

CHARGES AGAINST THOMAS WALTER WEST.

We find as follows:—

(a.) That the accused committed a breach of the said Regulation No. 44, in that he, on or about the 31st July, 1905, at Christchurch, informed Messrs. Fisher and Taylor that a voucher for an amount exceeding £70, payable to Captain Seddon for reorganizing the Defence Stores at Wellington, had passed through the post-office at Christchurch.

(b.) That the accused committed a further breach of the said regulation in that he, on the 4th day of August, 1905, at Christchurch, made and caused to be delivered to Mr. Fisher, M.H.R., the following affidavit as to the existence of the said voucher:—

“I, Thomas Walter West, of the City of Christchurch, in New Zealand, a clerk in the General Post Office, make oath and say as follows:—

“1. That I am a clerk employed in the office of the Chief Postmaster at Christchurch.

“2. That some time during the year 1904, I saw a voucher made out in favour of R. J. S. Seddon, for the reorganization of Defence Stores.

“3. That such voucher was for an amount exceeding £70.

“T. W. WEST.

“Sworn at Christchurch, this 4th day of August, 1904, before me—
C. E. Salter, a solicitor of the Supreme Court of New Zealand.”

(c.) That the accused committed a further breach of the said regulation in that he, on or about the said 4th day of August, caused a copy or duplicate of the said affidavit to be delivered to Mr. Taylor, M.H.R.

General remarks on Charges against T. W. West.

We refer Your Excellency to our general remarks in the case of W. J. Larcombe, which are in the main applicable to the charges against Mr. West.

CHARGE AGAINST DAVID HOBSON LONDON.

We find that Mr. London, on or about 31st August, 1905, at the accused Mr. Willis's suggestion, assented to Mr. Willis sending a telegram to Mr. Taylor urging him to press his (Mr. Taylor's) said motion, but the accused did not know the wording of the telegram, and, as already stated, we do not think his conduct amounted to a breach of the said regulation or fidelity declaration.

SUGGESTIONS.

We have the honour to add the following remarks (see Regulation 29, Civil Service Regulations):—

We suggest—

1. That the forms of fidelity declaration now in use in the Post and Telegraph Department require amendment. They may have been considered sufficient in former times, when the duties of an employee in the Post Office related only to letters, postal packets and telegrams, &c., but with the increase in the number of duties discharged by Post Office officials in recent years, the declarations now in use are not, in our opinion, comprehensive enough. It is, in our opinion, all-important that every possible precaution should be taken by the Government to insure the utmost secrecy in the post and telegraph offices in the colony, and that officers in those Departments who wrongfully divulge any knowledge or information which they gain or become possessed of officially should be severely punished.

2. That a fidelity declaration be made by every public servant when he enters the service, or at any future date when called upon to make same.

3. From the evidence before us we are inclined to the belief that the General Regulations of the Civil Service are not known to the Post Office officials; this should not be. It is highly desirable that every one in the public service of the colony should be familiar with the general regulations of such service.