

him. Your client is your first consideration, and you ought to tell him what was in the telegram." And Standish said, No; he would not.

223. *Mr. Gray.*] Do you know of your own knowledge whether Mr. Owen had for years spent considerable sums of money in negotiating for these blocks we have been referring to?—Yes; he has spent a lot. The Natives stopped at his house, and when they wanted money they always got it. There is no doubt he spent a good deal of money.

224. *The Chairman.*] Is that a customary thing for any one dealing with Natives to do?—I think you ought to be able to know that: you have had a good deal of experience. I know it, to my cost. The Natives, when passing Mr. Owen's place at Hawera, used to go and stop there for days, and when they wanted a little money I have known them to get it. They also got clothing. Mr. Hugh Owen paid Mr. Gilmour one bill of £50 for clothing and flour for them.

225. *Mr. Gray.*] Were you in Wellington when the evidence was given on the petition last year?—Yes.

226. Was any suggestion made by anybody after the evidence was taken as to a compromise with Walker, or Russell, or Morrin?—No. I heard the Chairman of this Committee tell Mr. Owen that he would have to come down again next year—that his petition was not then finished, and that he would have to come down again this year, and that they would have to send for Walker and, perhaps, Stockman; and that probably before then an arrangement might be made between the contending parties. Mr. Kelly mentioned Morrin's name in connection with the probable arrangement.

*The Chairman:* I do not remember that.

Mr. ALEXANDER GILMOUR examined.

227. *Mr. Gray.*] What are you?—I am a manufacturer of patent medicines just now.

228. Where do you live?—Nelson.

229. I believe you lived in Taranaki for many years?—For six years—at Waitara.

230. Do you know anything about the transaction between Owen and the Natives with regard to this block of land at Mokau?—Yes.

231. What do you know about it?—I know that Mr. Owen was connected with Mr. Stockman.

232. For what purpose?—Acquiring land on the north bank of the Mokau.

233. Had you anything to do with Mokau?—I had.

234. What?—I was negotiating for the Mangaawakino Block.

235. *The Chairman.*] Who were you negotiating for?—I was negotiating for myself and Mr. Hugh Owen in that block.

236. *Mr. Gray.*] It lies between Mangoira and Mangapapa?—Yes.

237. Do you know who found the money for payment to the Natives while Owen and Stockman were negotiating?—Mr. Arthur Owen.

238. Do you remember the Chief Judge being in New Plymouth in June, 1887?—I do.

239. Did you put in any application?—I did.

240. What for?—For Mangaawakino and Mangakawhia.

241. Do you remember hearing that Chief Judge Macdonald had refused the certificate to Arthur Owen?—I do.

242. Do you know anything of what took place at that time?—I remember the circumstance—not of the Chief Judge refusing it; I was not in the Court at the time.

243. I ask, do you remember hearing of the refusal?—Yes; I heard it outside.

244. Do you know anything that took place after the granting of the certificate to Walker and the refusal of a certificate to Owen?—I remember what took place after the granting of the certificates.

245. What was it? Were you present before the Chief Judge?—I was after the granting of the certificates. The Chief Judge asked me to make a statement with regard to my connection with Mokau, and before I had said half a dozen words he rose from the chair. He took a telegram from his pocket, and said, "Here is a confidential telegram from James Russell, Auckland, that settles all." He stood back to watch the effect upon myself and Mr. Owen.

246. Where did this take place?—In the White Hart Hotel, in a room upstairs.

247. Is that a room used by the Judge as his chambers?—I imagine so.

248. Did Mr. Standish make any reply?—He gathered up his papers and we went downstairs.

249. Did he tell you what the contents of that telegram were?—Mr. Owen asked Mr. Standish, just as we were coming out of the door, "What was in that telegram?" Mr. Standish replied, "Owen, I cannot tell—it was confidential; but it is fatal to your interests." And he said, "I cannot understand the Chief Judge acting in that manner."

250. Is that all that took place at that time?—Yes.

251. Did you ever see any written agreement between Stockman and Owen?—I did.

252. More than one?—What form of agreement do you mean?

253. A written agreement?—No; I did not see more than one.

254. What one was that?—One made on the 13th June, 1887.

255. Do you remember a conference between Stockman, Owen, and yourself before the Judge sat in June?—I do. Before going any further I would like to ask what is meant by "agreement;" because I have seen a number of agreements between Owen and Stockman.

256. Never mind that just now. Do you remember the blocks being discussed at a conference between Owen, Stockman, and yourself?—I do.

257. Were not papers shown then by Stockman?—Yes; one.

258. What was it?—It was a deed in Mr. Hugh Owen's handwriting.

259. Do you know what the date of that deed was?—1881, I think; I am not sure. Mr Standish would be able to tell the date of the deed, because it was in his possession.