

My contention is that your inquiry extends over the various times that the Government have prohibited my obtaining an inquiry, from 1908.

1. *Mr. Bell.*] I do not think you quite understood me about that. You were complaining about the refusal of Dr. Findlay, as to whether or not he supported the setting-up of a Royal Commission, and you said he had really opposed it, although he had said he was in favour of it. I said that I did not see how that could affect your position now?—Look at the losses I have suffered. That is the point I wish to bring before you.

2. You say the Commission was not set up and that there was loss to you, but it does not matter whether Dr. Findlay or any one else in the Cabinet did it, so far as we are concerned. That is what I meant to say?—I misunderstood you.

3. I want you to understand that I am not cross-examining you or acting in a hostile way towards you; I only want to get your story from you?—Well, I have nothing to hide.

4. After you started negotiating with these Natives I understand you performed some services for the Government, and the Government in return agreed to assist you in your negotiations?—That is the effect of it, sir.

5. Then you proceeded with your negotiations until the Restriction Act of 1884 blocked your dealings?—That is so.

6. So you went to Parliament in 1885 and got the Special Powers and Contracts Act passed?—That is so.

7. Which put you right?—Yes.

8. But the Native Land Court held that an Act subsequently passed in 1886 again interfered with your rights?—That is correct; but I want to explain that reply.

9. You got a Royal Commission set up in 1888 to inquire into that position. You came and complained that the Act of 1886 was held to be blocking you, and the Commission was set up in 1888 to inquire into the matter?—That is so.

10. And in 1888 an Act was passed which put you right again?—Yes, the private Act of 1888.

11. So that at the end of 1888 you had nothing to complain of—you yourself said that you did not think it was necessary for the Government to provide you with any compensation, because the Act of 1888 had made your title good and so did away with all hindrances?—I claimed a couple of thousand pounds.

12. But you agreed in the end not to take it?—On the passing of the Act Sir Harry Atkinson said, "You put your claim in and I will see what I can do for you." I said, "Give me the statute and I will not claim anything."

13. You have nothing to complain of before 1888?—For several years I was prevented from going on with my surveys, as the Commission of 1888 found.

14. You accepted the statute of 1888 as a complete settlement of the whole thing?—That is so.

15. Therefore we need not go into that?—My reply is this: there was a finality then, there is no doubt, and I could have got on well before that but for the troubles. I am now asking Parliament and this Committee to take all that into consideration.

16. Your position is this: that in 1888 you admit there was finality, but you say that you had conceded a good deal to the Government then, and that that fact ought to be taken into consideration in considering your petition now?—Yes, if you please.

17. After the Act of 1888 you completed your title?—Some of the signatures had not been obtained, and I think some have not yet been obtained; but they were sufficiently complete for me to start working.

18. Before you went to England you had, in regard to liabilities on the place, an amount to the extent of nearly £8,000?—That is so.

19. Had you given a mortgage?—Yes.

20. Then you went to England and endeavoured to get Mr. Flower to lend you the money to pay off the mortgages, and to assist you to float the whole concern into a company?—That is so. He was to get a thousand guineas for his assistance.

21. You say that Mr. Flower turned you down—you say he swindled you—and as a matter of fact bought the property in for himself?—He said he bought it for himself and not for me.

22. Then your complaint was against Mr. Flower and not against the Government?—At that time that is the true position.

23. You took proceedings to have Mr. Flower declared your trustee?—That is so.

24. And the effect of these proceedings was, according to you, to make him a trustee?—Not according to me. The High Court of England said that he was guilty of malpractice as a solicitor.

25. Mr. Flower meanwhile, after buying the property, sent out an expert to examine the coal?—Yes, a man named Wales.

26. That man, according to you, made an incomplete survey and was rarely on the property at all, you say. It is set out in the petition?—He was only eleven days in the neighbourhood.

27. We will assume that his report was absolutely wrong—I only want to get it from you that the report was made?—Yes.

28. That report has been a source of considerable trouble in London since?—Mr. Flower put it into Mr. Hopkinson's hands. It was, in reality, Mr. Flower who circulated it.

29. I take it that Mr. Flower, having bought the property here in his own name and still contended that the property was his, was endeavouring to block your operations with the West Australian Mining Company, because he thought if you had that company behind you you would be able to bring sufficient pressure to bear to oust him?—To knock him over, yes. It is in the last document I put in this morning.