

26. So that it was not unusual for working-men to take a keen interest in the elections?—No.

27. You never thought there was anything unusual in the men taking an interest in the forthcoming contest?—No, I did not take much interest at all in the thing. I did not belong to the Parnell constituency. I was simply concerned about the reservoir, as I had to build it at about my estimate, and I did not like this idea of charging the holiday to the Board. That is what I was concerned with; I was annoyed about it.

28. Only as an engineer you would be, and that was the only thing you would take exception to?—Yes, that is the only thing I took exception to.

29. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] What time did Mr. Cawkwell address the men?—It must have been about 10 o'clock. He was down at my office about 12 o'clock or half past the same day.

30. So that they did not get a whole holiday?—He addressed them about 10 o'clock, and I suppose it would take a certain time to address them, and then to give them a holiday for the rest of the day. They really got eight hours and a half each. They worked for an hour or two.

31. Do you say that Mr. Cawkwell had done that at the request of Sir John Findlay?—You could not take any other inference out of it. I considered that was his object. It was not out of any kindness towards the men.

32. Do you suggest that Mr. Cawkwell's addressing the men and giving them a holiday was done at the request of Sir John Findlay?—No, quite on his own.

33. Have you ever known men to go off on account of excessive rain?—Yes, often; but we do not pay them for wet days.

34. Not under any conditions?—Not under any conditions. They get so-much per hour.

35. At whose request did you come here to give evidence?—At the request of this Committee.

36. Were you communicated with by anybody before coming here?—I just got a telegram.

37. Had any one spoken to you before you got the telegram about coming here?—No; I was surprised when I got the telegram on the Wednesday morning. I received a telegram from Mr. Dickson prior to this asking me to write full particulars of this incident.

38. Did you take an active part in connection with the last election?—No, I never do.

39. *Hon. Mr. Allen.*] You know Mr. Cawkwell, of course, well?—Yes.

40. Did you see him yesterday?—I saw him on Wednesday morning.

41. Did you know he had been summoned to give evidence?—Yes; I happened to ring up the Waitemata County Council Office, and the Chairman of the county, Mr. Cochrane, said, "You are going to Wellington." I said "Yes," and he said Mr. Cawkwell was going as well.

42. Do you know why he did not come?—No.

43. Was he ill when you saw him?—No; he did not appear to be.

44. Did he look as if he had influenza?—He seemed to be in his ordinary health.

4 and 5 Palmerston Buildings, Auckland, 30th October, 1912.

J. B. Hine, Esq., M.P., Chairman, Public Accounts Committee.

DEAR SIR,—

The statement made by Mr. C. A. Cawkwell that I was "turned down" by the Waitemata County Council is untrue. I resigned through having other more important work in hand. I was never asked to resign, and on severing my connection I received a very fine illuminated address, in a frame, signed by the Chairman and all the members of the county. Mr. Cawkwell knows this perfectly well, because he was at the time Clerk to the county. His statement with reference to his instructions to Mr. Wilkins, Foreman of Works, is absolutely false. He came to me after leaving Wilkins and told me what he had instructed Wilkins to do.

I beg to remain, &c.,

H. MUNRO WILSON, Engineer.

CHARLES SOMERS WILSON sworn and examined. (No. 13.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—Clerk to the Remuera Road Board.

2. *Hon. Mr. Allen.*] Do you remember some men who were paid for a holiday by the Board about the 13th December?—I know the men were paid on the 15th December, but, of course, I merely received that pay-sheet from the foreman. I knew nothing at all what they were paid for—merely that they were paid the wages they had earned for work done.

3. Did you as the Clerk to the Board receive this telegram: "£42,090 water-supply loan finally approved, payment of £10,000 will be made when debentures completed and returned," dated 10th November, 1911?—Yes, I received that.

4. You know nothing more about the matter than that you paid the men?—Yes, I paid the men.

5. Has the money been refunded to the Board?—No.

6. Was there any talk about the money being refunded?—I never heard anything about it.

7. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] In regard to that telegram which Mr. Allen asked you to look at, whom is it from?—It was sent by the Advances Board.

8. Had you communicated with the Advances Board before that?—Oh, yes.

9. Is that telegram in reply to one sent by you on behalf of the Remuera Road Board?—I was in communication with them about this £10,000 previously. It was pending at the time, and the telegram was to say that payment had been approved of.

10. This telegram just read is in reply to representations from yourself to the Advances Board?—Yes, an application for a £10,000 loan.

11. That is a reply to a request conveyed by you to the Board?—That is so.

12. Do you know that the whole loan concerning which an advance of £10,000 was asked for was provisionally approved in May, nearly seven months before the election?—Yes, that is so.