

47. Did you discuss the matter with the Secretary to the Treasury as to the urgency?—Yes, several times.

48. *Mr. J. Allen.*] The same mistake with regard to the words “Consolidated Fund” being used instead of “Public revenues of the colony” was made in other debentures?—Yes.

49. What Act?—The Land for Settlements Consolidation Act.

50. When were those debentures printed?—I think, about the end of July.

51. When did the mistake in these debentures come under your notice?—About the middle of June. But there was no mistake. It was merely pointed out by the Controller and Auditor-General that there was a difference in the wording of the security stated on the debenture and that quoted in the Act.

52. The error was first pointed out in the middle of June?—I do not admit that there was an error.

53. The wording was not in accordance with the Act?—That is so, and it was pointed out to the Secretary.

54. Those debentures were not printed with the error in them?—No.

55. It was a draft debenture?—Yes.

56. In the middle of June?—Just so.

57. Did the same error as this occur in the debentures under the Aid to Public Works and Land Settlement Act?—Yes; but I do not say that it was an error.

58. Does the Treasury admit that the wording on the face of the debentures is not in accordance with the Act?—That is so.

59. The wording is not textually in accordance with the Act?—The wording is not textually in accordance with the Act, but the meaning is the same.

60. You knew in the middle of June that the Controller and Auditor-General had objected to debentures of the same nature, and with the same wording on the face of them?—I did.

61. If you knew that the Controller and Auditor-General had objected to debentures similarly worded to those under the Aid to Public Works and Land Settlement Act in the month of June, did not you think that he would to these which had the same textual objection?—I did not think he would.

62. Do you think he would object to one debenture and not to another similarly worded?—He did not object to them.

63. Then, why were they altered?—Because he pointed out the difference in the wording of the nature of security.

64. And he pointed it out in regard to the debentures under the Aid to Public Works and Land Settlement Act?—The fact is that he did not do so. The debentures were in his hand on the 25th July, but he did not make any objection.

65. Did he read them then?—I cannot say; but if he did not he ought to have done so.

66. When he noticed that the debentures under the Aid to Public Works and Land Settlement Act were printed in a form to which he had already called attention, did you not think that he would call attention to it again?—I did not think he would, for the matter was not of so much importance to require him to do so.

67. Do you take it that “Consolidated Fund” and “Public revenues of the colony” are the same?—They are the same; I have no doubt about that.

68. Is the Land for Settlements Account part of the Consolidated Fund?—No.

69. Is it part of the public revenues of the colony?—Yes.

70. *Mr. Graham.*] I think you said that the mail left on the 15th August, and that it was by that mail that you wished to send these debentures: it was also on the 15th August that you took them to the Controller and Auditor-General for his signature?—Yes.

71. Do you know at what time the mail closed?—It usually closes at 5 o'clock; and then there is a morning train by which a mail can be sent.

72. About what time did you take them up?—About 1 o'clock.

73. You do not know to whom you delivered them?—I do not remember for certain, but to the best of my recollection I handed them to Mr. Warburton.

74. Did you tell him they were wanted that afternoon?—Yes.

75. You heard Mr. Warburton say it was too late that day?—Yes.

76. Also that if it had been a matter of urgency the Audit Office would have worked overtime to get the work done. Did the Treasury take any steps to make him acquainted with the urgency of the matter, and to ask him to have them ready for the next morning's mail?—I cannot recollect having done so. I do not know for certain whether it was done.

77. If it was a matter of urgency to get the debentures away that day, was it not possible to have taken them to the Audit Office earlier: was there any reason why they could not have been taken up a day or two earlier?—No; because I think the Governor's Warrant only reached the Treasury on the morning of the 15th, and it was at once sent on to the Audit Office.

78. Could not that Warrant have been obtained earlier so as to give plenty of time: was there any difficulty in doing that?—If it could have been obtained earlier it would have been, because we were very anxious to get the debentures away.

79. Did you try to get it earlier?—The getting of the Warrant is in the hands of the Secretary.

80. You did not ask for this Warrant in time?—I have nothing to do with getting the Warrant.

81. You do not know whether the Warrant was asked for earlier?—No.

82. Is it not possible that it was not asked for earlier through some neglect or other cause in your office?—No; that is impossible.

83. *Mr. Guinness.*] You said you had the debentures under the Land for Settlements Act printed in June?—I said we had a draft of them printed.

84. In the middle of June, and that was sent to the Auditor-General?—About the middle of June.

85. And he then pointed out that the words “Consolidated Fund” were used instead of “Public revenues of the colony”?—He pointed that out to the Secretary.

86. Did you have the words altered?—Yes.