

3778. Why is it not attached to the papers? Is it not the business of the department to attach the whole data to the papers?—That practice is not followed in one estate out of hundreds.

3779. We simply want to know about this estate. Why does no reference to this £15 19s. 10d. appear in the papers?—The reference should be made in the general report, but it does not appear to contain the information.

3780. If I tell you there is no reference in the Assets and Claims ledger to that bank account, what have you got to say then?—Of course, the only explanation is that there has been an oversight, and that it has been left out.

Mr. RONALDSON further examined.

3781. *Mr. Macdonald.*] Are you in charge of this Intestate Estates ledger?—Yes.

3782. I see entered in it a balance to credit in the Bank of New South Wales of £15 19s. 10d. I see no reference to that in the report or the papers or your Assets and Claims ledger?—I expect it is in the bank pass-book downstairs.

3783. How is it there is no reference to that in the papers?—[No answer.]

3784. Will you bring up the bank pass-book?—Yes, if I can lay my hands on it.

3785. Do you not think it ought to be attached to the papers? At the present moment the papers in the estate have not the slightest reference in any sense or shape to the fact that you received £15 19s. 10d.?—The ledger shows it, of course.

3786. Do you not think the papers ought to show it?—Well, I do not know that they need.

3787. And yet the papers are supposed to be the story of the estate?—Pretty well.

[Mr. Macdonald asked the witness to bring up the bank pass-book, and he withdrew for that purpose. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Ronaldson, Ledger-keeper, returned and said, "I am having a search made for the bank pass-book, but it may be some time before it is found."]

*Mr. Macdonald:* Please get a copy of it from the Bank of New South Wales.

Mr. R. C. HAMERTON, Public Trustee, further examined.

3788. *The Chairman.*] That return I spoke to you about this morning, and another that the Commissioners asked for at the same time, of all personality in your possession, ought to have been furnished by this time. It is nearly a week ago since we asked for them—22nd April—and we ought to have had them before this. When are we to get them?—If you say you must have that at once I will put the men on to it; but we are very much overworked.

3789. We want that return at once; and also, as I told you this morning, a return of all the articles of personality that have been purchased by the different officers of the staff. That latter return can be furnished, perhaps not exactly, but pretty well, from the memories of the individuals themselves?—They cannot give the names of the estates.

3790. Never mind. Where they cannot remember, leave it blank and let them explain, and the estates and further particulars can be filled in afterwards. Send up to the Rev. Mr. De Castro immediately, and meanwhile tell him that he is not to go out of town—tell him he is not to leave Wellington without the knowledge and consent of the Commissioners?—Very well, I will do so.

THURSDAY, 30TH APRIL, 1891.

Mr. THOMAS REDMOND examined.

3791. *The Chairman.*] Mr. Redmond, what are you?—For the last seventeen years I have been storeman to George Thomas and Co. At present I am a messenger in the Buildings. The firm has been "George Thomas" for most of the time, "and Co." is only a recent addition.

3792. Now, will you tell the Commissioners what your duties were while you were employed at Captain Thomas's?—Well, I was head storeman there. I kept accounts of everything coming in and going out, but principally attended to the auction-sales; regulated goods of all descriptions, and held them up for inspection at the sale.

3793. How long is it since you left Captain Thomas?—Twelve months—the month after Captain Thomas died. I left on the 15th of March, 1890.

3794. You knew all about the various lots of effects belonging to these dead people's estates which from time to time went in there for sale?—Yes; I think I handled every one of them.

3795. Are you aware there was a clerk in that employment who misbehaved himself in connection with his duties?—Yes.

3796. What is his name?—A. Martelli.

3797. Do you know where he is?—I believe he is on the survey on the Wanganui River at present.

3798. Do you know what he did or did not do to give offence to his employers?—I left about a month before he did. I had some words with Mr. Haybittle after Captain Thomas died. Mr. Haybittle seemed not to wish to have me any longer. He gave me an excellent character, which I now hold. I cautioned Mr. Haybittle some time previously about Martelli. I did not think him honest towards his employers.

3799. Did you notice any dishonesty in respect to Martelli in connection with the estates of deceased persons that Messrs. Thomas and Co. had the sale of?—I could not say that I did.

3800. Were you aware that gentlemen on the staff of the Public Trust Office dealt in those effects?—Oh, yes! Everybody at the sale was aware of that.

3801. Do you remember any books being destroyed belonging to Messrs. Thomas and Co. before you left?—Not since Captain Thomas started in business after he failed.