

328. About these expenses. I understood you to say that you paid out of your own pocket all expenses that you had any cognizance of in connection with this election?—Yes; all that I incurred myself I paid.

329. Do you know how much in the aggregate these expenses would come to? Some were in the country districts, and some in town, I understand. How much altogether?—Between £10 and £20 altogether. I cannot tell exactly.

330. Do you know how much more expense was incurred by members of the committee and paid by them?—I do not.

331. It may be a large sum, or may be a small sum?—Yes; but I do not know.

332. Do you know anything about Major Pitt?—No.

333. Were you present at all the committee meetings?—No; I was present at four or five.

334. When the committee was first formed as a committee it was for Mr. Wilson?—Yes.

335. The duration of its existence before the election, then, would cover more than ten days?—Three or four weeks.

336. It was in existence as Mr. Wilson's committee for some days?—Yes; it was extended over a month altogether.

337. *Mr. Montgomery.*] I understand Major Pitt was appointed by the committee?—I believe he was. I do not know that he was ever positively appointed.

338. You were not present when it was done?—No; I had nothing to do with it.

339. *Mr. Wason.*] Was there a chairman to this committee? We understand there were a great variety of these committees over the district. Who was chairman of this particular committee?—When it was first formed, at a meeting of the electors at Gisborne, no chairman was appointed, and, as far as I know, no standing chairman was appointed. At each meeting, we elected one of those present to take the chair for the evening. At one meeting I was chairman, and another meeting another person would be chairman, and so on.

340. Is this the usual course at election committees?—I do not know. I was not connected with an election before.

341. How many members were there on the committee?—I think I have seen twenty members present.

342. Were there any moneys paid?—Not so far as I know. After the election I never attended any meeting.

343. Do you know anything about the chartering of a steamer?—No.

344. What do you do at Gisborne; that is where you live, is it not?—I live ten miles from Gisborne. I am a sheep-farmer, and at this time I was Chairman of the Road Board.

345. Did you know Mr. Henshaw was acting for Captain Read?—I did not know him.

346. Did you hear he was acting for Captain Read?—No.

347. Did you hear nothing about it at the committee meeting?—No; I knew nothing about it.

348. And you knew nothing about Major Pitt's appointment?—No.

349. Nor yet about the chartering of the steamer?—No.

350. Was there any secretary to the committee?—Not that I am aware of.

351. Were the meetings called by advertisement?—No; it was generally known when we were to meet. The committee was split up into sections for different places.

352. To which section did you belong?—I belonged to the country section, and looked after country voters.

353. You did not canvass in town; only in the country?—Yes.

354. *Mr. Whitaker.*] I understand there was a large committee dispersed over different parts of the country, and the meetings took place in different parts of the country?—Yes.

355. And you were sometimes at one committee and sometimes at another?—Yes.

356. It was in point of fact one committee, but subdivided?—Yes.

357. *Mr. Barton.*] Can you say whether the committee ever changed its constitution. That is, were the members appointed first by a public meeting only allowed to attend the committee, or did any person go in if he chose to do so?—No; it was all along the same committee as was appointed by the ratepayers.

358. *Mr. Wason.*] Was not the committee empowered to add to its number if it chose to do so?—No.

359. It never increased in number from the time of the original appointment?—No.

360. *Mr. Whitaker.*] Did anybody else attend the committee but those who had been appointed?—No.

361. But each person attended, and meetings were called as was thought fit?—Not exactly; there were places and times of meeting planned out, and the plan was kept to.

TUESDAY, 15TH AUGUST, 1876.

ROBERT COOPER examined on oath.

362. *Mr. Barton.*] Your name?—Robert Cooper.

363. What are you, Mr. Cooper?—A settler at Poverty Bay.

364. You were there at the time of the election at which Captain Read was returned?—Yes.

365. Were you a member of the committee at Gisborne?—Yes.

366. How was that committee appointed?—We formed ourselves into a committee to secure Captain Read's return. I asked Captain Read for three weeks to come forward as a candidate, but he refused. At last he consented to stand. There was a committee sitting at this time for the purpose of securing the return of Mr. Wilson.

367. What had he to do with it?—He was at this time putting up, but he was willing to retire in favour of Captain Read. We brought Captain Read to this committee-room and asked him to stand,