

Mr. Holt.

14th Oct., 1872.

390. Did you say, "Mr. Brogden has kept aloof from party politics during the late debate"?—
I did.

391. Did you add, "Now that they have got a Government they can work with, they are anxious that they should remain in power during the present Session?"—I deny that absolutely.

392. You have stated that your political sympathies went with Mr. Stafford's party?—Yes.

393. Is it since you got into Mr. Brogden's office that you felt yourself at liberty to express these opinions?—I may state that Mr. Brogden makes it a rule never to interfere with his employés either as regards their religion or their politics.

394. You have told us that it is only since you got into Mr. Brogden's office that you have found yourself at liberty to ventilate these opinions?—Yes.

395. In the direction of Mr. Stafford's party?—In favour of that party.

396. During this time you were in Mr. Brogden's employment—in his paid service?—Yes.

397. You knew Mr. Brogden was in terms of negotiation, and had actually accepted contracts from the Government of that day?—Yes.

398. Did you pause to consider how far your action towards the Government to which your employers stood in such a relation was consistent with your loyalty towards your employers?—No, I did not; because, as I have already informed you, Mr. Brogden never interferes with the politics of his employers.

399. You never paused to ask yourself if the course you were pursuing was in accordance with Mr. Brogden's interest or not; I mean in reference to the retention of the Government in power?—No, I did not think it was necessary to do so. If I talked to Mr. Brogden about politics, he would laugh at me, and say I was too hot, or something of that kind.

400. When you made the proposal to Mr. Harrison, and talked to him about keeping Mr. Stafford's Government in office, did you do so irrespective altogether of its results to Mr. Brogden?—Yes.

401. You had no idea whether it would be agreeable to Mr. Brogden or not?—I think Mr. Brogden should answer that question for himself.

402. I wish your answer, Mr. Holt, to the question?—I did not at that time.

403. In reference to the negotiations entered into with Mr. Harrison, you say that some conversation took place between you and Mr. Brogden, in which you suggested the matter to him a week or two before he (Mr. Brogden) went to Picton. Was there anything in the circumstances which pointed to that particular time to enter upon the negotiations with Mr. Harrison. Anything that made it particularly appropriate for you to select that particular time?—It looks as if there were, but that is not the case. I wanted to do Mr. Harrison a good turn, and I went to him on that day as I knew that another person, not a Member of the House, would be spoken to on the subject, and I wanted to see Mr. Harrison before anyone else was spoken to. Then the day happened to be an idle one, as both Mr. Henderson and Mr. Brogden had gone away to Picton.

404. When did you enter into your present engagement as private secretary to Mr. Brogden?... I believe it was on the day of the meeting of the Assembly, or a day or two afterwards.

405. Have you had any previous acquaintance with the construction of railways or public works, or things of that sort?—No; but as private secretary I have.

406. You have a large acquaintance with the Members of the House, and you have got the run of the public offices, I believe?—No; not particularly so now. I have been a long time out of the employment of the Government.

407. Still, you know a great number of the Members, and you have got the run of the lobbies, have you not?—As a clerk last year I had it.

408. You say you have had no previous acquaintance with the construction of public works and railways. Is that correct?—No previous acquaintance.

409. You entered into Mr. Brogden's service when the Session had commenced?—Yes; but I did so quite free from political reasons. He had just then got the contracts decided upon, and was about to begin them.

410. *Mr. Harrison.*] With respect to the opinion Mr. Brogden entertained towards Mr. Vogel, did I not say that he was more likely to receive better terms at his hand than at the hands of another Government?—No. What you said was "Mr. Vogel had done a good deal better for Mr. Brogden than for other people. He had given him No. 1 Contract." I remarked, "Yes, but he had withdrawn it away."

411. Did I not say that Mr. Brogden was likely to get better terms at Mr. Vogel's hands than at the hands of another Government?—No, you did not. What you said was what I have stated.

412. You admit you said that Messrs. Brogden considered it was desirable the then Ministry should remain in power?—No; nothing of the kind.

413. *Sir J. C. Wilson.*] How long were you in the Civil Service of the Colony?—For thirteen and a half years.

414. Did you ever act as Secretary during that time?—Yes; with General Wynyard for part of his year of office; for five years with Sir Gore Browne, as Assistant Private Secretary; then A.D.C. to Sir George Grey; then as Under Secretary for Defence.

415. *Mr. Parker.*] Did this conversation about "You have had your turn" take place after Mr. Tribe left or not?—I do not know. I know I have said something of the same kind to Mr. Tribe as well as to Mr. Harrison.

416. There was some conversation, you admit, as to his action as a Member of the House being fettered?—No; it was to be perfectly unfettered.

417. Was Mr. Tribe there then?—No.

418. *Mr. Travers.*] You have stated that you had some conversation with Mr. Brogden in reference to the employment of Mr. Harrison. Did Mr. Brogden express any opinion regarding that proposal?—Well, yes; he was rather opposed to Mr. Harrison's employment; I thought Mr. Brogden would have preferred any other person.

419. You say Mr. Brogden was opposed to Mr. Harrison's employment. Did he express any opinion on the subject?—No; I think he said that he would rather have some one else.

420. And you tried rather to induce him to employ Mr. Harrison instead of another person?—Exactly so.

421. As a matter of friendship to Mr. Harrison?—Yes; I wanted to do him a good turn.