

## MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

WEDNESDAY, 12TH JULY, 1876.

Captain READ examined on oath.

1. *Mr. Shaw*, of counsel for the petitioner.] I shall ask you, Captain Read, if Major Pitt was your agent generally for managing the affairs of the election on your behalf in the District of Tauranga?—No; I had no affairs in Tauranga requiring it.

2. Did you employ him to do anything for you in connection with the polling at Tauranga, or with this election at all?—No.

3. You did not?—No.

4. Did you give him any money to be expended in connection with it?—No.

5. I understand that a steamer was specially chartered to take him from Gisborne to Opotiki, or some other place?—To Opotiki.

6. Did you pay for that special service?—I did not charter the steamer or pay for it.

7. Did you procure it to be chartered, or induce anybody to do it for you?—I did not.

8. Then I understand you to say that Major Pitt was in no sense acting for you in connection with that election at Tauranga?—He had nothing to do with me. He never received any instructions from me. I believe he did from a Committee, which I did not appoint, and which I had nothing to do with.

9. Then, if he said he was appointed by you, he was not speaking the truth?—He was telling what was not true.

10. And if anybody else made oath that you had done so, or had told them that you had done so, that would be untrue also?—Yes.

11. If one Thomas Joseph Henshaw, for instance, gave evidence that you yourself told him that you had appointed Major Pitt as your agent, would that be true or not?—It would not be true. I never saw Henshaw but once, and that was a long time after the election. He was my agent at Tauranga.

12. If he swore that, would it be untrue?—He could not swear it, because I never saw him.

13. If he did, would it be untrue?—It would. He went away some time before that.

14. You had a conversation with Henshaw about the election?—He came to me to demand more money. He had already obtained £85, and then he came for £50 more. I would not give it to him. I was going to kick him out.

15. Did you have conversation with him about Major Pitt then?—No; he merely said he wanted £50, to pay the balance of election expenses.

16. And you would not give him the £50?—I said, "Don't talk to me about balances. I want an account of what has come of the moneys you have already had."

17. Who were on the committee at Tauranga?—There was no committee at Tauranga.

18. It was by the committee at Gisborne that Major Pitt was employed?—I suppose so. I wished to have nothing to do with the election. But some of them would have me in it. In fact, they almost came and took me by main force. They said if I would only agree to stand they would put me in, because they wanted a candidate who knew something of the place. For five years they had never got anything, and they thought they might as well have something as any one else, so they wished me to stand, as I was the only candidate who could get them anything.

19. *Mr. Wason*.] Did you employ a proposer and seconder?—I telegraphed to a man named Brandon to act for me as proposer.

20. Who was your seconder?—I do not know. I had very little to do with the matter. They came to me and said, "If you will stand, we will put you in."

21. Did they promise to pay the expenses of the election?—They said they would put me in, and certainly I did not know there was going to be any expense to myself. I never had anything to do with an election before.

22. *Mr. Shaw*.] Then Major Pitt was employed by this committee?—Yes.

23. And received his instructions from the committee, and not from you?—Most decidedly not from me.

24. Then it was by the committee?—Yes.

25. Do you know that as a fact, or do you merely know it from hearsay?—I have heard people say that the committee gave him instructions.

26. Were the instructions written?—Yes.

27. Have you seen the instructions?—Yes; he was to do the thing in a proper legal manner.

28. There was some reference to the chartering of a steamer. Did he go to Opotiki in the steamer?—Yes, I believe so.

29. Did you speak to Major Pitt before he went on to the steamer?—I might have spoken to him, but I did not say anything at all to him about these duties.

30. You never spoke to him about the election before he went on to the steamer?—No; never about the election. I really had nothing to do with the election.

31. However, the steamer was chartered. Did you pay the account?—The account has been paid by the Committee, and by me.

32. You paid part of the account?—I believe I did.

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