

48. That is not my question, and you know it. The witness is trifling with my question. If I do not get an answer to my question I will appeal to the Chairman. I want an answer?—You put the question in a proper way and I will answer it.

49. Are you not aware that deputations often wait upon public men without a record of the movement which gave rise to the deputation being recorded in the minute-book?—I have not heard of that. I have been on local bodies a number of years, and it has always been discussed at a previous meeting of the Council or Drainage Board or Road Board. When a Minister comes to Auckland and they decide to get up a deputation, there is always a record on the minutes, and the Secretary is instructed to notify the members about the deputation.

50. Every deputation, as far as you know, has always been arranged at a meeting?—Yes, at a meeting previously, and a formal resolution passed that a deputation will wait upon the Minister.

51. Is it not a fact that the money was necessary, the Minister was there, and in order to save interest this Board approached the Minister?—The Board did not. The individual members did.

52. And what they were doing was trying to save interest, which was to the advantage of the district?—There were two purposes—one for saving interest and the other for political influence.

53. And which do you draw?—Political influence.

54. And you are an opponent of Sir John Findlay's?—Yes.

55. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] Were you a member of the Remuera Road Board when application was made to the State-guaranteed Advances Board?—No, not when application was made.

56. Did you afterwards approve of the loan having been applied for?—I think the loan was approved before I got on the Board; I am not certain.

57. When you became a member did you approve of the action of the Board in having applied for the loan?—Oh, yes, certainly.

58. What was the rate which your Board was paying to the bank for its accommodation at the time when the deputation interviewed a Minister of the Crown asking for expedition of the loan from Wellington?—5 per cent.

59. Are you sure it was not 6 per cent.?—No, I think it was 5 per cent.

60. Now, supposing it was 5 per cent., in accordance with what you say, was it good business of the Board of which you were a member to get that money earlier at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.?—Yes; they were saving a difference in one month's interest.

61. Were you a regular attendant at the Board meetings prior to the election?—I was during the campaign absent from three Board meetings.

62. As a matter of fact, did you for several meetings before the general election know much of the Board's proceedings?—Yes, I did.

63. If you were absent from those meetings, in which way would you know of the Board's proceedings?—In the first place I made inquiries from the Clerk. I was at the Board on different occasions between the meetings and got all the information, and, of course, I saw in the papers what had happened.

64. Is it not a fact that you had to publicly apologize to the Chairman of the Board for a slanderous statement you made concerning the engineer?—I withdrew a statement which I had made after the Chairman had resigned.

65. Is it not a fact that you had to apologize for a slanderous statement made?—There were certain statements made which I withdrew.

66. Is it not a fact that you had to apologize for slanderous statements made?—You can call it an apology if you like. I did apologize to Mr. Cawkwell.

67. If I say the words used were, "I certainly apologize to Mr. Cawkwell," what do you say?—Yes, that is correct.

68. Is it not a fact that you had to apologize to Mr. Cawkwell for slanderous statements made concerning the engineer?—Yes, I withdrew them.

69. You apologized?—Yes.

70. Have you ever in your official capacity as Chairman of a Board interviewed a Minister of the Crown without a record appearing in the minute-book from a Board meeting?—Not that I am aware of.

71. Do you mean to say that at every interview with a Minister of the Crown you have had a record in the minute-book always taken?—Yes, always. The matter has been brought up at the meetings, discussed, and recorded.

72. Is it a fact that upon all occasions you have had an interview with a Minister of the Crown you have had a record of the proceedings?—If it is anything connected with the Board or Council I have.

73. And you swear it is a fact you have always done it?—As far as I know it is a fact.

74. And do you not know whether it is a fact or not?—As far as I know it is a fact. I cannot remember any instance where it has not been recorded.

75. You say that prior to a meeting with a Minister of the Crown you have had a record taken in the minutes of proceedings that an interview was to take place?—Yes, as far as I know. I do not know of any case where it has not been done.

76. You do not know the exact position of the bank account when the interview took place?—No.

77. You do not know what it was even within a few thousand pounds?—I do not know what it was.

78. Did you know what the liabilities were in addition to the overdraft at the bank?—We had a list of the liabilities at that time at the previous Board meeting.