

55. Under what authority, Sir Julius Vogel, were advances made to you in London?—Advances were made in just the same way as it had been customary to make them, as far as I know, not only to Ministers, but to officers of the Government travelling on public business. The advance in London was done by request to the Agent-General, in a letter which you see published.

56. Might I ask you, Sir Julius Vogel, whether you have any accounts as to the expenses—either the total amount of your expenses while on the voyage, or the amount of expenses beyond the allowance of four guineas a day?—When I came back, I estimated, by the cheques which I had drawn on private account, and the money I had to pay when I came back; the latter sum amounted to £2,518 more than my Ministerial salary and special and travelling allowances. I very carefully estimated it, and found that, over and above my salary at the time I wrote to Dr. Pollen, I was £400 out of my private means in excess of my salary and special allowance, supposing that the £2,750 was paid to me. That £2,750 includes the amount of interest which I had to pay to meet that £2,518 which I was overdrawn beyond the advances made for allowances and salary. Of course, when I put my salary in, I include the expenses of my family. Doctors cost me a great deal of money.

57. May I ask you whether you considered that, after you started upon the second mission to England, you had a right—of course, I mean either legal or equitable—to draw to the full extent of the £1,500 special allowance?—Yes. At any time I considered I had a right to draw. I looked at it in this way: Supposing I had ceased to be a Minister, I should have been invested with the character of “absent on public duty,” and entitled to full pay.

58. When had you a right to receive the £1,500?—Whenever it was convenient to me.

59. At any time during the mission?—At any time I thought proper. My salary, after the end of December, ceased to be paid in the colony.

60. Then, what limit was there, when you went away in September, to your power to draw? You drew £1,500; was that on your own authority?—I fancy it was on Ministerial authority.

61. Do you know whether the Cabinet agreed to your taking the advance?—I know it was agreed by Ministers that I should draw it. I presume it was minuted on the paper making the advance.

62. What limit was there to your power to draw?—I had no power to draw a cheque myself at all. Before leaving New Zealand, the Cabinet asked me what I thought it would be convenient to draw, and it was agreed that I should draw £1,500.

63. *Hon. Mr. Stafford.*] From the way in which the last question or two have been put, it would appear as if any Minister could go to the Treasury and get money, but, as a matter of fact, cheques are only signed by the Colonial Treasurer. No Minister can go and draw money on his own authority. It has to go through the ordinary departmental and audit offices, and nobody but the Colonial Treasurer can give authority to draw money?—It appears to me that if such a large sum were asked for, the Auditors would ask whether it should be charged to any particular vote. If there was no particular vote to take it from, it would be unauthorized expenditure, bearing the signature of Ministers, and passed through all the machinery that any other payment to be made would pass through. The Colonial Treasurer never signs cheques. He can only authorize payments in a legal manner.

64. *Mr. Rees.*] When you received part payment in advance in London, under what authority did you obtain that? Did you draw it yourself?—No. I wrote to the Agent-General, when at Home, before I wrote to the Crown Agents, to know if they would grant me the money.

65. Then, when you drew the £3,200 on your own account, you considered you had a right to credit yourself with the full £1,500 special allowance?—Yes. At the time I left it was supposed I would be back in June.

66. Then the only evidence that you have in relation to your total expenditure is the estimate you have spoken of as having been made by yourself?—It is certainly the only available evidence. I had the blocks of the cheques which I had drawn. I do not know whether I have destroyed them or not. I kept no private account. It was from the cheque-book blocks that I got general information, which enabled me to make the estimate. I may say that my journey to the German baths, and detention by ill-health on my way home, were very expensive.

67. *The Chairman.*] When the special allowance of £1,500 was decided on before your leaving New Zealand, had that any reference to the length of time you would probably be absent; or was it considered to be the sum to be paid, whatever time your journey might take? Was there any calculation at the time as to how long your mission would probably occupy?—My recollection of the matter is, that I said to the Cabinet “that I thought £1,500 would be necessary, and it might be more” and it was agreed to fix that amount. The Cabinet gave me to understand that if it exceeded that sum, they would consider the matter favourably.

68. Can you tell the Committee how long you expected to be absent at the time that allowance was made?—I hoped to be back again before June.

69. And the time of your return was February, 1876?—Yes.

70. Then you were absent about eight months longer than you expected, at the time of your departure?—Fully that. I expected to be back in good time to prepare for the Session.

71. That absence, I presume, was owing partly to illness. Was it also owing to other matters of public business occupying your time longer than you expected, when you left New Zealand?—I was told by the doctors that my life was at stake, if I ventured home. I was not only told that by Sir W. Gull, but by others, to whom Dr. Gull had said the same thing.

72. When did you consider that the work on which you went Home was to all practical intents completed?—At the end of June. I had then practically wound up everything connected with my mission. I had gone through all the Immigration Regulations, and the Cable and Loan negotiations were at an end; but after I returned to England, my attention was directed to the arrangements with the Bank of England, which occupied my time until I left England. That was no part of my mission. I may be allowed to say that when the Government found I was not coming back, they sent Home instructions about my negotiating the balance of the debentures.