

that you are obliged to instruct in the school?—My services are given gratuitously; there was no stipulation of that kind.

300. *Mr. Rolleston.*] Was there any understanding when the land was given as to you or anybody else being connected with the estate?—A stipulation was made by Sir George Grey. The object was to get me up from Otaki to Hawke's Bay, and the land was given both by the Natives and the Governor to induce me to go. Sir George Grey said plainly, "Understand, if you do not come to Hawke's Bay, the grant will not be made." And the Natives said, "We wish to understand from you that you will come, because we give this land to induce you to come. If you do not come, we will not give the land."

301. *Captain Russell.*] Henare Matua said the money from the estate was spent, not on the estate, but on Mr. Williams. I presume he meant before you erected these buildings?—Henare Matua has never taken any interest in the matter before he came here to Wellington. I do not think he ever visited the school.

302. Do you think he meant that the money was spent in improving the estate?—I do not know.

303. That is how the money was expended?—Yes.

304. Judging by past experience, do you think that was wise?—Yes, decidedly. I think it would have been much better if more money had been spent upon the land.

305. Supposing you had spent all the money in education, would the estate have now been in as good a position as it now is to return a rental?—No.

306. You think the estate has been placed in its present position simply because of the money that has been spent?—Yes.

307. *Hon. Mr. Fox.*] And the money you found out of your own pocket?—Yes—all advances before the date of the lease, and all sums over the £500 rent after that date. The £500 rent went towards the school.

308. *Captain Russell.*] Could the property have been let to any advantage, say, in the years from 1860 to 1865?—No; freeholds could then be obtained on very easy terms indeed.

309. Have you any idea what Native land would fetch as a rental in 1860?—About £100 per 5,000 acres for a twenty-one years' lease. The question will require further consideration.

310. The last witness we had, Henare Matua, appeared to have examined the school; did he do so?—No, not that I can remember.

311. Has he ever asked you for information?—No.

312. He has never complained to you of the management of the estate?—No; the only thing that Henare Matua ever mentioned to me was that he did say something about having a Native trustee appointed with the other trustees. There was no fault found with the management.

313. Was he one of the original owners of the land?—No; as he says, he is a relative of the ancestors of those who gave the land.

314. Are the Natives generally aware that the Te Aute estate consists of two blocks, one of which was given by the Government, and the other, the smaller one, by the Natives?—Yes; they have been told that repeatedly.

315. Are they aware that by the terms of the grant the land was given for the benefit of Europeans as well as of Natives?—Yes; Bishop Selwyn was very particular in the first instance about having a clear understanding with the Natives. He not only asked the question at the time, but wrote me a letter subsequently, requesting me to be very particular in seeing that they understood that the land was given for general education.

316. That was distinctly understood?—It was distinctly explained by me at the meeting. The Natives were also asked whether they would approve of scholars being brought from Melanesia, and they replied they would be glad to see them. "The more the merrier," they said.

317. I understood you to say you imagined the petition was not drawn up by the Natives in the first instance?—That is my opinion, judging from the mode of expression used.

318. Did you hear anything of this petition until it was drawn up?—The first mention I heard of a petition was when I was told by a Native, immediately after the meeting in August last, that a petition had been signed. I asked what was the object of the petition. He said he did not know. I asked again, Was there nothing read or explained at the meeting? He said "No," and added that a letter came up from Napier asking for signatures on papers with lines drawn across them; but there was no petition attached—that was to be done afterwards. On the Monday following, when in Napier for the purpose of giving evidence in connection with the *Waka Maori* case, I met Mr. Grace, who volunteered the statement that the Natives had signed a petition asking that the Te Aute estate land might be returned to them. I thanked him for the information, and told him I had been asked by the Natives themselves what was the object of the petition which had been drawn up by him. He said, "Oh, I had nothing to do with it."

319. Do you think it would be wise to appoint a Native trustee?—I would not recommend it at present.

320. Have you any opinion as to the course which should be followed in future for letting or dealing with the estate?—I have suggested to the trustees that they might arrive at the value of the estate by a valuation, or by submitting it to public tender or public auction. So far as I am concerned I am indifferent as to which course should be adopted.

321. There is no understanding between yourself and the trustees as to having a new lease granted to you?—No. I have heard it remarked by more than one gentleman of position in Wellington that it was astonishing that two of the trustees should act solely on their own judgment, ignoring the other two trustees. I therefore asked the chairman of the trustees if anything had been done, and I was furnished with a copy of the minutes of the last meeting of the trustees. It appeared that letters had been read from Mr. Stokes, and it was resolved that no steps should be taken in the matter until Mr. George Hunter, one of the trustees, visited Hawke's Bay and Te Aute and gained further information on the subject.