change of Government.' His exact words, as near as I can recollect, were, 'You have considerable influence with Mr. Vogel, and you can persuade him not to bring any vote against the Government this year.' Between what is here stated and the statement in the letter to the Speaker it will be observed, that a very material discrepancy exists. Here is simply a suggestion, whereas in the letter it is made to appear that it was to be a condition of his employment that he was to vote in such a manner as would suit the interests of the Messrs. Brogden and Co. The statement then, as made to the Committee, is entirely different to the one in the letter addressed to the Hon. the Speaker, or to the private communication made to him by Mr. Harrison. We find similar discrepancies in the statement of what took place between Mr. Harrison and Mr. Tribe. About half-past 5 o'clock, or between 5 and 6 o'clock the same afternoon (that is, the afternoon upon which the interview took place), Mr. Harrison states that he had some conversation with Mr. Tribe respecting the character of the proposal which had been made to him. At this interview, Mr. Harrison, after giving his version of the affair, coolly asked Mr. Tribe this very remarkable question. "I said to him, I suppose some proposal of the same sort was made to you?" No explanation is given of the reasons why he was induced to suppose that an improper proposal had been made to Mr. Tribe. All that he did say was, "I suppose something of the sort was suggested to you?" According to Mr. Harrison's evidence, the reply made by Mr. Tribe was, "Yes, something of the same sort." There could be no doubt upon the subject. The question was put by the honorable Member, Mr. Rolleston, as shown by question No. 24; and again in question No. 30 by another honorable Member (Mr. Sheehan). Mr. Rolleston's question was as follows:—"Did Mr. Tribe intimate to you that he held the same view as to the impropriety of the offer as you held yourself?" The answer is, "I simply told him the view which suggested itself to my mind. In doing so I said, 'I suppose something of the kind was said to you?' He replied, 'Yes; something of the sort.' I afterwards told him the course I intended to adopt, and he said he thought I was very foolish." Mr. Sheehan asked, as shown by question No. 30, "You understood Mr. Tribe's answer to mean, that at that interview Mr. Holt had made similar proposals to him?" The reply is "I did." And yet if we turn to Mr. Tribe's evidence, especially that portion of it given in reply to question No. 173, we find the following:—"Had any suggestion or proposition been made to you, Mr. Tribe, that you felt bound to resent as being of an insulting character?" That question was put by the Chairman to Mr. Tribe, and the reply by Mr. Tribe is "None whatever." Again, in No. 182, he is asked by Mr. Rolleston, "Did you intimate to Mr. Harrison that any overtures or proposals of any character had been made to you by Mr. Brogden?" Mr. Tribe's answer to that question is, "I did not intimate that any proposals having a political bearing had been made by Mr. Brogden or any one connected with the firm." Question No. 186 was also cited by counsel as bearing upon that view of the question; after which he went on to say, that had the honorable Member (Mr. Tribe) ever made such an answer as that imputed to him by Mr. Harrison, it is hardly possible to believe that it could have faded so completely from his recollection. Mr. Harrison's story then is, that he said to Mr. Tribe, "Something

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of the same sort was suggested to you?" to which he replied, "Yes; something of the same sort." And yet it is plain from the whole course of his (Mr. Tribe's) evidence, that he never viewed any proposition made to him, by or on behalf of Mr. Brogden, as being of an improper character, or intended to influence his vote in the House. No such proposal, he says, was ever made or suggested to him by Mr. Brogden or any other person connected with the firm. It is true that Mr. Tribe states that his conversation with Mr. Harrison suggested to his mind the idea,—Could the money paid to him for certain services he had rendered to the firm, and which had been valued at a much higher rate than he (Mr. Tribe) claimed, have been offered with an improper motive? Still he states most distinctly that he did not make use of the expression attempted to be put into his mouth by Mr. Harrison. He denies that any improper suggestion was ever made to him during his intercourse with Mr. Brogden or any other person connected with that firm. He (counsel) would now proceed to call attention to a very remarkable circumstance, which was strongly insisted upon by Mr. Harrison in his version of the impropriety of the proposal made to him; he referred to the alleged pledge of secrecy. Mr. Harrison stated that when this dishonorable proposal was made to him he was asked to accept it under a distinct pledge of secrecy; that he gave such a pledge, not knowing the character of the proposal that was to be made to him; that he felt embarrassed with this pledge, and that he afterwards felt it to be his duty to consult the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer and the Hon. the Speaker how far that pledge of secrecy was binding, having, as he himself alleges, been entrapped into it by means of false pretences. If the Committee turn to question No. 22, a question put by the Hon. Mr. Fox, they will find the following:—"Did you understand that promise of secrecy to involve any particular action in the House? To which Mr. Harrison replied, "I simply thought that it related to the offer made for my professional services in my capacity as a private individual." In that answer he distinctly states that this pledge had no reference to his conduct as a Member of the House, that it related simply to his employment in his professional capacity in the furtherance of transactions of which he entirely approved. He admits that not a single suggestion was made to him of which he disapproved. The undertakings for which his professional services were sought, he entirely approved of. He had no hesitation in advocating them in his professional capacity, advocating them in his private capacity, or as a Member of the House. This completely cuts away the ground insisted upon by the Colonial Treasurer and the Speaker, that the pledge of secrecy had reference to the alleged political proposal. Counsel next called attention to the sequence of the evidence with regard to dates. It struck him that there was something very remarkable with regard to the dates. Mr. Harrison states that these dishonorable proposals were first made to him in the course of the afternoon on Monday, at Mr. Brogden's office, at the close of the interview held with regard to the private business. He says that he made no observation at the time upon the nature of the proposal; but simply remarked that the conversation had better be dropped, and renewed again at the end of the Session. Throughout the whole of the discussion he never led Mr. Holt to understand that he disapproved of the proposals that had been made, or treated them in the light of an insult. At the Government Buildings or the Metropolitan Hotel he meets Mr. Tribe, and then states for the first time the proposals that had been made to him, and asks that very remarkable question about something of the same sort having been proposed to him. After speaking to Mr. Tribe upon the dishonorable character of these proposals, he (Mr. Harrison) receives Mr. Holt as a guest at dinner, and never in the course of the dinner or afterwards intimates to Mr. Holt that he looked upon his proposal as being of a disgraceful character. There is some discrepancy between their statements as to when they parted. Mr. Holt's statement as to the time they parted was in all probability the most reliable, as he supports it by stating that he left Mr. Harrison and went and dressed for Government House. He states that it was about half-past 8 when he parted from Mr. Harrison. Now, during the whole of this time no suggestion is made by Mr. Harrison which led him to believe that anything unusual had occurred. We hear nothing further about what took place until the following day, Tuesday, when the matter is mentioned *casually* to Mr. Vogel. He (Mr. Harrison) does not say that he went to consult Mr. Vogel on the subject. All he says is that he merely mentioned to him casually what had taken place. Immediately the matter was mentioned to Mr. Vogel, he (Mr. Vogel) said that it was a serious matter, and that it was incumbent upon him to mention the circumstance to the Speaker. "I went," says Mr. Harrison, "and wrote to the Speaker, asking an interview, and the Speaker fixed the following morning at 10 o'clock." This would appear to be incorrect, as we find the Speaker in his evidence say that the interview took place not on Tuesday but on Wednesday morning. What took place at that interview is related by Mr. Harrison as follows:—"I related in general terms what had taken place between Mr. Holt and myself. He (the Speaker) then told me that I was not only justified in the course I had adopted, but that I had no option but to bring the matter before the House. I then wrote and delivered the letter to the Speaker on the Thursday morning." It would thus appear, then, that this secret was only casually mentioned to Mr. Vogel, from which we infer that it came to Mr. Vogel's ears quite accidentally; at all events, being a casual communication, we are quite justified in concluding that he (Mr. Harrison) did not take any pains to seek out Mr. Vogel to make the communication to him. Between Mr. Harrison's statement as to the day on which the casual communication was made and the statement as made by Mr. Vogel, there is a discrepancy. Mr. Vogel says that this occurred on the Wednesday. His words are, "some day—I cannot fix the exact time, my impression is that it was the day before the matter came before the House—Mr. Harrison spoke to me on the subject without my inviting any statement of the kind." Mr. Vogel then appears to have gone to the Speaker, and he appears to have instructed Mr. Vogel to send Mr. Harrison to him. The result of that interview with Mr. Harrison is related in reply to the following put to the Speaker by Mr. Gillies:—"When Mr. Harrison laid the matter before you conversationally in the first instance, did he inform you that he had previously consulted any other person on the subject?—Yes, I think so; I think he told me he had spoken to Mr. Vogel. I am sure Mr. Harrison told me he had spoken to Mr. Vogel." The next question was, "Had Mr. Vogel any conversation with you on the subject?—Yes." It would thus appear that Mr. Harrison had been carrying the matter about with him all day

on Tuesday, though we might reasonably infer from other circumstances Mr. Harrison had made public property of the whole affair before he conferred with Mr. Vogel. Counsel went on to say, that looking at the evidence given by Mr. Harrison on his cross-examination, there was cause for still further wonder. Mr. Harrison tells us that he saw nothing whatever in the proposition for the use of his professional services that was derogatory, but that after he had seen Mr. Tribe he discovered that an attempt had been made to influence him as a Member of the House. He states most distinctly that at the time the proposition was made it did not strike him as being an improper one. In support of that theory, Counsel referred to questions Nos. 75 to 83. It would thus be seen that all that he (Mr. Harrison) said was, according to his own showing, that the conversation had better be dropped until after the end of the Session. If the conversation was dangerous and improper, why drop it merely until after the end of the Session, unless, indeed, Mr. Harrison intended to cease being a Member of the House. Mr. Harrison's evidence, 84 to 94 was then read and commented upon by Counsel, who then proceeded to say,—From this it would appear that there was nothing in the language made use of by Mr. Holt which led him (Mr. Harrison) to conclude that the proposition was an improper one, beyond the fact that he looked upon him (Mr. Holt) as acting in the capacity of an agent for the Messrs. Brogden. That fact is plain from the answer to question No. 95. There Mr. Harrison is asked—Am I to understand, then, that it was the circumstances of the supposed agency that you laid the great stress upon? The answer made by Mr. Harrison is, "Exactly so." Here we are told in effect that there was nothing in the language used at the interview that could in the slightest degree be regarded as implying an improper overture; whilst the simple circumstance that he looked upon Mr. Holt in the character of an agent, induced him to suppose that an attempt had been made to influence him unduly. This is quite inconsistent with Mr. Harrison's communication to the Speaker, in which it is positively stated to have been made a condition of the employment that he should use his vote in the House for the furtherance of Mr. Brogden's interests. On that point the evidence given by the Hon. the Speaker was perfectly explicit. At page 11 of the evidence, he (the Speaker) says that Mr. Harrison told him that after some conversation on the subject of employing his professional services, he (Mr. Harrison) said to Mr. Holt, "I suppose, then, that there is nothing more?" whereupon Mr. Holt said to him, "That it must be understood he was to give his vote in the House in such a way as was necessary for Mr. Brogden's interests." On this point the words of the Speaker were most distinct; and whilst he was giving his evidence, honorable Members would recollect that Mr. Harrison stood by, and never asked a single question to show that the words and language were not such as the Speaker had stated. Having allowed Mr. Bell to make that statement, and not having made the slightest attempt at an objection, he (Counsel) submitted that, under this circumstance, he must be held to have acquiesced in what the Speaker said. He (Mr. Harrison) then distinctly says that if the communication was made by Mr. Holt as a private individual, he could no longer consider that an attempt had been made unduly to influence him politically, but that he would simply regard the conversation as that of a private individual. Now Mr. Brogden, in his evidence, denied that Mr. Holt had any authority from him in the matter at all. There was some slight discrepancy between Mr. Holt's evidence and the evidence given by Mr. Brogden regarding the intention of employing a person in the capacity suggested by Mr. Holt. That, however, was explained by the fact that Mr. Holt, in the evidence he gave, treated Mr. Henderson as a member of the firm. He would submit that the statements of the affair, as made by Mr. Harrison, were entirely at variance with each other. He assumed that the Speaker was entitled to full credit in the matter; and he (Counsel) submitted that Mr. Harrison having failed to cross-examine him upon the various points on which these statements were at variance, placed Mr. Harrison's conduct in a very equivocal light indeed. Apart from the actual object of the inquiry, its results must to some extent affect the position of Mr. Brogden. Although the actual punishment of any guilt would no doubt fall upon Mr. Holt's shoulders, the transaction must nevertheless exercise some influence upon the character and position of Mr. Brogden. If the suggestion of Mr. Harrison were well founded, the view taken by the public would no doubt be that he (Mr. Holt) was simply made use of as an instrument by Mr. Brogden to make improper proposals to Members of the House for their political support. A charge, or even a suspicion of that kind, could not but be painful to a gentleman in Mr. Brogden's position. Counsel next referred to the telegrams as published in the *Southern Cross* newspaper. These sensational telegrams, he said, had been despatched immediately after the letter to the Speaker had been placed in possession of the House. Those telegrams went home by the steamer, and would in all probability reach Mr. Brogden's firm before he had an opportunity of contradicting them. He believed that he was not betraying any secret when he said that it was a positive instruction of Mr. Brogden's firm that its members should not identify themselves with any political party, but simply deal with the Government of the day in connection with their business transactions, and Mr. Brogden had stated to the Committee that he had taken no part whatever in politics, so far as regards the position of parties in the House of Representatives. He would ask the Committee, in coming to its conclusion, to take into consideration the position in which this gentleman finds himself placed by these proceedings, and to free him from any complicity in the matter. Had evidence similar to that given by Mr. Harrison before this Committee been given in a Court of law, he (Counsel) would have felt justified in characterizing it by much stronger terms than he could do before a tribunal of this sort. He concluded by submitting that there was nothing whatsoever in Mr. Holt's conduct to show that he had been guilty of the impropriety attributed to him, and that the Committee would be justified in reporting to the House accordingly.

The *Attorney-General* said that it appeared to him that the point which merited their attention was not so much as to whether Mr. Brogden's authority was given to the negotiations, as to prove whether or not Mr. Harrison's evidence was reliable, and as to whether or not he was justified in looking upon what took place as an attempt to influence his conduct as a Member of the House. It might be true enough that Mr. Brogden's authority was not proved. Mr. Brogden himself denies that he ever gave any authority to Mr. Holt to negotiate for the employment of Mr. Harrison's services at all. Mr. Holt himself gives similar evidence. Mr. Harrison has no other evidence to produce before the Committee that Mr. Brogden did. According to the evidence that had been given, Mr. Holt had for a week or two previous to the occurrence suggested to Mr. Brogden that Mr. Harrison should

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be employed. Mr. Brogden, it would appear, told Mr. Holt that he would not entertain any proposition of the kind, being altogether opposed to the employment of any such person in the capacity suggested by Mr. Holt. In regard to the particular person suggested to him, namely, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Brogden expressed the greatest disinclination to use his services. At this time Mr. Holt was certainly acting in the interest of his employer, at all events he was acting in the services of the firm. Despite the disinclination of his employer, Mr. Holt made an appointment with Mr. Harrison, and in pursuance of that appointment they met in the offices of the firm, and then and there came the proposal with regard to the employment of Mr. Harrison's services as a writer of articles in the interest of the firm. That part of the matter had not been satisfactorily cleared up. Certainly he (Counsel) could not say that he had come to the conclusion that there was evidence to show Mr. Brogden's authority to the purchase of Mr. Harrison's influence and action as a Member of the House. But that was not the only question—the question had Mr. Brogden authorized these negotiations. The real question to decide was, whether taking Messrs. Holt, Harrison, and Tribe's evidence fully into consideration, there was sufficient evidence to justify Mr. Harrison in supposing that an attempt had been made to influence his actions as a Member of the House. It constantly happens that persons engaged, as these witnesses are, in business and about the House, that their recollection of the exact words made use of is not quite so distinct as it ought to be. His learned friend had imputed to Mr. Harrison that he had not given reliable testimony, but the very same might be said of Mr. Holt. He denied that anything had been said which indicated that it was Mr. Brogden's interest that the Government formed by Mr. Stafford should be kept in office. Mr. Tribe states that that did take place. Mr. Tribe, in his evidence, in reply to questions, stated that Mr. Holt had said to him that it would be for the interest of Mr. Brogden to retain the Stafford Government in office. The whole tenor of his evidence, as given in questions 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255 and 256, is to that effect. The first question for the Committee to come to a conclusion upon was, whether there was sufficient evidence to show that Mr. Brogden had authorized Mr. Holt to make any proposals of the kind to influence Mr. Harrison's conduct as a Member of the House. The next question for them to consider was, had Mr. Holt taken such a part in this transaction as to justify Mr. Harrison in believing that an attempt had been made to influence his conduct in that way. It appeared beyond all doubt, from Mr. Holt's own statement, that he (Mr. Holt) had suggested Mr. Harrison's name to Mr. Brogden. There can be but little doubt but that Mr. Harrison was aware that his name had been so suggested. Referring to the alleged proposal to influence Mr. Vogel not to bring down a vote of want of confidence against Mr. Stafford's Government, Counsel said that he would take only the evidence of Mr. Tribe on that point, and leave out other evidence altogether. It is plain, he said, from the evidence, that it had been suggested by Mr. Holt, in presence of Mr. Tribe, that it would be better for Mr. Brogden's firm if matters were to remain as they then were. In his evidence Mr. Tribe was asked, "Did Mr. Holt at any time suggest to you that, in the interest of Mr. Brogden, he would ask you to take such a course?" To which Mr. Holt replied he never went so far as that, but he said it would be for the interest of Mr. Brogden to retain the Stafford Government in office. Really, and in fact, looking at what took place, it was not so much a question of his vote, as it was his influence as a Member outside the House that was of importance at the particular juncture. It was of more importance than his vote in the House that the assured majority in favour of a vote of want of confidence should be prevented. The next point to which he would call attention raised the question whether or not what had taken place between the parties in presence of Mr. Tribe, justified Mr. Harrison in the opinion that a gross attempt had been made to influence his conduct by the offer of pecuniary consideration, and which he considered necessary to bring before the House. In his letter to the Speaker he states that while he was to use his influence as a Member of the House, he was not to be required to vote in a particular direction. Apparently the vote of want of confidence was to be prevented by preventing an assured majority at the meetings of Mr. Vogel's political supporters. What he (Counsel) asked the Committee to assume is, that Mr. Harrison thought he had good grounds for coming to the conclusion he did when he heard that a similar conversation had taken place with Mr. Tribe, and that some pecuniary consideration had been granted by the Messrs. Brogden to him. Mr. Tribe's explanation of that transaction is as follows. He says that he had no idea of making any charge at all for the services he had done; that in fact the money he received from Henderson was a present. Mr. Tribe and Mr. Harrison appear to have been in constant communication, being interested in certain West Coast projects. For the services so rendered, Mr. Henderson suggested that a present should be given to Mr. Tribe, and a sum of £50 was named by the latter. Mr. Henderson then offered £100, or double the amount asked by Mr. Tribe. It was when he (Mr. Harrison) came to think over that fact—to put all things, as it were, together—that his suspicions were aroused that an attempt had been made to buy his political influence. Certain pecuniary loss had been spoken off by Mr. Tribe as having been sustained by him, and the question was whether, was this £100 paid as compensation for the pecuniary loss, or was it paid by Mr. Henderson as a present? There was no evidence that the sum proposed as a present bore any relation to the alleged pecuniary loss.