

Mr. Hislop requested that he might appear for Mr. John Hutcheson, M.H.R., who had first mentioned the allegations of irregularity in the House. But, as no charges before the Commission were laid by Mr. Hutcheson, the request was refused. Subsequently Mr. Hislop reappeared with a list of charges made by Mr. Pirani, M.H.R., and was permitted to appear in respect of certain of them, and to examine any of the witnesses called.

The following are the charges as laid before us :—

GENTLEMEN,—

Wellington, 11th July, 1899.

I beg to hand to you certain charges which I make against the Right Hon. R. J. Seddon and the Hon. Wm. Hall-Jones, and I request that you will be pleased to investigate the same.

I have, &c.,

The Commissioners appointed to Inquire into Certain  
Matters relating to the Marine Department.

FRED. PIRANI.

That the Right Hon. Richard John Seddon, on or about the 17th day of April, 1897, then knowing that one James Jones had not performed the service entitling him to a certificate of service under subsection (1) of section 34 of "The Shipping and Seamen's Act Amendment Act, 1894," endeavoured to procure the issue of such certificate to the said James Jones by representing to the Hon. Hall-Jones, who was then Minister of Marine, that the said James Jones was entitled to such certificate of service, whereas he well knew that the said James Jones was not so entitled.

2. That the said Richard John Seddon, knowing that the said James Jones was not entitled either to a certificate of service under the section aforesaid or to a certificate of competency under "The Shipping and Seamen's Act, 1877," boasted to the said James Jones, after the issue of a certificate of competency, that he (the said Richard John Seddon) had been able to procure the same.

3. That the said Richard John Seddon, after it had been alleged that irregularities had taken place in granting certificates either of service or of competency, denied during the session of Parliament of 1898, in his place in the House of Representatives, that any irregularity had taken place, although he knew that the said James Jones had received a certificate in contravention of law, inasmuch as he (the said Richard John Seddon) knew that the said James Jones had not performed the services entitling him to a certificate of service before described, and that he was not entitled to be examined for competency as a master, inasmuch as he never was the holder of a mate's certificate and had not performed the requisite service.

4. That the said Richard John Seddon, with a view to preventing the true circumstances attending the procuring of a certificate of competency by the said James Jones being known, stated, in or about the month of February last, to the Press Association in Dunedin that he had, prior to the granting of a certificate of competency to the said James Jones, had no conversation with the said Hall-Jones, and that he had not written to him, and, further, that the first that he knew of Captain Jones or his examination was after a speech was made in the House of Representatives by one John Hutcheson, whereas he at the time knew that he had communicated by telegram with the said Hall-Jones, urging him to grant a certificate of service to the said James Jones, and was aware prior to such speech that the said James Jones had, in contravention of law, received a master's certificate.

5. That certificates had been improperly issued to certain persons named in the telegram of the 17th April, 1897, sent by the said Richard John Seddon to the said William Hall-Jones, and that the said Richard John Seddon took no steps to initiate the proceedings necessary to cancel the same.

That the Hon. William Hall-Jones, in or about the month of , then being Minister of Marine, wrongfully used his power to order that one James Jones should be examined in order that he might procure a certificate of competency entitling him to a master mariner's certificate; whereas the said William Hall-Jones knew that the said James Jones was not entitled to be allowed to be examined or to receive, though he should pass an examination successfully, such certificate, he not then being the holder of a mate's certificate and not having performed the requisite service.

That the Hon. William Hall-Jones, knowing that such certificate had been granted, for a long time suffered the said James Jones to retain the same without protest or taking the necessary steps to recall the same; and, further, that he, on being questioned during the session of 1898 as to the existence of any irregularity in the granting of certificates in any case, denied that any irregularity had taken place, he then knowing of the circumstances aforesaid.

That the said William Hall-Jones, during the session of Parliament of 1898, induced one Captain Allman, being the Examiner who had improperly granted a certificate of competency to the said James Jones, by promises of support, to make an incorrect report of the circumstances, and, knowing that such report was incorrect, caused the same to be published—such report being known as "Captain Allman's first report"—thus retarding the steps necessary to be taken to have the certificate aforesaid annulled.

That the said William Hall-Jones, on or about the 26th day of February, 1899, with a view to preventing the true circumstances from being made known, sent a telegram to the Right Hon. Richard John Seddon stating that the said Richard John Seddon had had no conversation with the said William Hall-Jones as to the said James Jones, his certificate, or anything concerning him, whereas he knew at the time that he had received a telegram on such subject from the said Richard John Seddon dated the 17th day of April, 1897; and such telegram of the