

52. Then, presumably they did lose $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. ?—I do not think so.

53. Were the Government to give you any commission?—Not in the least; more than that, if any such suggestion had been made, I would have declined to have anything at all to do with it.

54. Did it not occur to you at all that your conduct as a member of the House of Representatives might be misunderstood?—No, I do not think it. I do not think so, even now.

55. Do you think it unnecessary this inquiry should be held?—Except on this point—except that my friends may be jealous of my honour or the honour of others *per se*. I say this was my private business, and the House has nothing to do with it. I freely admit at once that if I had the knowledge that they would become purchasers, and that they would give me a commission for doing what I was doing, it would have been an improper thing. But I hold myself at liberty, if any one asks me to sell it for them, to sell any property whatever.

56. To put it briefly in this way: does it conduce to the interest and honour of this House that its members should intervene with the Government in monetary transactions?—Not if commission is to be paid by the Government.

57. Especially if the member so acting should be a supporter of the Government?—Certainly that would greatly strengthen the case if commission was to be paid by the Government.

58. But if commission is not paid by the Government, you think it makes no matter?—No, not in the least. I take it that supporters of the Government are equally honourable with members of the Opposition.

59. But does it not open a question as to the probity of members in the public mind?—No doubt it might.

60. *Mr. Pearson.*] But do you not admit that when you reduced—or offered to reduce—your commission, there was a difference which amounted to more than 2 per cent. ?—Seeing that the whole thing was put into my hands, I could very well afford to take less commission for the second parcel.

61. The commission you were supposed to receive from the Waimate Company was $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.; then, to induce them to accept the Government offer you reduced your commission?—Not to induce them; but to make the net proceeds practically nearer their price.

62. Do you not think that is an admission that the Government could have got the debentures cheaper by dealing direct with the company?—I do not know whether they could or not; but I maintain that it was not my business to throw away business, and say that they could do better without my services. I do not think it was my business at all to question whether they could have got the debentures cheaper in some other way.

63. The commission was $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. on the Waimate?—Yes.

64. And $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the other?—Yes.

65. You have received commission on the Waimate?—No, it has not been paid.

66. Then on the Rotorua?—Portion of it.

67. What is the amount of commission on the whole?—About £1,035.

68. Then, you do not receive commission until the money is actually paid?—The reason why the Waimate was not paid is that there is a lot of transfers of land, &c., to be made. Persons living in England have to be consulted. But I believe the matter is now completed.

69. You told Mr. Fulton there was no communication about the Rotorua until you went to Auckland?—It was after my return from Auckland. The thing was suggested to me in Auckland. When I got the authority to offer them and offered them will be seen by the correspondence.

70. *Mr. Bruce.*] I put this question to you in consequence of the rumours that have been floating about, and for the reason that you should have an opportunity of contradicting them?—Have you ever received, directly or indirectly, any remuneration for your services in connection with the passing of the Waimate measure through the House?—Certainly not.

71. *Mr. Garrick.*] You laboured energetically for the passing of that Bill?—Not more than for others.

72. That is not an answer to my question?—I did my best for the passing of the Bill.

73. That is not an answer to the question. Did you labour energetically to pass the Bill?—I did my best.

74. I asked you whether you laboured energetically for that measure?—Yes, I did, and for a good many more.

75. You succeeded in getting the Waimate restored to the schedule after the House had rejected it?—Yes. I would do the same thing to-morrow.

76. And you did that in the small hours of the morning?—Yes. I would do it at any hour in the morning.

77. I only want to know the fact?—Yes. I am quite prepared to do so for any measure that I think it my duty to support.

78. *Mr. Fulton.*] Do you understand that this inquiry is not for the purpose only of inquiring into your conduct, but generally for the purpose of finding out whether anything improper has taken place either on your part or on the part of any one else?—Yes.

Correspondence.

Wellington, 17th October, 1885.—J. Batger, Esq., Secretary, Rotorua Railway Company, Auckland.—Telegram received. Will reply Monday or Tuesday.—W. J. STEWARD.

Christchurch, 17th October, 1885.—Major Steward, M.H.R., Wellington.—Waimate Company offer refused.—JULIUS VOGEL.

Christchurch, 19th October, 1885.—Major Steward, Wellington.—In reply to your telegram, I will be content with six months' accrued interest. I will take fifty thousand Rotorua—probably more.—JULIUS VOGEL.

Waimate, 20th October, 1885.—W. J. Steward, Esq., Wellington.—Directors withdraw their consent to sale to Vogel. Await letter.—F. SLEE.