

222. Now you say you did not want the £10,000 in January although you applied for it?—It would not have made any difference if it was £1,000 or £10,000—we wanted something to tide us over.

223. You asked for the £10,000, and you had some idea that Sir John Findlay, being a Minister of the Crown, would be able to help you to get the £10,000?—No, no connection with that at all. We simply wanted Sir John Findlay to shake them up in Wellington.

224. What is the difference between shaking them up and giving you a helping hand?—We considered there was unnecessary delay on the part of the Superintendent of the Advances Department. We did not consider for one moment that he was a busy man, but that he was keeping us back. Then he wanted a plan and information. We thought it might hang up for another three months.

225. Let the Committee know what the delay on the part of the Board was specifically?—Well, the delay was that we did not get the money.

226. What was the nature of the delay?—I could not say; Mr. Poynton knows best.

227. From your point of view, what caused the delay: have you any knowledge?—In my opinion I have considered since that I was rather impetuous. I put it down to red-tapeism and wanting all sorts of things answered.

228. Have you any correspondence from the Board which indicates the cause of the delay?—None that I am aware of.

229. Do you know any of those men working on the reservoir work?—No, I do not know one of them.

230. You do not know Mr. Young?—No.

231. And never knew him?—No, never knew him.

232. Do you know a Mr. Robert Cromwell?—Yes.

233. Who is he?—He is a man in charge of the scoria-pit three or four miles away.

234. Was he taking part in the election?—Yes.

235. How?—He was Mr. Dickson's right-hand man in the election. He got paid for election day, but I think he worked very keenly for him.

236. Had he anything to do with the Remuera Road Board?—Yes, he was an employee of the Board.

237. Did you ever say anything to him about the elections?—Yes, I did.

238. What did you say?—I said a lot.

239. Did you discuss his position as an employee of the Board taking a part in the elections?—No, I did not. Might I explain it? This man Cromwell is an employee of the Board's. One of the members of the Road Board, a Mr. Bond, who is a temperance advocate and cold-water advocate, came to me frothing at the mouth and complained of this man Cromwell. He said, "This man Cromwell is going round from house to house in front of me with a ticket in one pocket for temperance and Sam Dickson, and a ticket in the other pocket for beer, and I want you to sack him." I told him that we could not sack him. I looked upon Mr. Cromwell as one of my adherents in local matters too; and then some one else came to me about it, a Mr. Pilkins. I then rang up and told Mr. Cromwell I wanted to see him. He came to my house and I said, "In regard to what you are doing in political matters, it is nothing whatever to do with me, but you are rubbing up against old Bond, so be a little cautious what you do." I said, "It in no way affects your position, and you must not take offence; what you do politically does not affect me and does not alter your status; but in your own interests be a little cautious." I said, "I do not want you to stop, but do not rub up against these men."

240. And this was an employee of the Board?—Yes.

241. What were you?—Chairman of the Board.

242. Would not that employee of the Board think twice before he went electioneering again?—He did go.

243. I do not know whether you would think he would think twice of it?—I think he was hotter than ever.

244. He took no notice of your warning?—I think he dropped the temperance business. I heard no more about it. He was a very rabid supporter of Mr. Dickson.

245. He did not take a part in supporting Mr. Dickson afterwards?—I do not know.

246. Then it did affect his action?—They were two distinct actions.

247. Do you think it right as Chairman of the Board to interfere with the man?—I did not interfere.

*Mr. Hanan:* Is this relevant?

*The Chairman:* I uphold your objection: I do not think it is relevant.

*Witness:* I have a very wide influence in two or three elections there, and I did not use it in connection with this particular loan.

248. *Hon. Mr. Allen* (to witness).] If you have such a wide influence in these elections how was it the address did not affect them and influence them?—There was only a handful of men. Only six of them, I am told, lived in the district, and those six men I am told were Dickson's men. The foreman came and told me that the six men are Dickson's supporters.

249. What was your object—to convert them?—To convert them on behalf of the Government who gave us this liberal advance to find work for the prosperity of the people.

250. Your object was to convert Dickson's men to the Government?—Yes.

251. *Mr. Craigie.*] At the time you addressed these men, had you any doubt or anxiety or fear in your mind that if Sir John Findlay did not get returned for that electorate you would not get the advance as promised by the Department?—Absolutely not. I am sure that if Dr. Findlay had gone down we would have still got that money. We hope to get a lot of money yet. It depends on Mr. Allen. I think we will get it, too.