

1208. I do not think we can strike out the evidence now; but you can give us as full an explanation of it as you like, and that explanation will appear in the shorthand notes. I do not think we can strike out the evidence?—If I had read the whole clause I should have given different evidence.

1209. Yes; but you have explained that now, and it will appear in the notes of the evidence. Do you wish to say anything more about that before we go on with the questioning?—I am very sorry it is so. It is clearly a misapprehension on my part altogether, and I said things which I should not have said, and no explanation can set them straight. I cannot help thinking that, when the whole of what I said was based on an error, the simplest way would be to erase it altogether. Of course, if you say the contrary, I have no more to say.

1210. I think it should not be forgotten, Mr. Fenton, that, after your explanation, it will not affect the decision of the Committee. They will understand that you have withdrawn or recalled what you stated the other day, on account of that having been stated under a misapprehension. Therefore I do not think you need think that it will weigh with the Committee in any way.

1211. *Hon. Sir R. Stout.*] What I was going to ask you to-day, Mr. Fenton, is this: I understand you to say that you had a large amount of administrative work cast on you. Now, did you not leave the administrative work of the office to the Chief Clerk?—Great part of it.

1212. Then, the long list of things you mentioned that were done in the office you did not mean were done by yourself personally?—Oh, no!

1213. Was it your duty to supervise the papers that came into the office in any way?—The papers from the Judges?

1214. From the Judges and from the Natives?—I am supposed to have seen everything; but of course I did not.

1215. Well, looking through this bundle—if you would like to look through it—I think you will find that about three-fourths of the papers have no initials by you on them, or any remarks on them?—Yes, up to the rehearing. That is what I told Sir Donald McLean must be the course taken by me in carrying out his arrangement of a separate establishment for Mr. Rogan.

1216. No. I am speaking of 1875?—At the commencement of these papers, you mean.

1217. Yes; from 1875 on. You do not seem to have initialled them?—No. I told Sir Donald McLean that Mr. Rogan must correspond with Mr. Dickey. This I explained on a previous day.

1218. I am speaking of the Natives' correspondence with the office—letters addressed to you. For example: "Mr. Fenton, greeting. This is a request to you to hold a sitting of the Native Land Court, and adjudicate upon our lands which were brought into the Court at Napier. The names of the lands are Owhaoko," and so on. It does not seem as though there was any memorandum or words upon this?—I think you will find no minute of mine upon the papers until we get to the rehearing.

1219. I see?—It was taken away from me entirely, as Mr. Rogan has been explaining; but he had the use of my office.

1220. But I do not see that Mr. Rogan had anything to do with it?—It is his district, and he had everything to do with it. I should add that when that arrangement was made we found the unworkable character of this Act. It was absolutely unworkable. I asked for twelve months' leave of absence to let it be started by some one else.

1221. There is a letter here, Mr. Fenton, from Heperi Pikirangi, saying that "We were too late for the Court, the reason being that we only received the notices on the 13th, and on the 16th the Court sat. We travelled night and day, but did not arrive in time for it; and therefore we send in this application. Friend, Mr. Fenton, do you accede to this request; and if the letter reaches you, answer it, so that we may be aware of your decision on the subject," and so on. Do you remember that being brought before your notice in connection with the application for rehearing?—I do not remember it. Is that in the printed paper?

1222. It is referred to in the memorandum, I think. Yes, it is on page 3. On the face of it there is a memorandum, "A.C.N., send forms." I presume that is your writing. Will you see if it is?—Yes, that is my writing. Rehearings were the business of the Governor in Council, not mine.

1223. At any rate, I may take it, then, that so far as this application was made, you knew that the Natives wished a rehearing on the grounds mentioned there?—It is not likely I should remember that. I saw the letter, and told the clerk to send the forms of application for a rehearing. It was a matter of the Governor in Council. It was no business of mine. If you assume that I remember all these things—

1224. I do not assume that. You said you made a note when you had seen certain things. You said so on the last day you were examined. I think that the documents you saw you minuted?—That is, what I saw.

1225. Is that correct, that you saw nothing that you have not minuted? This telegram of Buller's is not minuted that you say was impertinent; and you saw that?—I did not see it till long afterwards.

1226. But it is not minuted at all?—No.

1227. Is it correct to say that you minuted everything?—Not absolutely. For instance, these papers which I have seen in Wellington when I came down here years afterwards.

1228. I mean in the office?—I did not see that in my office.

1229. Where?—At Auckland.

1230. But was not that your office?—Yes.

1231. It was filed with the papers?—Yes; but I only saw it long afterwards, when the whole thing had passed away, and there was nothing to do upon it.

1232. Do I understand that, though you had the administrative duty of this Act to look after,