

28. Now, you are very positive you never received from any one any information about Captain Clark being employed in the Department?—Yes.

29. Did the military section of the Defence Department claim that the only authority was that given by the Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones?—Yes.

30. *The Chairman.*] What has Captain Clark received?—£293 3s. 2d. is the actual amount received in this colony.

31. *Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon.*] He has actually received nearly £300?—Yes.

32. *Mr. Barber.*] You said the first amount was a voucher for £600?—I presume the vouchers all came in at one time. I think Mr. Clark brought them all down to me. [Statement of claim here read.] It is not a claim at all. Captain Clark sent in so many vouchers and to so many different persons—as far as my knowledge goes. Some of them were sent to the Paymaster-General direct.

33. This is a statement in Mr. Clark's own writing. Now, when the claim first came to you you sent it back to obtain authority. Why did you do that?—It is the ordinary custom of the service.

34. You have done that before?—In all cases.

35. Are people often employed without authority?—No; in this sense, that the authority has been got.

36. You said you sent this back because there was no authority. Is it a fact that the vouchers were sent back for the Ministerial authority?—No.

37. Never?—No.

38. Why have these been sent back?—You do not understand. The Commandant may get authority for any service without my knowledge.

39. Then every time you have sent a claim back for Ministerial authority it has always been produced?—Yes.

40. Was it obtained after the voucher came in?—Yes.

41. *The Chairman.*] Have you ever had a similar case?—No, never. I have been in the office nearly eighteen years now and never knew a case.

42. *Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon.*] What is the date of that you hold in your hand now?—This is a letter from Captain Clark dated the 19th March: "Wellington, 19th March, 1903.—To General Officer Commanding.—SIR,—I would be glad if I could be informed of the present position of vouchers submitted by me, detailed herewith. The first three amounts were submitted as far back as August, 1902, and the last advice from the Under-Secretary for Defence *re* this matter was that they would be referred to South Africa: August 18th, 1902—Difference in pay, £50 2s.; August 18th, 1902—Extra-duty pay, £5 2s.; August 18th, 1902—Sundries, £9 5s. 5d.; February 28th, 1903—Pay, £277 17s. 6d.; February 28th, 1903—Gratuity, £50; February 28th, 1903—Gratuity, £50: total, £442 6s. 11d.—I have, &c., J. J. CLARK, Captain, N.Z.M."

43. You said just now he sent in so many claims. This is the claim he sent direct to the Commandant's?—Yes.

44. Nineteenth March, £442 16s. 11d. Eight days afterwards the claim was reduced by £200-odd?—Yes.

45. What has he taken off on the second claim?—£191 15s. 8d.

46. He received in the meantime £191 gratuity?—Yes.

47. Is there any item there you do not know anything about?—There are two items about which I know nothing at all.

48. *The Chairman.*] Are sundries generally allowed?—Not unless Captain Clark had authority from the officer commanding the contingent. The two extra items do not appear in the first vouchers I sent to the Commandant direct.

49. Have you ever known an officer to send in vouchers for work for five months?—The officer has to certify the voucher, and send it in within the first week of the current month.

50. And you think an officer like Mr. Clark would know that?—I think that, working in the Commandant's office, and the staff following that custom, he must have known it.

51. *Captain Clark.*] Are you certain you never saw the voucher?—To my knowledge I never saw it.

52. Is that the stamp of the Department?—Yes. It is the stamp of the office, 23rd August, 1902. It does not follow that I saw the vouchers personally, Mr. Clark.

53. *Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon* (handing witness a document, which witness read as follows: "Memorandum from Captain J. J. Clark, N.Z.M., late Ninth New Zealand Contingent, Kilbirnie.—To the Under-Secretary for Defence—29th April, 1903.—Difference in pay, &c.—Referring to your letter of the 17th November last *re* the above matter, I would be glad to learn if any decision has yet been arrived at.—J. J. CLARK, Captain.")]. Has there not been a reply to that? "Memorandum.—Captain J. J. Clark, N.Z.M., late IX., N.Z.M.R., Kilbirnie.—Pay and allowances for difference in rank.—In reply to your letter of the 29th April, I beg to inform you that the question *re* the above is still under the consideration of the Hon. the Minister for Defence.—T. F. GREY, for Under-Secretary for Defence." If Captain Clark says he has received no answer he is making a mistake?—He was informed that his claim was under consideration.

54. How does it come that these vouchers with the office stamp are in the hands of Captain Clark?—That I cannot understand. There must be some unlawful irregularity somewhere. Once the vouchers come into our hands and bear the stamp they become the property of the Department.

55. Is that the property of the Department?—Yes.

56. How do you account for it going out of the hands of the Department?—I cannot account for it.