

97. *Sir J. G. Ward.*] How would the evidence be addressed to Mr. Cook or Mr. Easton; would it be sent to their hotel?—Yes, to Mr. Cook, Mandel's Hotel, Victoria Street, Wellington.

98. And to Mr. Easton's address also?—Yes, to Searl's Hotel.

99. *Mr. Fisher.*] You know that at the last meeting of this Committee, at which you were present, you could only account for two copies of the evidence?—Yes.

100. There is now a third complete copy on the table?—Yes.

101. Do you know how that third copy came here?—No.

102. You do not know how to account for the appearance here this morning of the third complete copy of the evidence given before the Mines Committee on the 15th August?—No, I do not know what course it has travelled.

103. You say now that you did not give the order to the shorthand-writer to produce three complete copies of the evidence?—No; I had no instructions from the Committee to do so.

104. You say you had no instructions from either the Chairman of the Committee or the Committee itself to prepare three copies of the evidence?—No; or to cause them to be prepared.

105. Did you give to some of the witnesses, or to a witness, copies of evidence given at that meeting of the Committee by other witnesses?—I may have given Mr. Cook's evidence to Mr. Easton, if I gave Mr. Easton's evidence to Mr. Cook; but I have not got it in my memory.

106. You say that if you gave the evidence of Mr. Easton to Mr. Cook, you may have given Mr. Cook's evidence to Mr. Easton. You put it in a problematical way. Your answer should be more than that; it should be you did or you did not?—I could not say I gave the evidence to either party. Mr. Cook might have been entitled to a copy of Mr. Easton's charges. The question of Mr. Easton having a copy of Mr. Cook's evidence was in a very different position.

107. I can understand that, because three copies of the petition which contained the charges were typewritten for that purpose?—Yes.

108. The question of the petition and the charges is disposed of. Now, did you give the evidence of one witness to another witness?—I cannot speak definitely on the subject.

109. Mr. Cook says in his evidence that you gave him a copy of Mr. Easton's evidence?—Of course, he had it for correction.

110. You say you are uncertain whether you gave it to him or not?—I understood you to ask me whether I gave him a second copy. Of course, I gave him a copy of the evidence. I said that from the beginning. That was his own evidence, and Mr. Easton's evidence too.

111. By whose direction did you send to Mr. Cook a copy of the evidence given by Mr. Easton?—By direction of the Chairman.

112. Is it usual—is it the custom—to give copies of evidence given by one witness before a Committee to another witness who has given evidence before that Committee?—It is not.

113. Tell us, then, why this departure was made in this particular case?—Because the charges which Mr. Easton had made in his statement were in the nature of a serious indictment, and Mr. Cook desired to see Mr. Easton's evidence so that he might reply to those charges.

114. Am I right in saying, then, that it is not enough to say that the petition embraced all the charges?—That I cannot tell you.

115. You have told us that the evidence contained the charges?—I did not take much notice of the evidence when it was given at the table. The evidence which Mr. Easton gave might have been a repetition of the petition, or embraced other charges, or have been an elaboration of the charges.

116. Did you adopt that course in regard to other witnesses during the whole day? Did you give all the witnesses copies of the evidence given by other witnesses?—I have no recollection of sending Mr. Cook's evidence to Mr. Easton, but, having sent Mr. Easton's evidence to Mr. Cook, I may have done so. It is quite clear to me that, it being an unusual course and receiving instructions from the Chairman in the matter, I did what was required to be done, and the thing passed from my memory.

117. You are aware that three copies of the evidence of each witness were prepared by the shorthand-writer by direction of the Chairman?—Yes, I heard him tell the shorthand-writer to typewrite three copies.

118. And those three copies were handed to you by the shorthand-writer?—Yes.

119. *Mr. Pirani.*] Who is supposed to be in charge of the Committee clerks of the House?—Mr. Lowe.

120. *Sir J. G. Ward.*] You are quite certain that a copy of Mr. Easton's evidence was sent to Mr. Cook?—Yes, I believe so, now that my memory has been refreshed by the proceedings that have taken place here.

121. Will you tell the Committee whether you are sure he did not receive two copies?—I am pretty positive that he could not have received the two copies at the same time.

122. Has he received two copies?—Not that I know of.

123. Then, if he has returned one copy, which you had in your possession before this Committee met, and returned another this morning, he must have had two copies?—Yes; he must have had two.

124. *Mr. Pirani.*] Did Mr. Cook return a copy to you as well as to the clerk of this Committee?—Only one copy, complete.

125. Mr. Easton's evidence only has been received this morning?—So I understand.

126. *Sir J. G. Ward.*] Is it a certainty that two copies of Mr. Easton's evidence were sent out from the Committee?—Yes, of Mr. Easton's evidence.

127. One copy was given to Mr. Cook, which is returned only this morning?—Yes.

128. And the other copy sent to Mr. Easton, which he corrected and returned?—Yes.

129. So that for some time there were two copies out of the possession of the Committee?—Yes.