

question. The first question I put to Mr. Simpson was: "199. I will ask the shorthand-writer to read that portion of Captain Clark's evidence where he said that Mr. Simpson told him he was entitled to the gratuity for the five months. (The following extract from Captain Clark's statement was accordingly read by the shorthand-writer: 'I did not think I should obtain the gratuity for the five months, and when I made out the voucher I went down to the pay-office and inquired as to what I had better do—whether it would be obtainable up to the 28th February or not. They said, Certainly it would. They recommended me to claim for it, and told me to put in the voucher for that amount, which I did. It was solely on the recommendation of the officers of the Pay Department.')" You have heard Mr. Williams's explanation and Mr. Simpson's explanation, that there has been a misunderstanding—that they intended it to apply to the time you were in the Department?—It does not bear that interpretation to me.

109. The Chairman asks Question 210, "Supposing that he had been detailed off to five or six of the different contingents in South Africa, would you call the work for each of those contingents part of the contingent work?" Answer: "No; only the last one that he was in." That makes it clear what they advised you. Now, will you look at that voucher [Voucher produced]. Is that your signature?—Yes.

110. Did you put that claim in for the £4 a week?—Yes.

111. If, a day or two following, they had given you a cheque, I believe you would have considered yourself satisfactorily paid, leaving the question of rank an open one?—Yes; without prejudice to that position.

112. You would have taken that money?—Yes. The qualification is embodied in the voucher, "The question of my rank of captain being still under discussion, the lower rank is hereby claimed without prejudice to any subsequent claim for difference in rank for period marked A."

113. That voucher was put in in good faith, and, subject to that statement, you would have been satisfied?—Yes, for the period which it covers.

114. Were the officers you referred to—Colonel Abbott, Major O'Brien, and Captains Stevenson and Brown—in the pay of the New Zealand Government or the Imperial Government?—I think it came out in evidence that we were all in the pay of the Imperial Government—that the New Zealand Government pays nothing. I take it from that that they were in the pay of the Imperial Government.

115. If they have been paid, now that the matter has been drawn attention to, they will have to disgorge, I presume?—Well, that has been attempted in my case.

116. It would only be reasonable to make them disgorge?—Yes, if the same procedure were adopted with them as with me.

117. Are you aware that they have been notified to refund these payments?—I am not aware.

118. You say they have been paid?—I presume that they have. One of the officers who has gone to England said before he went Home that everything had been paid up.

119. Are you aware that the Auditor-General—if an officer is drawing an Imperial pension and goes to work in the service—stops the pension and allows pay for the service performed?—I am not aware of that.

120. If that is the case, it is exactly on a par with your case?—The pension would be on a par with the New Zealand gratuity, as we term it?

121. Yes?—I presume so.

F. BURTON MABIN recalled. (No. 5.)

122. *Right Hon. the Minister of Defence.*] In respect to the pay of £4 per week for work done in the Commandant's office, you have had military experience?—Yes.

123. You know the class of work that has been done in the compilation of the rolls?—I do.

124. What would be a fair value to pay for it?—It is certainly special work, and is worth, I would say, £4 a week—a little over that, perhaps.

125. What are you receiving?—Not quite that.

126. Do you think that your work requires as much experience, attention, anxiety, and thought as that class of work?—Yes; but, candidly speaking, I do not think I am receiving sufficient remuneration.

127. Have you in your service men who are receiving 10s. and 12s. a day who are equally competent to do this work?—Yes, 10s. and 10s. 6d.

128. And men who have had military experience?—Yes, and more perhaps than Captain Clark has had.

129. And they are receiving 10s. a day?—Yes, 10s. and 10s. 6d. a day.

130. You have heard something about pay being received by other officers?—Yes.

131. If they are in the same position as Captain Clark are they liable to be surcharged?—Yes. It is a question connected with the War Office, and we are asking for a refund in some cases.

132. *Mr. Taylor.*] Have any of them refunded?—In some cases we cannot get at them.

133. Can you tell us on how many occasions they have paid altogether?—No.

134. Have you made applications for fifty refunds?—I could not say.

135. How many have refunded?—Perhaps ten, or more.

136. Perhaps fifteen?—Yes.

137. What is the remedy for those who will not refund?—The law.

138. Will they be summoned?—Yes.

139. Are any of the clerks you refer to as receiving 10s. a day so qualified as Captain Clark? Have any of them the detailed knowledge of the members of the Seventh and other contingents that Captain Clark has?—Yes.

140. Was the employment offered to them?—I could not say, not being on the spot.

141. Supposing General Babington says that Captain Clark, in his opinion, was the most qualified man for the work, what would you say to that?—I would not back my opinion against his, or I could, as the case may be.