

9. For what purposes could the land be applied: pastoral, dairying, or what?—It is at present used to the best advantage in my opinion. It is not well enough watered to dairy on. You could perhaps dairy on small pieces of it, but as a whole it is not dairying country.

10. Have you formed any opinion as to what money has been expended in improving the property to get it into its present condition, speaking generally from what you have seen?—Outside of the buildings, I should say about £2 10s. an acre has been spent over all of it.

11. You know that a portion was in fern originally, and 500 acres in heavy bush?—Yes, part of the bush is still there.

12. Has it been well farmed?—Very well indeed. There is a considerable amount of new fencing that has been put up since I was there two years ago—very good fencing, all eight-wire.

13. Are all the improvements in the nature of buildings of a substantial character?—Yes. Owing to its being used as a stud-farm the buildings are very extensive.

14. You know that the existing lease was granted in August, 1903, to the then tenant for twelve years at £2,200 a year: you know the history of this land?—No; the lease had not been registered when I was there.

15. Having regard to what you know of the history of the trust and the whole of the surrounding circumstances, do you consider the lease was in the interests of the trusts?—That would work out at 6s. 3d. an acre. Yes, I do.

16. Will you give grounds for your opinion?—When I valued the land in 1904 wool was rising, but people had no confidence that the rise was permanent, and the lease was granted nearly a year previous to my visit, when the rise was not so great; and the feeling of insecurity was more intense than even when I was there. A short time before wool had been 4d. per pound: people had not forgotten it. If I had valued it at the time I did for the purpose of leasing it, it would have worked out at not more than 6s. 6d. an acre. That was some months subsequent to the lease.

17. Have you examined the land that was taken in exchange for the piece given to the Archdeacon?—Yes, I examined it yesterday carefully.

18. In that exchange do you consider the trust got a *quid pro quo*?—I think they got the best of it. It was to the mutual advantage of both. It gave the Archdeacon a much better frontage to the swamp land than he previously had. It gave the trust land a better outlet to the main road, and the quality of the land they got was better than that they gave. The land they gave is the washings from the poor marl hills and is not so good as the average flats in the locality.

19. You think the exchange was on the whole in favour of the trust?—Yes, they got the better land.

20. It has been suggested that it would have been better if the estate had been cut up into farms and leased for, say, twelve years—offered by public auction or by tender. Looking at the whole of the circumstances, and seeing that the trustees had to make sure of the income to carry on the two schools—Hukarere and Te Aute—do you think that the trustees acted wisely in making sure of the Archdeacon as a tenant at £2,200 a year rather than cut up the property and stand the chance of getting tenants on small farms?—Unless they had given the tenants compensation for improvements I do not think they could have let it at all in small farms. People would not put in improvements of a substantial nature on land of which they had only a twelve years' tenancy. If compensation had been allowed it would have brought more cut up than if leased as a whole.

21. *Mr. Hogg.*] How many homesteads do you think could be formed if it was cut up—out of 7,000 acres—I mean reasonable-sized homesteads?—I should say about twenty.

22. Do you anticipate from what you know of the working of the Land for Settlements Act that there would have been much danger of the tenants failing to pay the rent?—Not if the land had been let under land-for-settlements conditions.

23. But if it was let for a period of, say, twenty-one years, with compensation for improvements, do you think that class of tenant would have been found likely to fail in payment?—No.

24. Do you think that the school would have suffered on account of the revenue from the rents not coming in?—No.

25. You have not heard of tenants making default on anything like an extensive scale?—No.

26. *Mr. Ngata.*] Are the buildings on the property included in your valuation?—Part of it.

27. Which part?—There is a certain school and church.

28. Would the Archdeacon's dwellinghouse be included?—Two dwellings are exempted, and the rest of the station buildings are included; 3,100 pounds' worth of buildings were included.

29. We understand that the buildings are practically excluded from the trustees' lease to the Archdeacon?—I was not aware of that. That would bring my estimate of the rental value down to almost what they got for it.

30. What would the valuation of the buildings be?—£3,100.

31. That would be a little less than 10s. an acre?—Yes.

32. What would be the unimproved value of the property?—It varies. I valued part of it at £1 unimproved, and part at £2.

33. What is the total entry of the unimproved value on the 3,800 acres?—£18,188 unimproved.

34. That would be about £4 10s. an acre?—Almost £5.

35. *Mr. Elliott.*] Is the land similar to the Hatuma land?—No; part of it is, but the whole of it is not.

36. Do you know whether any concession in rent was given to the Hatuma settlers?—I do not know.

37. Will you ascertain for us the valuation of Section 1, Block 15?—Yes, I made a valuation of that in 1894. [Subsequently witness forwarded the following particulars as to area and valuation: "Maraekakoho—Block 15, Section 1, 913 acres; capital value, £6,270; unimproved value, £5,221."]