

and Te Hatepe, 60 shares. Number of grantee, 56: Grantee—Hone Pihama Tarake, 20 shares. Number of grantee, 57: Grantee—Hatape, 20 shares. Number of grantee, 58: Grantee—Te Moho, 20 shares. Number of grantee, 59: Grantees—Ripo Kawhe and Wini te Puangi, 50 shares. Number of grantee, 60: Grantee—Nikora te Wehi, 50 shares. Number of grantee, 61: Grantee—Erai Neta Henare, 50 shares. Number of grantee, 62: Grantee—Matena Pikiwata, 50 shares. Number of grantee, 63: Grantee—Uruwhare Uruhaha, 50 shares. Number of grantee, 64: Grantee—Riria Rongoipuhia, 50 shares. Number of grantee, 65: Grantee—Harahone, 50 shares. Number of grantee, 66: Grantees—Whero, $\frac{1}{2}$; Mere te Wehenga, $\frac{1}{2}$, of 50 shares. Number of grantee, 67: Grantee—Kararaina Kahuke, 50 shares. Number of grantee, 68: Grantee—Tuhakapiri Oriwia, 50 shares. Total shares, 15,070.

Mr. Poynton: I would like to explain, in connection with the expenditure shown in the statement, that branches of the office such as Wills and Intestacy are not put into this statement at all, they having nothing to do with it. One fifth of my own salary is charged to the Native Reserves Branch, also one-fifth of the Accountant's salary and one-fifth of the Examiner's salary. The services of the other officers are charged for according to the amount of work they do in connection with this branch. There is also under the office management a firm of solicitors in Wellington who are employed as consulting solicitors, to whom are referred all legal matters that cannot be decided by the office. In connection with the West Coast Reserves we reckon that half the salary of the consulting barrister should be charged against this branch, as such references are very numerous.

2. *Mr. Wi Pere.* I understand that so much per cent. is deducted out of every £100 for this, that, and the other purpose. What was the total amount deducted out of every £100?—£6 16s.

3. Does that include all your expenses—payment to this, that, and the other official? Is all that included in the £6 16s.?—Yes. There is a balance of £21 profits per annum payable to the office, but that more than goes in different ways.

4. What was the $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. that we were told about?—Seven and a half per cent. is charged on the rents collected from Europeans, the $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. on the rents collected from the Natives, making altogether the average of £6 16s.

5. What is the total amount of moneys received from all the lands under the control of the Public Trustee?—Well, I could not give the total amount, but from Taranaki I should say just about £26,000, say £25,800. Office expenses come to about £1,766—that is for everything, including the proportions of my own salary, the Accountant's, and the Examiner's. And the whole of the branch connected with the reserves do nothing else. Some Natives seem to think that the whole of the expenses of the office are paid out of their commission.

6. Is that £6 16s. paid out of the valuation of the land, or is it paid out of moneys received as rents?—Rents. If we get £100 we pay the £100 to the Natives less £6 16s. We pay £93 4s. In some instances the Natives have to pay a little more because their rents may be obtained largely from Europeans, with very few occupation licenses. If some of the grants have no occupation licenses then they have to pay $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. This year it may be $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., but next year it may be less, because some of the Natives may come in and take up occupation licenses. The amount varies between, say, $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The average is £6 16s.

7. What is the meaning of this paragraph in your statement: "It must, however, be pointed out that these reserves are held on a different tenure from other Native lands. They are legally vested in a trustee, and the Natives interested have life interests in them only, and are not in the same position as owners of other Native lands"?—Suppose, Mr. Wi Pere, you have a block of land up the East Coast. That would be your own land. It may be subject to certain restrictions, but it is your own land. In this case you would only have an interest for life. The land would not be your own.

8. *The Chairman.* Does it not go to his children?—Yes, it goes to his successors.

9. *Mr. Wi Pere.* Well, you say when the Maoris die everything goes to their successors—the interests and rents go to their successors. Well, then, if this is so, the land is the Maoris'?—They have a life interest in it. The tenure is different. They cannot lease or sell the land.

10. What becomes of the land if there are no successors?—There are always successors. I never heard of a Native dying without successors. They take good care that there is somebody to succeed to the land.

11. Supposing Mrs. Thompson were to die, would her children succeed to her land?—Yes.

12. Then surely you cannot say that the land is not hers?—No. She has an interest in the land. She could not sell it.

13. Well, when the children die who does it go to?—To her children's children.

14. Does not the pakeha die usually between sixty and seventy years of age?—The Public Trustee lives always.

15. Yes, but that is nothing. That is merely the existence of a servant. It is a hand—an arm—working for the Maori. The Public Trustee has made two statements that do not seem to me to agree. He says, first of all, that the petitioner, Mrs. Thompson, is under a mistake in thinking that the land is hers, and yet he says she has a life interest in the land and that on her death it goes to her descendants. I say that no matter how the Public Trustee may desire to keep me in the dark as to the real meaning of what the Act says, I shall require the production of the West Coast Settlements Act, and I will look into this matter myself.

Mr. Poynton: What is it you want to know?

Mr. Wi Pere: According to Maori custom when a parent dies his child succeeds, but the pakeha people have put you in the position of being the hands of this woman. It is not that I am making any personal accusation or charge against the Public Trustee for a moment. It is the procedure that I am trying to get at. Until I find the Public Trustee capable of doing anything wrong I am not going to charge him with it—