

member of my office Board. You will see, therefore, that no inquiries whatever, private or otherwise, were made of any person outside the office except of a member of the Office Board, and as Mr. Wason refers in his remarks in the House to the ordinary course of valuation as adopted by the Government Insurance Department, it will perhaps interest him to know that the course adopted by the Government Insurance Department is, to lay any application for a loan before any valuation is made before the Insurance Board to see if such application shall be entertained. If, therefore, I adopted this practice, precisely what Mr. Wason complains of would eventuate, for his application would have been submitted for consideration to my office Board, of which Mr. McGowan is a member.

Secondly, of my having written "a most offensive memorandum," saying that I had made "private inquiries as to the value of the land, that A's statements were altogether wrong, thereby suggesting that he was trying to 'get at' the office": I have searched in vain for any such memorandum. I forwarded to you with my letter of the 14th instant copies of every letter or memorandum that I knew of in connection with the matter, and in Mr. Hamilton's statement, forwarded with my letter of the 15th instant, were set out copies of any correspondence that he knew of. Those documents speak for themselves, and answer Mr. Wason's charge.

I have endeavoured to conduct the investment portion of this business in accordance with the rules laid down by the Courts when defining the duties of trustees, and I shall continue to carry on the business in exactly the same way that I have carried it on in the past; but, as Mr. Wason's statements will go before the public throughout the Colony in *Hansard*, I am compelled, in order that the public may be in a position to form a correct opinion, to ask you to lay this letter on the table of the House with the papers previously sent to you, and to obtain the necessary sanction for their being printed. If Mr. Wason had referred to the business of any person other than himself, I should not have made this request, as a compliance with it would have made business affairs of a private individual public property; but as Mr. Wason himself brought this matter forward, which relates to his affairs and to his alone, I do not think that there can be any objection to doing what I ask.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. the Premier.

J. C. MARTIN, Public Trustee.

No. 15.

The Right Hon. the PREMIER to the PUBLIC TRUSTEE.

SIR,—

26th July, 1898.

In the House this evening Mr. Wason stated, in reference to the charges made against you, that, to complete the papers, the memorandum with the pencilled memorandum referred to in your letter to me of the 14th instant should also be laid on the table of the House, and be printed. In this I concurred. If existent I should therefore be glad to have it supplied.

I have, &c.,

The Public Trustee, Wellington.

R. J. SEDDON.

No. 16.

The PUBLIC TRUSTEE to the Right Hon. the PREMIER.

SIR,—

Public Trust Office, Wellington, 27th July, 1898.

Referring to your letter of yesterday, which has just reached me, I have the honour to forward herewith the original pencilled memorandum which you refer to, a copy of which was forwarded to you with my letter of the 14th instant.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

J. C. MARTIN,
Public Trustee.

No. 17.

Land- and Income-tax Department, Wellington, 189

MR. JOHNSTON,—Did your department buy Mr. Wason's Corwar Estate, near Highbank? Could you let me see the papers for a few minutes?—J. McG.

Pencilled Memorandum.

Marawiti Estate, 2,026 acres 2 roods 33 perches, purchased from Mr. Wason for £14,200 18s. 10d. (£7 per acre).

No. 18.

The PUBLIC TRUSTEE to the Right Hon. the PREMIER.

Public Trust Office,

Wellington, 5th August, 1898.

I TO-DAY received a letter from Mr. McGowan, as follows:—

Looking over *Hansard* last evening I noticed that Mr. J. C. Wason, M.H.R. for Selwyn, took exception to an item in the correspondence laid before Parliament with regard to his application for a loan from your office which he characterized as offensive, and which, he stated, was either written or dictated by me. The circumstances, of which you do not seem to be fully aware, are as follows: When your officer came to make inquiries as to the valuation of the proposed security, I was at first under the impression that it was the Corwar Estate that was offered,