

680. But there was something said about the Upper House?—Yes; we were talking about the petition, and I said “I wished it were all over, and that if I were put into the Upper House it would be an excuse to my supporters, because I should have to withdraw then. I could not, as a member of the Upper House, seek a seat in the Lower House.” He was anxious to have the petition withdrawn.

681. Did you send to Captain Read to ask an interview?—No.

682. You know Mr. Macfarlane?—Yes.

683. Did you, in conversation with him—He is an intimate friend of Captain Read?—I believe he is.

684. Did you not, in conversation with him, say you wished to see Captain Read?—I think not.

685. If he went to Captain Read and represented to him, as a fact, that you did wish to see him, was that done by Mr. Macfarlane without any authority from you?—Certainly, without any authority from me.

686. Do you know a Mr. Stephenson, of Auckland?—Yes.

687. Did you send him to Captain Read?—No; I said to him, “It seems unsocial to pass a man by, day after day, without speaking to him, and that I thought I would speak to old Read next day.” He said, “I will prepare him for the interview, so that, if you do speak to him, you will not be snubbed or be put in an unpleasant position.”

688. And a conversation took place with Read next morning?—Yes.

689. Then, was anything said about his paying your expenses?—No.

690. Were any persons present when you were speaking?—No.

691. Was anything said about bringing witnesses down?—Not a word.

692. *Mr. Whitaker.*] Had you any conversation about this election with Mr. Stephenson?—No.

693. No conversation about taking money to reimburse you your expenses?—There was something of the kind suggested.

694. What was the sum?—I forget.

695. Do you really mean to tell the Committee you forget?—Yes.

696. How long ago was it?—About a month ago. I never entertained the idea, so I took little notice. I was asked what my expenses would be, and I said “Somewhere about £700, taking into consideration all my troubles and tribulations.” Some one said, “That is a good deal;” and I replied, “That I would not take that, because if I settled the matter in that way I could never show my face in my district again.” I then said, “The only way to get out of the difficulty was my appointment to the Upper House.”

697. You were willing to compromise the matter if you were appointed to the Upper House?—No; I merely said that would end the whole thing.

698. Who was to get you into the Upper House?—I do not know.

699. Captain Read’s party?—I do not know. I did not entertain the idea.

700. If it was to be done, by whom was it to be done?—I did not propose that it should be done.

701. Did you ever have a conversation with Stephenson upon the subject?—I may have mentioned it to him.

702. Did you ever mention a probable compromise with Captain Read?—I did not, that I remember.

703. You have said your expenses were about £700. Will you tell us how you made them up?—I think the expenses of my election came to £137; then there were travelling expenses to Poverty Bay and back, £50 or £60. These latter were large on account of being much detained by floods, and having horses waiting for me meanwhile at great cost. Then there were expenses to Auckland and—

704. Well, never mind. You spent £137 in election expenses?—In round numbers I should say £200, as the trip to Poverty Bay was really an election expense.

705. Well, let us keep to the £137. How was that sum spent? Evidently you have kept a careful account, because you mention an odd sum?—The money was spent in various places, but I cannot remember everything. About £10 was spent at Maketu.

706. How was that spent?—It was spent by the committee.

707. Was the money paid after the election?—Yes.

708. Did you pay anything before the election?—No.

709. Had you a committee-room at Tauranga?—Yes.

710. We have been told there were three booths open?—I was not there.

711. Who was your agent there?—I had none. I had a committee, about twenty in number, the chairman of which was Mr. James Bowdell, but I do not know that he had anything more to do with the matter than anybody else. In consequence of visiting Poverty Bay, I could not get to Tauranga till the last moment.

712. Had you any committee-room at Poverty Bay?—No.

713. Everything the last witness has said is untrue?—Positively untrue.

714. An invention?—An invention, with the exception that I might have spoken to him, and might have drunk with him, but I do not recognize his face.

715. Did you take anybody else to the public-house?—I may have done.

716. Did you or did you not?—Of the two, I should say I did.

717. How many public-houses did you go into?—Only one, so far as I remember.

718. What did it cost you for drink on this day?—Ten shillings perhaps.

719. Was that spent among electors?—I presume so. I cannot say how much I spent. It may not have been 10s.

720. Is it true that you called the electors down and then left them without “shouting”?—The fact was they were going to shout for me, but I could not take a shout from all, so I left. A good deal of influence had been brought against me, and I had been addressing the electors to convince them of the error of their ways.

721. When was this?—After the polling.

722. No “shouting” before the polling?—No.