

41. Yes; now, what about the £60,000?—The general imprest of £60,000 is money which, in the opinion of the Audit Office, is provided for payments chargeable to votes, but which it is not possible to charge to votes when the money is issued.

42. *Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] Does the Act say “in the judgment of the Audit Office”?—No; that is our opinion.

43. *Mr. J. Allen.*] What did you say just now?—A sum of money is issued by way of general imprest—that is to say, for general purposes—but such money is for authorised purposes.

44. *Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] It is a pretty fine distinction?—If you read that in connection with sections 47 and 48 it is impossible to comply with the law and to make a payment of unauthorised expenditure out of General Imprest, or except on a requisition issued under section 48, which section I read just now.

45. *Mr. J. Allen.*] With regard to this £60,000 of General Imprest: could not an unauthorised account be paid in London?—Not legally.

46. So there was no means, according to your judgment, to pay this amount of £3,000, except by a special bank order?—There was no means except by compliance with sections 47 and 48.

47. That is to say, out of unauthorised expenditure?—Yes.

48. How could you pay an unauthorised vote in London?—By providing a sum of money charged to Unauthorised Expenditure.

49. How would you provide that sum of money; there is no money in London to meet it, is there?—There is money in the Public Account in London.

50. There is no money that you could use to pay an unauthorised vote in London?—No; but the Treasury prepares a requisition, charging a sum of money to Unauthorised Expenditure Account, and sends with that requisition a bank order.

51. In your evidence the other day you said that this £3,000 is not the whole of the money that has been expended on account of the Coronation Contingent?—No; I stated there was a further payment.

52. A further payment of £1,500; has that gone through the same course as this £3,000?—The Audit Office is objecting to that now—is pointing out that that £1,500 is open to the same objection.

53. Was that paid in the same way—by order upon the Agent-General?—It was paid out of General Imprest.

54. Are those amounts all, or are there any other sums?—I do not know. The Audit Office has received up to the present an account for the £3,000, one for the £1,500, and one for a further sum of £1,000 paid on the 2nd July.

55. For the same purpose—the Coronation Contingent?—The £1,000 paid on the 2nd July would come under Imprest Supply. An imprest supply is in anticipation of appropriation.

56. Yes; but is it on account of the Coronation Contingent?—It is on the same account.

57. How much is there altogether, then?—That would be £5,500, so far as I have seen the accounts.

58. *Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] There will be more, of course?—I should say so.

59. *Mr. J. Allen.*] Would you mind reading the original draft—the whole of it?—I am not sure that I have every mark on this copy of it.

60. Read what you have got?—This is a copy that I made myself:—“Cape Town, 3rd June, 1902.—Exchange, £3,000.—At three days’ sight of, pay this first of exchange (second of the same terms and date not paid) to the order of the Standard Bank of South Africa (Limited) the sum of £3,000 sterling, value received, as authorised by cable on the 22nd May, 1902, from Paymaster-General, New Zealand.—New Zealand Government Agency (HERBERT PILCHER, Agent).—The Agent-General for New Zealand, Westminster Chambers, No. 13, Victoria Street, S.W., London.” “Accepted this 23rd day of June, 1902. Payable at the office of the Bank of New Zealand, 1, Queen Victoria Street, E.C., on the 28th June, 1902.—F. W. PALLISER, for Agent-General for New Zealand.” It is stamped “Paid, 30th June, 1902;” and then it bears a mark at the top “29th June.”

61. Will you raise the same objection with respect to the other amount?—No.

62. Why?—Because there is no need of unauthorised expenditure after the 30th June, until the Appropriation Act is passed.

63. Because of the imprest supply?—Yes.

64. You assume there will be an authorisation presently?—Yes. The Audit Office is not responsible for payments chargeable to Imprest Supply.

TUESDAY, 23RD SEPTEMBER, 1902.

Examination of J. K. WARBURTON, Controller and Auditor-General, continued. (No. 1.)

1. *Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] In the course of your evidence regarding Imprest Account, Mr. Warburton, I understood you to say that in the colony the Treasury prepares the requisition?—With regard to the general imprest.

2. A comparison was being made between the treatment of an imprest in London and New Zealand, and you made the distinction that in the colony the Treasury prepares the requisition?—The requisition is prepared by the Treasury—the Paymaster-General’s requisition.

3. Is it not a fact that the requisition is prepared by the Treasury after the details of the pay-