

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.

14th Oct., 1872.

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.

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

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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. Rolleson.] 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.]