

William
Thornborough.
2nd Oct., 1878.

1177. *Mr. Swanson.*] Have you been living with your wife ever since?—Yes; and very comfortably, too.

1178. *The Chairman.*] Why did you leave Sir George Bowen's service?—On account of sickness.

1179. Why did you leave the service of the House of Representatives?—To go into the Government Buildings on the beach, because I thought it would be permanent; but, when the end of the session came, two messengers were discharged, and I was one of them. It was for no fault of ours whatever.

1180. You got the transfer eventually?—Yes.

1181. Why did you give up the house?—I was ejected. Macfarlane would not have the license indorsed in my favour.

1182. Was that on account of non-payment of the money?—There was no dispute about the payment.

1183. Then why did you not get the license?—Because Macfarlane refused to allow the license to be indorsed.

1184. It was a matter of private arrangement, then?—Yes; it rested between Atchison and Staples; they seem to be in company: at any rate, that is the rumour about town.

1185. Do you know anything of your own knowledge in reference to the matter?—No; no more than the rumours about town.

Henry S.
Fitzherbert.
2nd Oct., 1878.

HENRY S. FITZHERBERT, Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court, being duly sworn, was examined.

1186. *Mr. Barton.*] Were you acting for Thornborough in respect to the purchase by him, from Macfarlane, of the Victoria Hotel?—I was.

1187. Will you state to the Committee about that transaction?—Thornborough came to me to get prepared a deed of assignment of lease from Macfarlane of an hotel and license, &c., and I had to see Staples about it. Staples, I may say, is a brewer here, and this man Macfarlane was in his hands. Staples did not seem very anxious to complete the transaction: in fact, I had been told that, as soon as this bargain had been made, Staples and Macfarlane had been offered £500 for the place. He did not seem very anxious about completing the transaction; and he said he did not think Thornborough would get his license, as Inspector Atchison would not grant it; but that, if Thornborough could get the license, he would complete the matter. I said I thought that rather a queer thing, and asked the reason. He said he did not know, but he felt sure Inspector Atchison would not grant it.

1188. *The Chairman.*] "Grant" it?—Yes; I am giving you the words used. There seems to be an impression that Atchison grants the licenses. I said I should have to make application, at any rate. When the matter came before the Bench, Mr. Atchison said Thornborough was a drunkard, that he had tried to cut his wife's throat, and that he was not in any way a proper person to have a license. I remarked to the Bench that we only had Inspector Atchison's word for that, and it would be best to adjourn the case, so that he might bring his witnesses to prove his case, and that we might have an opportunity of giving refuting evidence. The case was adjourned. In the meantime, before it came on again, I saw Staples; and he then said he thought it would be all right—he thought Thornborough would get his license. When the day fixed came round Thornborough was not present but Atchison was, and there was not a word of objection. He had no evidence to bring, and the license was granted without Thornborough being present.

1189. Do you know why all objections were waived?—No; I was anxious to know. It seemed very strange to me that there should be such objections in the first instance, and that, on the second occasion, he had nothing at all to say against the man.

1190. Do you know whether there had been any change in the consideration given for the house?—I do not know.

1191. It went through your hands?—It has never been completed.

1192. How is that?—Thornborough was not able to find the money; and he has been trying to get it ever since, so far as I know. Macfarlane refused to give up the license, or to have the transfer indorsed.

1193. He has not been in possession?—Yes; he was in possession, but was turned out.

1194. Why?—For not having paid the money.

1195. I understand that Inspector Atchison objected first that Thornborough was a drunkard, and that he had tried to cut his wife's throat; the case was then adjourned that the matter might be gone into; and then, when the day came, all objections were withdrawn?—Yes; he told me he had objected for the man's own sake—that he was not a business man, and would be sure to lose money.

1196. Do you know anything of Thornborough apart from his having been your client?—I know he was Sir George Bowen's valet, and that he was messenger in the House for a long time.

1197. *Mr. Tole.*] Did you gather inferentially what were Inspector Atchison's reasons for this course of conduct?—I knew that Atchison was a great friend of Staples's, and I always understood Staples and Atchison had lots of little speculations together. Therefore I was not surprised that Staples could tell me what was going to be done: in fact, I think I asked him to make it all right with Atchison. I said, "You can do it, and you are the only one who can," or something to that effect.

1198. What did Staples say?—I think he said he would see.

1199. *Mr. Swanson.*] They understood one another very well?—Yes. So far as my experience goes Staples is quite able to predict what will happen.

1200. *Hon. Mr. Fox.*] To what speculation did you allude just now—speculations in publichouses?—Yes; I have always understood so.

1201. Do you mean to say that Atchison, the Inspector of Police, speculates in publichouses?—I believe Atchison had an interest in an hotel at the Upper Hutt, which Ames kept, and that Staples