

1896.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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## REPORTING DEBATES AND PRINTING COMMITTEE

(REPORTS OF, ON CERTAIN REVISIONS MADE IN THE EVIDENCE ATTACHED TO THE  
REPORT OF THE HOROWHENUA COMMISSION WITH MINUTES OF EVIDENCE).

*Reports brought up 16th and 17th July, 1896, and ordered to be printed.*

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### ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

*Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.*

THURSDAY, THE 25TH DAY OF JULY, 1896.

*Ordered*, "That a Committee, consisting of ten members, be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the reporting of debates, and for the purpose of selecting and arranging for printing returns and papers presented in pursuance of motions made by members of this House; three to be a quorum. The Committee to consist of Mr. Speaker, Mr. Carnecross, Mr. Duthie, Mr. Hogg, Mr. G. Hutchison, Mr. Lang, Mr. Pirani, Hon. Major Steward, Mr. Willis, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. HALL-JONES.)

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FRIDAY, THE 3RD DAY OF JULY, 1896.

*Ordered*, "That Standing Order No. 211 be suspended for the purpose of adding the name of Mr. Saunders to the Reporting Debates and Printing Committee."—(Hon. Mr. HALL-JONES.)

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THURSDAY, THE 16TH DAY OF JULY, 1896.

*Ordered*, "That the report of the Reporting Debates and Printing Committee on the subject of the revision of the evidence attached to the report of the Horowhenua Commission be referred back to the Committee for the purpose of taking further evidence."—(Hon. Mr. HALL-JONES.)

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### REPORT.

BROUGHT UP 16TH JULY, 1896.

THE Reporting Debates and Printing Committee have the honour to report,—

That the evidence laid before the Horowhenua Commission had been sent in with several blanks, arising principally from the want of quotations and Maori names. This irregularity is explained on the plea of urgency to send in the report, and the filling-in of the blanks was apparently done in all good faith. Permitting the completion of the text after it had been laid on the table was a still more culpable proceeding, against which all the officers concerned should be emphatically cautioned; but as no additions have been made, nor has the accuracy of the evidence been affected, the Committee recommends that no further action is necessary, and that the Chairman report accordingly.

W. J. STEWARD, Chairman.

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### SECOND REPORT.

BROUGHT UP 17TH JULY, 1896, AND ORDERED TO BE PRINTED.

THE Reporting Debates and Printing Committee have the honour to report,—

That they have held an exhaustive inquiry, lasting for more than an hour and three-quarters, and have taken the evidence of Mr. J. C. Martin and of Mr. Sheridan, and that they have no further recommendation to make.

W. J. STEWARD, Chairman.

## MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

THURSDAY, 16TH JULY, 1896.

Hon. Mr. SEDDON examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] As this meeting has been summoned in consequence of a statement made in the House by the Premier, perhaps he will tell the Committee what he knows about the matter?—My attention was called to what was going on in respect to adding paragraphs to the manuscript evidence which had been laid upon the table of the House in connection with the Horowhenua Commission. I said that ought not to be done. It was reprehensible, and a very serious matter, and inquiries were made. Mr. Leslie was looking after the printing of the evidence, and I was handed this letter from him to the draughtsman.

“DEAR SIR,—

“Parliament Buildings, 10th July, 1896.

“*Re* plans forwarded to you for the Horowhenua Commission papers, the small plans of sections attached to deeds put in as exhibits do not require to be done in colours. With regard to the large plans, exact *fac-similes* will be necessary.

“I have, &c.,

“WALTER LESLIE.

“The Chief Draughtsman, Surveyor-General's Department.”

From that I took it that Mr. Leslie was continuing to act after the time of his having been secretary to the Commission. I failed to see by what authority he could order the draughtsman, by writing, to have the plans executed as without the colouring. I considered it desirable to stop the whole thing by bringing the matter before Mr. Speaker and the House.

2. *Mr. Pirani.*] The Commission is supposed to end when the report is handed in, but does it always follow that the secretary's duties end with the report?—Oh, certainly. For instance, if Mr. Martin had asked me to let Mr. Leslie do anything after the Commission was ended on account of his having had to do with it, I should have said, No. Once the Commission has handed in its report nothing can touch that afterwards.

3. *Mr. Hogg.*] The evidence cannot be doctored up?—No.

4. *Mr. Pirani.*] Then, I suppose you do not know who employed Mr. Leslie in correcting the proofs?—I have heard it was Mr. Otterson.

5. *Mr. Hall-Jones.*] I suppose the Government Printer and his readers are supposed to guarantee the accuracy of the printed matter that passes through their hands with the manuscript?—Certainly. The ordinary course would be for Mr. Otterson or Mr. Lowe to look after these papers; that is part of their duties, not an outsider. I hear that the paragraph inserted was an extract from Sir Walter Buller's speech delivered at the bar of the House.

Mr. JOHN MACKAY examined.

6. *Hon. Major Steward.*] The present meeting is called for the purpose of inquiring into a statement made in the House to the effect that certain papers relating to the matter of the Horowhenua Commission have been altered since they were laid on the table of the House—that is to say, matter has been interpolated which was not in the papers as originally presented. Do you know anything of the matter in question?—I know that some blanks in the manuscript have been filled up with quotations.

7. Have you the papers with you?—Yes; I have the printed papers, not the manuscript.

*Mr. Pirani:* Oh, we ought to have the manuscript, I should think.

[Examination suspended.]

Mr. WALTER LESLIE examined.

8. *Hon. Mr. Seddon.*] You are a *Hansard* reporter, Mr. Leslie?—Yes.

9. When did the Horowhenua Commission hand in its report?—Somewhere about the end of May, or the beginning of June.

10. That letter that has been read was from you?—Yes.

11. You have been superintending the printing of this evidence?—Yes.

12. Who gave you instructions to do that?—Mr. Sheridan, of the Native Land Purchase Office.

13. When did he give you instructions?—A few days before the report was handed in. He told me he would require me to superintend the printing of the report of the evidence, and he would make further arrangements with me in regard to payment. It was suggested by me, or by the Chairman of the Commission, that it would save time if the evidence was put through the Printing Office immediately; but I understand that was not sanctioned by the Minister, and therefore the matter was held over. I mentioned the matter to Mr. Sheridan on several occasions between the time when the report was handed in and the meeting of Parliament, and on each occasion he gave me some reply to the effect that the printing had not been decided upon. When I heard that the House had ordered this document to be printed I saw Mr. Otterson. I told him the instructions I had received. He said that when the documents were printed he would require me to superintend. Mr. Otterson sent to the Printing Office, I think, an authority to sign the proofs. At the same time when I mentioned that to Mr. Otterson, I said to him that in the papers there were a number of blanks left, which required to be filled in—mostly Maori names and names of places—and that there were several places where the counsel or Native agents had read extracts from documents, and had not supplied me with the extracts, and it would be necessary for me to fill them in to make the papers complete. Mr. Otterson told me that if anything had to be added to the papers

it would be necessary for them to be laid formally upon the table first. I explained to him the nature of what had to be put in, and he said that, considering these additions were merely formal, it would not be necessary to go through the form of laying them on the table.

14. I understand you have been continually conferring with Sir Walter Buller since the report was presented?—I do not know what you mean by the word “conferring.” I have had to “refer” to Sir Walter Buller, and to Mr. Baldwin, and Mr. Fraser, and Mr. Morison, in the case of extracts.

15. “Conferring” is understood by you as it is by me. Have you conferred with Sir Walter Buller?—I have had to ask him to supply extracts. I have had to “refer” him to these blanks, where the question was asked, “Do you know this?” or “Do you remember saying so-and-so?”

16. You have heard me say there was an extract made from his speech; did he give you that?—I cannot quite recollect the extract you refer to. I think the reference must be to an extract read by Mr. Fraser. I remember he asks if the witness remembers Sir Walter Buller saying so-and-so, at the bar of the House; and, in order to ascertain the words used, I obtained a pamphlet issued by Sir Walter Buller. I may have got it from him, or else from the Chairman of the Commission; but I rather fancy the Chairman said he had lost his copy, and I got it from Sir Walter Buller.

17. Can you not say yes or no?—Not for a certainty.

18. But you have frequently conversed with Sir Walter Buller here?—I have had to refer to him twice. Once for a small extract, and once for a notice in a *Gazette* of a long time ago, quoted by him in examining Judge Ward.

19. Now, these alterations and additions were not in the papers as sent by you to the Printer?—They were not actually typewritten; but blanks were left, to be filled in afterwards.

20. Then, it would not have been in accordance with the evidence as laid upon the table, or as supplied to the Government?—Well, not exactly.

21. How did you come to sign that letter as secretary of the Commission?—Mr. Mackay came to me one morning with some plans that he was sending to the Survey Office, and asked me if it would be necessary to print them in colour. I took them to Mr. Martin, and the result of the conversation that I had with him was that he said that he did not care whether they were printed in colour or not; but I think it was mutually agreed between Mr. Martin and myself that, in the case of these smaller plans, which were merely small plans attached to deeds put in as exhibits, it was unimportant whether they were coloured or not. Mr. Mackay seemed very anxious that they should be printed in one colour, and either he or I suggested that I should see Mr. Flanagan about it. I saw him, and said it was not important that he should do them in colours. He requested me to write to him to the same effect, and I signed the letter as secretary of the Commission.

22. Did Mr. Martin tell you that his functions as Chairman had ceased?—Yes.

23. And how did you come to sign it as secretary?—I did so to show Mr. Flanagan what my connection with the affair was.

24. What was the date of this?—10th July.

25. Now, was that after you received instructions from Mr. Otterson?—I had not received any instructions from Mr. Otterson.

26. Did you sign it after you had received authority to the Government Printer?—Yes.

27. Now, has Mr. Sheridan given you any instructions since authority was sent by Mr. Otterson to the Government Printer?—No. I think it will be found that nearly all the additions are made in questions, not in witnesses' evidence.

28. *Mr. Lang.*] And the additions made were merely of a formal character?—The particular one to which Mr. Seddon refers would read thus: “Do you remember Sir Walter Buller saying this at the bar of the House?” and then there would be a blank, which I considered should be filled in. Further, it would be absolutely impossible for a man to whom I refer to give me more than was exactly said, because I have in my original notes the catch-words at the beginning and at the end.

28A. Mr. Seddon mentioned that Mr. Martin handed in all the papers directly the Commission was closed; does it necessarily follow the secretary has no duties to perform after that?—I could not say. I fancy there might be cases in which a Commissioner might hand in his report and the evidence could be gone through afterwards.

29. *Mr. Duthie.*] You say Mr. Martin understood these blanks were being filled?—At the time the report was sent on it was thought the printing would be gone on with immediately.

30. He was aware of it?—Yes.

31. As your experience as a reporter, would you admit that that was a proper thing to do?—I protested about handing the papers over so quickly, and asked Mr. Martin for time. It appears Mr. Bush was anxious to get away to Auckland by a steamer, and they hurried me so much during the last ten days that I was often working ten and fifteen hours a day, including Sundays.

32. *Mr. Pirani.*] Have you ever had anything to do with a report of a Commission after it has been in before this?—No.

33. Is it true that you have been continually conferring with Sir Walter Buller in the Parliamentary Buildings?—Certainly not. The only time I saw him in these buildings was last Saturday, when, at my particular request, he came up to the *Hansard*-room to tell me where to find a rule of the Native Land Court. I think I am quite correct in saying I have only referred to Sir Walter Buller twice, and on both occasions the matter was of absolute unimportance.

34. Do you know if the evidence laid on the table, “Am I making a correct statement in my saying,” would be laid on the table first and then filled in afterwards?—Yes.

35. The special charge, I believe, in connection with this affair is one made by the Minister of Lands—that a piece of a speech of Sir Walter Buller's made before the bar of the House was included in this Commission by you at Sir Walter's request?—That is absolutely without foundation, because Sir Walter Buller has never made any request to add anything at all. Anything that has been added at all was at my request. The particular question you refer to was put by Mr. Fraser.

36. Have you any idea what part of the evidence before the Commission it was? You said the piece we are referring to now was in reference to one of Mr. Fraser's questions that you first asked the Chairman of the Committee. Mr. Alick McDonald says, "Sir Walter Buller made this statement before the bar of the House," and this piece that you have cut out of Sir Walter's statement was simply to supply that blank?—Yes.

37. You say that you first applied to the Chairman for a copy of the pamphlet to fill in the blank?—I think the Chairman and Sir Walter Buller were the only two who had copies at Levin. When I came back to town I asked the Chairman to find one for me, but he was not able to do so, and I think I subsequently got it from Sir Walter Buller. I got one from somewhere.

38. Was there anything added in a speech of Sir Walter Buller's?—I do not think Sir Walter Buller's evidence has had a single word added to it. In some of his questions I may possibly have had a blank to supply, but, as far as I remember, in the evidence he gave himself there was nothing.

39. Here is a typewritten piece put in after: "Did you ever hear this," &c., and then there is a blank?—Yes; that was filled in.

40. You are positive you told Mr. Otterson these interpolations were to be made?—Yes.

41. And that he discussed it with you, whether it was necessary the alterations should be laid on the table of the House?—He told me any alterations must be laid on the table of the House. I explained the matter to him, and then he said it would not be necessary.

42. These additions were not for the purpose of any vile conspiracy?—I simply made them to make the evidence as clear as possible.

*Mr. Pirani*: I may mention, Mr. Chairman, that I have not spoken or written to Mr. Leslie on this subject at all.

43. *Mr. Hogg*.] Have you ever acted in this capacity as a secretary to a Royal Commission before?—Yes.

44. *Mr. Hogg*.] Has the same process been adopted then?—As far as I was concerned, I had to leave that Commission before it was over.

45. Then, you were not secretary throughout?—No.

46. Then, another secretary had to be appointed?—Yes.

47. You have not had any previous experience as a secretary?—No; not personally.

48. You say the Chairman, Mr. Martin, was aware the report was not quite complete?—He was aware, and instructed me wherever a blank occurred to write in "extract read."

49. Do you think, when he handed this report to the Government, he knew the evidence was not complete?—He knew of all these blanks.

50. You say where there are omissions you had to consult some of the witnesses afterwards to get the proper spelling?—No, not witnesses—those who put questions.

51. You did not look upon these depositions the same as those taken in a Court?—Yes. This evidence was all taken on oath.

52. Supposing, now, evidence is taken in a Court of justice, what would you think of the conduct of one if, after taking the depositions, he had to consult the witnesses?—I do not think the cases are parallel. Royal Commission work is supposed to be very similar to Committee-work of the House. It has always been usual, when you have written out evidence, to send it to the witnesses for revision.

53. That is to save the trouble of reading it over?—No; I do not know exactly why it is done; but it has been the usual custom.

54. Was that course adopted in this case?—No.

55. In a Court of justice the evidence is taken in manuscript slowly; but the evidence of a Royal Commission is taken in shorthand, consequently, as it takes some time to reproduce that evidence by the typewriter, it is considered convenient to allow the witnesses to read it over and, with the permission of the Chairman, to make alterations he considers necessary?—Yes.

56. You are not aware of evidence of this kind having been handed in in an incomplete state, or laid on the table of the House?—If I had had anything to say in the matter it would not have been handed in in an incomplete state.

57. There is no doubt your desire has been to make the evidence intelligible?—Yes; complete.

58. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones*.] You were secretary to this Commission, and handed the report to the Chairman of the Commission, and this is the report that you handed to him [produced]?—Yes.

59. You say, at the time you handed it to Mr. Martin, you told him it was incomplete?—Yes, that is the evidence.

60. I suppose, Mr. Chairman, we will have an opportunity of seeing Mr. Martin?—

*The Chairman*: Yes.

61. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones*.] You say that this is the first time you know of alterations being made in this manner?—It is the first time after laying it on the table; but it is the practice when leaving out things to get them afterwards.

62. When did the Commission finish its work?—The last day evidence was taken was on the 15th May, I think.

63. The evidence was handed into the Chairman, when?—About three weeks afterwards.

64. Of this added matter, was it statements made by the witnesses, or questions?—Questions principally, and Maori names.

65. How many personal interviews had you with Sir Walter Buller over this matter?—Only two, I think. Once I went to him to get a document, and the other time when he came up last Saturday.

66. I understand you asked Mr. Martin for more time to complete the report of the evidence, but that was declined?—I do not know that I absolutely asked Mr. Martin, but I told him I could not get these blanks sent in; I do not know that I absolutely asked him for more time.

67. He might have been led to believe it was complete when handed in?—He knew that it could not be complete.

68. What time did the Commission start?—I think the first evidence was taken on the 10th March.

69. Do these questions supplied deal with the earlier or later part of the evidence?—I think they run all the way through.

70. Did you have no opportunity of getting this matter supplied to you at all after?—The arrangement I made was that all persons connected with the case when making quotations should write them out and forward to me. In the meantime, I went on transcribing the evidence, leaving blanks for these places. When I came to Wellington in order to supply all these blanks I found that some of the persons had omitted to send me some of the quotations.

71. *Sir Maurice O'Rorke.*] Had the printing of these documents commenced before the evidence was laid on the table?—No.

72. Was it on behalf of the parliamentary officers you were supervising this?—It was Mr. Sheridan who asked me to supervise it.

73. I should have thought the parliamentary officers should have supervised it.

74. *Mr. Pirani:* Mr. Otterson might have asked somebody to supervise it.

75. *Sir Maurice O'Rorke.*] I think, when Mr. Sheridan's name was mentioned, the printing had commenced?—I believe it was originally intended that the documents should be set up immediately they were handed in.

76. Could you give me any idea of the number of blanks left?—I should say there were under one dozen, but Mr. Mackay, I think, will know.

77. We have a paper, sent by Mr. Otterson, addressed to the Government Printer—namely, "Please accept Mr. Walter Leslie's signature to all revises and orders for press in connection with the Horowhenua Commission Papers.—H. Otterson." Were you aware that you were acting for Mr. Otterson, or do you still think you were acting for Mr. Sheridan?—I understood I was acting for the department.

78. You did not add a single letter or word except what was given in the report?—Not a word.

Mr. JOHN MACKAY further examined.

79. *Mr. J. Mackay*, on being asked by the Chairman to state what he knew with regard to the plans mentioned, said that when these plans were shown to him there were a number of large and small ones. These were black, red, and green, and black and red. He asked Mr. Leslie if these were to be done in separate colours, with a view to avoid extra printing.

80. *Hon. Mr. Seddon* said whenever he (Mr. Mackay) got anything sent down from the Parliamentary Buildings, whether black, green, or yellow, he should print them as sent.

81. *Mr. Lang.*] Mr. Leslie, do you consider the secretary's duties a matter of discretion?—No.

*Mr. Leslie* said he understood the secretary's duties ceased after the Commission. He believed it a standing practice that the secretary to a Commission was engaged by the department to supervise proofs. His only reason for interfering with these papers was to make the thing as intelligible and correct as possible. He did not know now whether he should receive a single penny for the work he had done, and it would be understood he had quite sufficient to do without undertaking other work except for a special purpose. He had arranged with all the counsel and agents engaged in the case that they should send him copies of quotations, to be put into the evidence afterwards. The Commissioners were in a great hurry to get this work done, and he absolutely did not have time to go through the papers and see that blanks were filled in. After the report had actually been handed in he went through the papers and found there were several places in which extracts had not been supplied. It was impossible for him to supply them then, for Mr. Martin was anxious for him to hand the whole papers over, and it was not till he got proofs from the Printing Office that he could supply these blanks. Before the Commission closed he had a conversation with Mr. Martin about these blanks, and it was understood he should supply the blanks before the papers came before Parliament.

82. *Mr. Lang.*] I understand you had to refer to several witnesses—Sir Walter Buller.

83. *Mr. Carncross (Chairman).*] To whom did you hand the report?—To Mr. Martin personally. The evidence, I think, I handed to Mr. Hackworth.

84. Regarding the evidence, when you handed that to Mr. Hackworth, did you tell him it was incomplete?—He knew it, for he had to go through it afterwards to attach letters to exhibits, &c.

85. You have stated several times these additions were nothing beyond what was actually given in evidence. If a sub-committee were to compare your note-books with them, do you think they would substantiate them?—Yes.

86. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] I suppose we could have Mr. Leslie's note-book handed in?

*The Chairman:* Yes.

*Mr. Leslie:* May I ask that the Committee take steps to prove or disprove the accusation that has been made against me?

*Mr. Pirani:* Yes.

*Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones:* I think Mr. Pirani said a statement would be made. We have to complete this inquiry first.

*The Chairman:* The idea is to give every facility.

87. *The Chairman.*] You have heard what has taken place, Mr. Mackay?—Yes.

*Mr. Duthie:* Were you aware of these alterations taking place, Mr. Mackay? Have you a general knowledge of them?—No.

88. *Mr. Pirani.*] Did you take sufficient notice to answer that the interpolations were necessary to explain the context?—It was necessary some additions should be made to the manuscript in order to complete the matter.

89. That as the proofs were supplied to Mr. Leslie they were not complete, and that something was necessary to make them so. The proofs were an exact copy, I understand, of your copy, and something was needed to make sense in very many cases?—A blank was left for something to come in later.

90. If you were to have to go to press with the evidence as supplied in manuscript, you would say the thing itself was not complete?—I should say so.

91. *Mr. Pirani.*] You would say it was not a complete report of the evidence?—Not with the blanks left.

92. *Mr. Duthie.*] The reader could be able to say whether there has been anything unnecessarily put in?—He could tell you there were certain blanks. He could read the context, and in the course of paragraphs such as “That Mr. So-and-so said—(Horowhenua was in such a position, &c.)—” he would know that matter for these blanks would come in later.

93. *Mr. Pirani.*] He could not tell whether all supplied was correct?—No.

94. Do you remember if this was read by more than one man?—More than one.

95. Is the whole of the matter printed?—No.

96. *Mr. Hogg.*] Is there anything in the shape of new matter being introduced?—As far as I am aware, all the new matter appears to be simply extracts.

97. There have been no alterations to the matter as far as you are aware?—No.

98. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] Mr. Leslie said he understood the printing of the report was not sanctioned by the Minister. Have you had any instructions from the Minister or myself in connection with the printing of this report?—The only time I spoke to you was when you asked that other reports should be pushed on. I told you it was delaying our work.

99. Did I tell you this must be pushed on? I told you this was asked for, and should be urged on.

*Mr. Leslie:* I think you misunderstand me. What I said was, “I understood this was to be printed immediately it was handed in, but I understood the printed matter was not to be printed.”

103. *Sir Maurice O'Rorke.*] Do you know that any one else except Mr. Leslie was supervising the printing of these papers?—No.

104. There was no interference by any one outside?—No; it was entirely on that letter I received from Mr. Otterson.

105. *The Chairman.*] Re colouring plans, Mr. Mackay, whom did you consult?—Mr. Leslie.

106. *Mr. Leslie.*] It is a fact, is it not, that you were particularly anxious that any plans that could be printed in only one colour should be so printed?—I put it that if one colour would be sufficient, it seemed an unnecessary expense putting on three colours, unless referred to in the evidence, when, if so, I thought it should be printed in colours.

107. It was entirely at your request that I interfered in the matter at all?—Yes.

108. *The Chairman.*] To facilitate the matter?—

*Mr. Leslie:* Yes.

*Mr. Duthie* moved: “That the evidence before the Horowhenua Commission had been sent in with several blanks, arising principally from the want of quotations and of Maori names. This irregularity is explained on the plea of urgency to send in the report, and apparently was done in all good faith. Permitting the completions of the text after it was laid on the table of the House was a still more culpable proceeding, against which all officers concerned should be emphatically cautioned; but, as no additions have been interpolated, nor has the accuracy of the evidence been affected, the Committee recommend that no further action is necessary, and that the Chairman report accordingly.”

*Mr. Pirani* thought the Committee should call Mr. Otterson to give evidence as to whether he was told these interpolations were going to be made, and if he considered it was not desirable that they should be laid on the table. We cannot caution Mr. Otterson if we do not hear him.

*The Chairman.*] Did Mr. Leslie say the evidence was incomplete?

*Mr. Pirani:* Yes.

*Sir Maurice O'Rorke:* I suppose Mr. Otterson employed Mr. Leslie to do it because he was the secretary.

*Mr. Pirani:* From what I can see, the Native Department asked Mr. Leslie to do it, and Mr. Otterson asked Mr. Leslie.

*Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones:* We want to know who is responsible for the additions to the evidence after being laid on the table, and we want to know whether the Chairman of the Commission was responsible for it being laid on the table of the House before it was complete.

Mr. H. OTTERSON examined.

109. *Sir Maurice O'Rorke.*] Mr. Otterson, the Committee would like to know how it was you came to employ Mr. Leslie for the printing of these papers?—I was not his employer. Mr. Leslie came and told me he had been instructed to read all the proofs. He said he could not obtain the proofs without a formal order. I sent a note to the Printer then. He (Mr. Leslie) was instructed, he informed me, by the Native Department, and came and told me, and, knowing he had been secretary and reporter to the Commission, I thought he would not be a bad man to do the work.

110. It is said you gave some sanction to filling in the blanks?—I saw none of the blanks. He asked me what was the practice, and I told him that extracts from books or other unimportant blanks could be filled in, but that anything important would have to be laid on the table.

111. *Mr. Duthie.*] Is that your practice, Mr. Otterson?—Yes.

112. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] After the report has been laid on the table you allow these additions to be made?—Any little thing a reporter has not been able to take down. In the Midland Railway report, for instance, there were no end of such blanks. I told Mr. Leslie to be very careful; in fact, the Printer sent up to me and asked whether he could, as is usual, put in a copy of the Commission signed by the Governor. I said, “Do not put it in if it has not been laid on the table.”

113. *Sir Maurice O'Rorke.*] You yourself had no personal exercise in the supervision?—It was taken out of our hands. We had no sessional reader, owing to one not having yet been appointed. During the recess I supervise the principal part of the reading.

114. *Mr. Duthie.*] Is there no reader?—There is an extra clerk employed to do the reading during the session.

115. Who is appointed?—Mr. Lowe.

116. *Mr. Pirani.*] Is there no inconvenience through not having a permanent reader?—Yes, although at present we have a very good extra clerk to do the work. He, however, cannot be depended upon to attend every session at his present rate of pay, and without fixity of appointment.

117. What does he get?—15s. per day.

118. *The Chairman.*] Mr. Otterson, is there a precedent for reports being laid on the table of the House in an incomplete form?—Yes, many. This one was sent off to the Printer in a great hurry, and I do not know how incomplete it was.

119. *Mr. Pirani.*] Mr. Otterson, should an extract like this one be laid on the table of the House [one produced—extract from Sir W. Buller's speech]?—Yes, apparently so. But I could not say positively without reading the context.

*Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones* moved: "That Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. J. C. Martin, Chairman of the Commission, be asked to attend before this Committee."

*Mr. Pirani.*] The only objection, we are really very busy, and unless there is something to be gained it seems a shame to waste any more time over this, and it is a matter of great importance, especially to an officer employed in the House, and an answer should be given from the Committee to-day if possible.

*Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] I want to know who is responsible for these papers being handed over to the Minister with all these blanks left in them.

*Mr. Duthie.*] I suppose the Chairman would not know.

*Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] I want to know what passed between the Chairman and the secretary.

*Sir Maurice O'Rorke* did not think the evidence showed who was responsible. The officers of the department seemed to have interfered with Mr. Otterson.

*Mr. Pirani.*] It seems to me it was an encroachment made by the Native Department in appointing Mr. Leslie to supervise.

*Mr. Duthie.*] The fault is, Mr. Otterson had no right to recognise instructions from the Native Department.

The Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones' amendment was put and lost, Mr. Duthie's motion as afore-mentioned agreed to.

FRIDAY, 17TH JULY, 1896.

Mr. J. C. MARTIN, S.M., examined.

120. *The Chairman.*] You, I believe, Mr. Martin, were a member of the Horowhenua Commission?—I was.

121. When did that commission make its report?—I could not tell from memory. I was in Court till six o'clock last night, when I received your clerk's request, and I have not had time to look up the papers. I think it was about the 26th May.

122. The Commission became *functus officio* on the report being handed in?—Yes.

123. Did you see or supervise the printing of the report?—No; I have not seen the report or any documents in connection with it after it left my hands.

124. Are you aware whether the evidence was taken *in extenso*?—It was not.

125. In what way was it not done so?—The different persons in asking questions of the witnesses would, as a sort of preface to their questions, or in order to draw the witnesses' attention to the particular matter, read something to the witness. For instance, take Mr. Fraser when cross-examining Mr. Kemp; he said, "You gave evidence. I will read you what you said," &c.

126. As a matter of fact, it would not be taken down; it would be part of the question?—Yes.

127. Would you consider it part of the evidence of the Commission?—Yes, part of it.

128. Are you aware whether that was done?—I believe there were some few instances where it was not done.

129. Was your authority ever subsequently asked in the way of filling in these blanks?—No.

130. Was Mr. Leslie connected with the Commission in any way?—Yes, as secretary and shorthand-writer.

131. Did Mr. Leslie see you on any occasion after the report was handed in?—I believe, three times. Once he came to me with a plan, and I think he had other papers in his hand at the same time. He came to my office and told me the Government Printer wished to know whether he might print all these plans on one sheet of paper. I told Mr. Leslie, "I have nothing to do with the matter; you can print them on one piece of paper or not, it is a matter of indifference to me. You had better get directions from whoever instructed you." But I said, "Where did you get those plans? I do not recognise them." Mr. Leslie said he did not know; he had simply been asked that question.

132. As to other occasions?—Mr. Leslie came in on another occasion and said, "I have found out where these plans came from I was speaking to you about the other day." He said they were the plans on the deeds; and I think that was all that passed on that occasion.

133. Was there a third occasion?—Yes. Mr. Leslie came to me and said the Speaker and members were being bothered by members who were anxious to get the report from the Printer, and the Printer said it was the plans that were taking the time, and the printing might go in with-

out the plans. Again I said it was no business of mine, and I absolutely declined to say anything about it. But I said, "You may tell the Speaker, and any one else that asks you, that I think the report will be utterly unintelligible unless the plans go in."

134. Then, on all occasions, I understand, Mr. Martin, you declined to give any opinion?—Yes.

135. Have you any recollection of what purported to be an extract of an address by Sir Walter Buller made at the bar of the House—I think, read by Mr. Fraser?—I could not tell from memory. I was watching very carefully to see that this Horowhenua business would not drift into a political atmosphere. Sir Walter Buller was trying to make the best he could of it, and from first to last I was watching to see that it did not drift into a political question. Sir Walter Buller and others were continually quoting from speeches, *Hansard*, &c.

136. You stated the evidence would not be completed unless the blanks were filled in?—Yes.

137. *Mr. Hogg.*] Mr. Martin, when the Commission had finished its work, the report was drawn up, and the evidence left your hands, did you believe that evidence was complete?—The evidence did not leave my hands when the report was drawn up. The train and steamer were going to leave on the Tuesday morning, and Mr. Leslie had been unable to supply all these extracts, which had been left with the space for them at that time. Mr. Bush, of course, could not leave here until the report was out of our hands, and we finished the report on the Monday night, and, as Mr. Leslie had not had time to collect all these blanks, it was arranged that we should send in the report and give Mr. Leslie more time to complete his transcript of the evidence. So it was arranged we should send our report in, and in doing so tell the Premier that Maori names and extracts had to be checked, and that the evidence would be forwarded in due course. The report went in to the Premier, but the evidence did not come forward for some time, because Mr. Leslie wanted to see Mr. Morison, who was not in town, and also to have the matter checked. The matter rested for some days, and I was anxious to get the evidence sent in, lest some accident might take place, and, after a reasonable time, I told Mr. Leslie if he could not get the information it must be forwarded without it. I said, "In any case where you have not been able to get the blanks filled you must simply put 'extract read' in brackets." In due course I received from Mr. Leslie what I understood was the whole of the evidence completed, and sent it on to the Premier.

138. *Mr. G. Hutchison.*] Not the whole of the evidence—the evidence with these blanks?—The evidence with these blanks.

139. *Mr. Lang.*] I understand you to say, Mr. Martin, if the report had gone in without these plans it would be unintelligible?—Yes, we were constantly referring in the reports to numbers and sections, and members without a plan would not have been able to follow it. We had the whole of the land valued, and the valuers had it cut up into sections on a plan which they made, with the sections numbered, and without their plan their evidence would have been quite unintelligible.

140. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] You say the report was handed in about the 26th?—About the 27th.

141. About how many days after you finished your work on the Commission, after taking the evidence?—I should think, a fortnight or three weeks, but I really have not had time to look up papers with regard to it.

142. And the Commission had been sitting about how long?—From the 6th March, I think, and we finished, I think, on the 15th May—more than two months.

143. I suppose some of this matter that had to be supplied was in the earlier part of the evidence?—That is quite possible.

144. You did not know where the blanks were?—No.

145. Did Mr. Leslie complain to you?—Mr. Leslie complained to me several times during the sittings. We were sitting very long hours, and Mr. Leslie explained it would take four to five hours to transcribe one hour's shorthand, and that we should have to wait a considerable time for the transcript. We wanted to sit from 9.30 to 5.30 and again in the evening. I wrote to Mr. Seddon, and he sent me another reporter up.

146. It was said Mr. Leslie asked for more time over and over again. That was presumably between the time he asked you and the application made for the report?—After we had finished our sittings Mr. Leslie did ask for more time, and we gave it. He wanted more time. We said, "No, the thing must be finished"; with the result Mr. Leslie got assistance.

147. He got assistance during the two or three weeks?—Yes.

148. You gave instructions finally, where these blanks occurred, "Extract read" was to be put in, not that the matter was to be supplied?—Yes, I am quite clear and positive about that. When this matter cropped up the other day Mr. Leslie came to me and asked if I could charge my memory with what had passed, and he then appeared to be under the impression he was to supply these blanks. I pointed out to him that he was in error, that I could not understand his being under such an impression, and that he must know that once the matter had gone to the Premier it was out of our hands, and we were "dead." I knew Mr. McKerrow's recollection agreed with mine, and I telegraphed to Mr. Bush [telegram produced]:—

"R. S. Bush, S.M., Auckland.—Did you understand Leslie had any liberty to alter or in any way deal with transcript evidence after he delivered it us as complete, and we forwarded it Premier?—(Signed) James C. Martin, S.M."

[Reply.]

"Mr. R. S. Bush to Mr. J. C. Martin.—Certainly not to whole of your wire.—R. S. BUSH, S.M., Auckland."

151. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] Mr. Bush says, "Certainly not"?—I am speaking very positively, and I say that there could be no misunderstanding. How could I sanction anything after it was beyond my control? We were very particular that the evidence should not be added to or altered in any way. After the evidence was all complete, Sir Walter Buller came and asked if he might add or correct something he had said; but we said, No; if he wished to add to his evidence or explain, he could write and say what he wanted, and we would attach his letter to the evidence,



but nothing must be altered. He subsequently asked us to let him look through his evidence, and we then told him, "If you find anything wrong, you are not to alter it there, but you can write, and we will forward your letter with the evidence."

152. *The Chairman.*] As Mr. Seddon is the complainant, and has been summoned and requested to attend, perhaps he would like to ask something from Mr. Martin.

153. *Hon. the Premier.*] I feel somewhat aggrieved at my presence having been taken exception to, and I do not wish this morning to appear as though I was unwarrantably interfering, and I object to it being said that I am the complainant. I simply brought the matter under the notice of the House, it being my duty. I certainly would like to put a question to Mr. Martin, but would not like to interfere with the proceedings of the Committee.

154. *Mr. Duthie.*] Mr. Chairman, is this right or regular? The Government is represented by the Minister for Public Works—

155. *Mr. Chairman.*] The position is this: As a matter of order, Mr. Seddon, or any other Minister, would not as a matter of right be entitled to come here and ask any questions; but as a matter of courtesy it is all right. If there are any questions he wishes to put I think the Committee should get them.

156. *Hon. Mr. Seddon* (to witness).] When you gave instructions, Mr. Martin, to put "Extract read," and sent the evidence thus marked to the Government, did you not consider what was read was material?—To tell the truth, there were a lot of side-issues; but the real points were very few. There was a mass of material, and the evidence, except with respect to Maori genealogy, was very irrelevant.

157. *Mr. Pirani.*] Was the evidence, as far as possible, sent to the Government complete?—Yes.

158. These are some of the alterations and additions taken from the report [produced]: will you kindly look at them, Mr. Martin?—I do not understand these: "that Mr. Carroll was asked so-and-so." Mr. Carroll was not up at Horowhenua, and I do not know what these mean.

*Mr. Pirani:* This is an extract supplied from somebody else's evidence.

*Hon. the Premier:* There are two marked there [produced]: there is a question and an answer put in?—I cannot identify these, Sir; the evidence is too voluminous to remember these.—"Block 14: Why was not 14 returned to the people?—Because the people agreed that this should be Major Kemp's allotment." That question strikes me as being asked half a dozen times. The same questions were asked over and over again.

*Mr. Pirani:* Mr. Martin said he did not think those things read and not supplied were material.

*Hon. the Premier:* My question was, where blanks were left?—I do not think they were material.

159. *Mr. Pirani.*] Supposing a question was put, "What do you think of the following extract from Sir Walter Buller's speech?" and if that extract was not put in?—It was a perfect matter of indifference what a witness thought.

160. Was it material to that man's own questions?—Yes.

161. Was anything put in and read at the inquiry, or left out?—I could not say.

162. Did not you think Mr. Leslie would be the most competent man to fill up these blanks?—Certainly.

163. It would be very difficult for a new man to do what was required?—Yes.

164. *Mr. Duthie.*] In sending in that evidence, was a covering letter sent with it?—Yes.

165. Did you draw attention to it?—I cannot remember. The first letter was sent in with our report, and we then told the Premier we were keeping back the evidence, and that something had to be done to complete the evidence.

166. After the evidence was sent in, did you draw attention to another irregularity?—The covering letter will speak for itself; I do not remember what was said in it.

[Mr. Carncross, on the motion of Mr. Pirani, voted to the chair.]

167. *Mr. Pirani.*] Mr. Martin, do you think that the addition of that extract, No. 12, slip 41 [produced], was relevant?

*Mr. Martin:* Has this all been interpolated?

169. *Mr. Pirani.*] Yes. Was it right to put that in?—From my point of view, as Chairman of the Commission, no one had any right to deal with these documents except by instructions from the House.

170. What we want to know is, whether that would make the evidence complete, or whether, with a view to making the evidence complete, that should be left out?—That speaks for itself. Instead of a sheet of paper coming before you with "Extract read," the extract read was set out.

171. *Mr. Duthie.*] Do you think that it was a general extract?—Yes. Kemp alleged that Section 14 belonged to himself. He was asked, "Did not this section belong to Whatanui's people?" "Yes," he said, "but they selected another section." Neither of the extracts produced falsify the evidence.

172. *Mr. Willis.*] Do the extracts sent in make any material difference to the evidence?—No.

173. Are you still of the same opinion, after seeing the proofs, that it was the same?—I do not think it would make the slightest difference whether the questions were left in or out.

174. *Mr. Pirani.*] Question 278, Mr. Martin?—This is a very good illustration of the utility or otherwise of this sort of evidence. This meeting of 1870 was a meeting the Natives held amongst themselves on the shore of Lake Horowhenua, at which they appointed a little Parliament or Committee of their own. They came to some decisions which nobody took any notice of.

175. Was anything put in?—Nothing so far as I have seen.

176. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] The one you say you cannot identify was on page 5?—Yes.

177. *Mr. Pirani.*] You do not think there is anything improper about this one?—No.

178. Question 165a, page 167: You do not think that that was putting the evidence in a different light, interpolating that?—I do not know.

179. Question 181, on page 168: I would like to ask Mr. Martin whether the question there would not be utter nonsense without the extract being read?—The retainer was read at the commencement of the inquiry, and that retainer was in evidence lying on our table, and so there to speak for itself.

180. Without those words being put in the evidence, would it be utter nonsense?—Yes.

181. *Mr. Duthie.*] I suppose your memory cannot carry you back—it would be a matter of calling other witnesses?—I should think, Mr. Fraser; and this it would be better to get from Mr. Leslie.

182. In a matter of this sort the work would be very tedious?—Yes.

183. *Mr. Hogg.*] You have seen some of these extracts now filled in?—Yes.

184. Did these extracts in your opinion affect the inquiry? Were they relative?—I do not think they were.

185. They did not seem to have much bearing on the subject?—I do not think, if members read the report and evidence, they will find they were of the slightest consequence at all.

186. They do not weigh at all?—No.

187. *Mr. Lang.*] I understood you to say, if these extracts were not inserted they would make the questions meaningless?—Yes.

188. *The Chairman.*] Mr. Martin, you have read these extracts. In your opinion, has any injustice been inflicted by the interpolation of unnecessary information?—No. There is one matter I should in justice to Mr. Leslie mention. I have heard it said that Mr. Leslie has been suspected of improperly and for improper motives—in plain words, that he has been “got at” by Sir Walter Buller. I should like to say Mr. Leslie occupied a very confidential position; he heard us discussing matters between ourselves; he had the sole charge of these papers. Mr. Leslie knew some days before our report was sent in what it was going to be, and not a word leaked out; and I believe he is thoroughly trustworthy. I cannot make a stronger declaration than to say, if I had reason to employ a shorthand-writer for myself or my family, and wished the matter to be absolutely confidential, I should have no hesitation in employing Mr. Leslie. If he were otherwise, I believe that he would not be such an utter fool as to allow himself to be tampered with. For Mr. Leslie, when he transcribed his evidence, copied it out in duplicate, and he knew that, whilst one copy went to the Premier, the other was in my possession. If Mr. Leslie has made a mistake, I feel certain it has been an honest mistake, made in order to make the thing as complete as possible.

189. Mr. Martin, have you got a duplicate copy?—I cannot say that it is an exact duplicate, because the extracts filled in by Mr. Leslie have not been filled in in it.

*The Chairman:* At this stage I should like to read a letter from Sir Walter Buller to myself:—

“DEAR SIR,—

“In to-night's *Evening Post* the Premier is reported to have said in the House yesterday that ‘the paragraph inserted was in Sir Walter Buller's evidence, and was put in by that gentleman's instructions.’ Mr. Seddon spoke under a misapprehension of the facts. I gave no instructions whatever to Mr. Leslie, and, so far as I am aware, my evidence is left untouched. Mr. Leslie applied to me in reference to a passage quoted by me in my examination of a witness, and I gave him the information asked for. He already had the catch-word and could take the passage. I should be happy to give evidence on the point if the Committee should desire it.

“I am, truly yours,

“W. L. BULLER.

“To the Hon. Major Steward, Chairman of the Reporting and Debates Committee.”

190. *Mr. Leslie.*] With reference to the printing of these documents, Mr. Martin, you remember, some time before I handed the report and evidence to you, I mentioned Mr. Sheridan would probably require me to see to the printing?—Yes.

191. Do you remember whether I mentioned to you I was going to recommend the printing to be put in hand right away?—I cannot remember whether you or Mr. Sheridan told me. There was an idea that the papers might be put straight into the Printing Office. Either you or Mr. Sheridan suggested we should have our report printed straight away. I cannot remember whether you suggested it or Mr. Sheridan.

192. You remember my mentioning I had a number of extracts and Maori names to get from Mr. Morison? You know I wanted Mr. Morison's assistance?—Yes.

193. I told you he had gone away to a Native Land Court at Hastings or somewhere?—You told me he was going, and that you had tried several times and could not get him.

194. There was one occasion when I made an appointment to get a paper and I missed seeing him, and he went away. I told you it would be some time before I could see him?—Yes.

195. Do you know whether I suggested at about that time if I could not see Mr. Morison I should make the correction I wanted in the Printing Office?—No; but on one occasion I think you, Mr. Bush, and I were walking down to the Government Buildings from the Parliament Buildings. I remember we were laughing and talking about these Maori names, and whether people would be able to distinguish between them, and you said, “If I supervise the printing it will give another opportunity of checking it.” I am not sure when that was said. It was a casual conversation.

196. Still, that showed you I had an idea of making these corrections while the other was going through and being printed?—Yes.

197. Do you consider that it was in consequence of any negligence on my part these were not handed in to you?—No; assuming you told me the truth when you told me Mr. Morison had to go out of town; if that were correct—and I have no reason to doubt you.

198. It has been insinuated, and plainly stated in this morning's paper, in connection with the Horowhenua Commission, I must have been either incompetent or negligent. Would you mind giving the Committee your opinion?—With regard to the incompetency, neither my colleague nor myself found anything wrong with your work; and I do remember Mr. McDonald, I think, certainly Sir Walter Buller, and I fancy some one else interested, mentioning in conversation what very excellent notes were taken by Leslie; and, with regard to the negligence, I know nothing of any negligence.

199. You saw me constantly during the time I was taking the whole of the work from start to finish, and you were quite satisfied I was working properly?—I had no reason to doubt it at all. There was an immense amount of work.

200. There was an immense amount of evidence?—Yes.

201. Several times you asked me to work on Sundays and holidays?—Yes; I was very anxious to get the thing out of my hands.

202. *The Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] There was no idea on your part that the report should be corrected after it went through the Printing Office or was laid upon the table?—No; such an idea was never in my mind, nor Mr. McKerrow's, nor Mr. Bush's.

203. *Mr. Pirani.*] As you said, to do it would be utter nonsense?—It is a dangerous thing to alter what has been said.

204. To put in what has been left out?—If it is an extract.

205. *Mr. Leslie.*] Is it the case or not that you understood that I would have preferred longer time in order to complete these papers?—Yes; you wanted longer time and I would not have it. Our report was in, and it was desirable that the evidence should be put into safe custody.

206. You remember, during the evidence being given I was frequently applied to by persons to be allowed to look at papers?—Yes.

207. On every occasion, so far as you know, I referred the matter immediately to you, and never allowed any one to come to the room without your permission?—Yes.

208. When we came down here, I reported that Sir Walter Buller wanted to see his evidence?—Yes.

209. You have seen me living for two months in the same house with Sir Walter Buller, and do you think I have had anything to do with Sir Walter Buller as insinuated?—I have already said "No."

210. *Mr. Pirani.*] Do you think it was negligence on Mr. Leslie's part not getting these extracts at the time?—I suppose, if you look at it from the highest point, Mr. Leslie should have reported every word; but I think it would be an absurd position to take.

211. Do you know whether that is the rule?—No, I do not. I know it is not my practice in taking notes of evidence if documents are read. I merely refer to them so as to identify them.

212. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] Since laying the report on the table of the House, have you given Mr. Leslie any instructions to supervise the printing of this report?—No. I had nothing to do with it; it was taken out of my hands when forwarded to the Premier.

213. Has Mr. Leslie called upon you or you upon him?—Only on the occasions I have mentioned.

214. *Mr. Leslie.*] Mr. Martin, I mentioned to you, I think, Mr. Sheridan said he required me to superintend the printing about a week before the report went in. Was there no conversation between you and me about terms?—I rather understood from the conversation that somebody would be required to superintend the printing, and that it would be a very good thing for Mr. Leslie if he could get it—it would be a small fee for him; and that he was desirous of getting it, and Mr. Sheridan would help him if he could.

215. That is all correct assuming the report would be printed?—Yes.

Mr. P. SHERIDAN examined.

216. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] After the report was laid on the table, did you give any authority to Mr. Leslie to deal with that report or make any alterations?—I had a printed proof-copy of the report only. I noticed one or two apparently printers' errors in it; I sent a note, not to Mr. Leslie, but to Mr. Hackworth, requesting him to call attention to them. Mr. Leslie came to see me about them afterwards and informed me that they had been corrected; they were, as I have already stated, printers' errors only. That is all the conversation I had with him on the subject of alterations.

217. Are you quite clear that after the evidence was laid on the table you gave no authority to touch that evidence?—I have never seen the original report or evidence. I was very clear with Mr. Leslie in telling him the whole thing was out of my hands and that I could not interfere with him at all now. It was the duty of the officers of the House, to whom I referred him, to see to the printing.

218. Did Mr. Leslie come to you?—He did. He asked me if he was to do the reading or if it would be done by the department. I told him the thing was entirely out of my hands, and I could not interfere. He said, "May I tell the officers of the House you said I was to do it?" I said, "Certainly not; it is entirely out of my hands." Then he said, "May I tell Mr. Friend you sent me to him?" I said, "No." He then said, "May I tell him of the previous arrangement you intended to make with me?" and I said "Yes."

219. If, when the report was laid on the table, Mr. Leslie went to Mr. Otterson for authority to get the report from the Printing Office by your instructions, would that be correct?—He had no authority from me to do so, but I would have availed myself of his services had the duty of correcting proofs devolved upon me. Except as regards printers' errors I had no conversation with Mr. Leslie on the subject of alterations.

220. *Mr. Pirani.*] If Mr. Leslie went to Mr. Otterson and told him you had made arrangements, or were willing to make arrangements, with him to superintend the printing, provided the department had to see to it, would you say that was correct?—Yes.

221. If, in consequence, Mr. Otterson considered Mr. Leslie the most competent person to do it, would he be right?—I think Mr. Leslie could do it better than a stranger, as the notes and typewriting were his own. That was why I intended to employ him if the duty had devolved upon the department. If the report and evidence had been printed under supervision of the department I would have been responsible for corrections of final revise.

222. Do you think you are in a position to speak with authority as to whether Mr. Leslie was the most suitable person to do this work?—He would be the most competent.

223. *Mr. Leslie.*] Yes, when I heard the House had ordered these documents to be printed I saw Mr. Otterson, told him that if your department had to do the printing I was to have looked after the work?—That would be right. I intended you to correct proofs in conjunction with myself.

224. *Mr. Pirani.*] Then you think there was nothing improper in Mr. Leslie saying to Mr. Otterson you would have intrusted him if you had had power?—Certainly not. I have found him honourable and straightforward throughout.

225. You think there was nothing improper in him giving Mr. Otterson the impression you thought him the most competent person to do the work?—Nothing whatever. The only reason I could not make that representation myself was that it would have the appearance of interfering in a matter which did not concern me.

226. It would be thought you were interfering with another man's work.—Yes.

227. You do not think Mr. Otterson did the wrong thing in employing Mr. Leslie to do the work, and there was nothing out of the way in Mr. Leslie being employed to do the work: Do you confirm all that?—If the duty devolved upon myself I would have selected Mr. Leslie in preference to any other person.

*Mr. Pirani:* It has been said Mr. Leslie told a lie in saying you considered him the best man to do the work.

228. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] You gave no authority to Mr. Leslie to make alterations, Mr. Sheridan?—No. I have never seen the alterations nor the original report and evidence, and do not now know what the alterations were.

229. You would not be competent to speak as to the alterations?—No.

230. *Mr. Pirani.*] You think that if you and he had revised the evidence together you would have done what has been done?—Of course, if anything material had had to be put in I would have consulted Mr. Martin.

231. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] If Mr. Martin told you to put in "Extract read," what would you have done?—I would have put in "Extract read."

232. *The Chairman.*] If it had been left in your hands you would have employed Mr. Leslie?—Yes.

233. *Mr. Leslie.*] Did I see you between the time the papers were laid on the table and the time I saw Mr. Otterson?—That would be the time you came to me, and I told you I could not interfere, as the thing was entirely out of my hands.

234. I do not remember having done so. My impression is, the very afternoon the Horowhenua papers were laid on the table I took five minutes from my work and went down to see Mr. Otterson, and told him of our previous conversation. It was not till some days afterwards I saw you?—You certainly came to me and asked if you might tell Mr. Friend that I said you were to supervise. I said, "Certainly not." Then you said, "May I tell him you sent me?" I said, "No." Then you said, "May I tell him of the arrangement you intended to make with me had the matter rested with you?" I said, "Yes."

## APPENDIX.

### LETTERS READ BY MR. MARTIN.

SIR,—

Horowhenua Commission, 4th June, 1896.

I have the honour to forward under separate cover the transcript of the shorthand-writer's notes of the evidence given before the Horowhenua Commission, and also exhibits. The exhibits are originals, and I have to ask that they may, when finished with, be returned to Mr. Hackworth, who will deliver them to the persons who produced them.

The Hon. the Premier.

I have, &c.,

J. C. MARTIN, Chairman.

SIR,—

Horowhenua Commission, 25th May, 1896.

We have the honour to forward, for transmission to His Excellency, our report in connection with Horowhenua.

Extracts and names in the evidence have to be checked, and when this has been done the evidence will be forwarded to you.

We have, &c.,

The Hon. the Premier.

J. C. MARTIN,

R. S. BUSH,

J. C. McKERROW,

} Commissioners.

### EXTRACTS REFERRED TO IN EVIDENCE.

Slip 41, No. 12: "Mr. Carroll asked, 'Was not the Horowhenua Block 14 set apart by the tribe, and put in the name of Major Kemp for the Whatanui family?'—No; it was first of all cut off by Major Kemp and offered to the descendants of Te Whatanui, but they refused to accept it. Major Kemp gave them another selection, and it was agreed that he should keep this as his own allotment."

Page 167, question 165a: "*Mr. Fraser:* Here is a telegram from Mr. W. Buller to the Hon. W. Fox:—

'Wanganui Station, 30th June, 1871.

'Just received telegram from Ihakara of Manawatu, of which the following is a translation: "Your men, Kemp and Kawana Hunia, have arrived at Horowhenua; they have burnt down the houses of ———; Ngatiraukawa and the Ngatiapa have gone back to fetch guns. Send word to the Magistrates of Manawatu to stop the guns, lest there be trouble.—From Ihakara, Tukumara."

'W. BULLER, R.M.'"

You remember the circumstance, I suppose?—I do not remember the circumstance at all. I have no distinct recollection of the trouble."

Page 168, question 181: "We hereby appoint Sir Walter Buller our solicitor in regard to the Horowhenua matter, and we hereby authorise him to take such steps as he may think fit for the assertion of our rights to the 15,000 acre block or any other part of the Horowhenua Estate."

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