

106. You complain the trustees have not roaded the estate: will you tell me where they are to get the money to road it?—You see we have never had a balance-sheet published. I do not know what they have got, but they ought to have funds enough to road the estate.

107. The accounts are published every year in the proceedings of the Synod, and they are also sent to the Education Department to be laid on the table of the Houses of Parliament?—I have never seen one. To my mind there is a very large revenue from the school and the estate.

108. How much do you think?—It is hard to say, but I should say that a year or two ago, from what I could learn, it has been nearly £15,000 a year from the school fees and the rent.

109. Do you know what the fees are?—No.

110. Do you know what the cost of boarding is?—I have heard it is about £1 10s. to £1 15s. a week for each boarder.

111. *Mr. Hogg.*] I suppose your complaint is that this land has been practically locked up against settlement and improvement?—Yes. There is a conflict between the Borough Council and the trustees.

112. Do you think its management has been of such a nature as to hinder the progress of Wanganui?—Certainly. There is the land lying idle, and people have been driven miles into the suburbs to get building-sites.

113. And you say the town has been prevented from growing in its natural directions?—Yes.

114. In regard to the education at this Collegiate School, are you satisfied with that?—I have never had anything to do with it. In the first place, I do not know how they get the name of Collegiate School.

At this stage the Chairman announced that, a cablegram having been received conveying the news of the sudden death of the Right Hon. R. J. Seddon yesterday, the Commission would forthwith adjourn out of respect of the deceased statesman's memory.

TUESDAY, 12TH JUNE, 1906.

On the Commission assembling at 10 a.m.—

The Chairman said, I have to announce that the Commission will not sit to-day, in consequence of the death of the Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, and out of respect to his memory. A Proclamation has been published in the *New Zealand Gazette* intimating that the offices of the Government service throughout the colony shall be closed to-day, and therefore we feel it is our duty, in deference to the wishes of the authorities, not to sit to-day. Our sitting therefore stands adjourned until 10 a.m. to-morrow.

WEDNESDAY, 13TH JUNE, 1906.

JOHN MORGAN further examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] I understand you wish to add something to your former statement?—As I find the scope of the Commission does not allow me to go into the validity of the grant, I suppose I must confine myself to the administration of the trust. I am only sorry the Commission does not embrace the question of the validity of the grant, because I was in hopes that the Commission would settle the matter for all time. My complaint now is that the grant has not been used for the purpose for which it was set apart, and that the administration of the grant has been something most miserable. In fact, I do not know how I can find words to express myself on this subject. I would say it has been a disgrace to all those concerned in it. We have been told that there have been drains put through the estate, but I do not know where they are. I have never seen them. I think I could point to one put in very many years ago, but the estate is under water still in many places. I would wish to impress on the Commission the state in which that land is at present.

2. We have been all over it, and we have seen the general condition of the property?—Then you have seen the water lying on it, I think.

3. The whole of that estate, including Mosstown, wants a complete system of drainage: I suppose you will admit that?—Yes. Drains that have been made at Mosstown and other places have assisted to drain the estate to a certain extent.

4. The Mosstown drains have concentrated the water in that particular part, and it seems to us that the present system for carrying off the water is quite inadequate: do you not think the whole question of drainage requires to be gone into by a competent engineer, and a complete drainage system devised?—Yes.

5. Is there any other point?—I only wish to add that I should like that grant to be carried out in its original intention—namely, as a township.

6. We understand you want to see the estate all roaded, drained, and covered with buildings?—I do. I want to see it a part and parcel of Wanganui. The question has been raised as to where the trustees are to get the money for doing all these things. I should say that the revenue from that block for all these years ought to have produced some money towards it, at any rate. Even at the present time I should think the revenue from the land and school should be fully from £12,000 to £15,000 a year. For the last few years it has been up to £15,000 a year. Two years ago there were 215 scholars there, and the greater number of them board, and I know of my own knowledge that most of them pay £75, if not £100, a year.

7. You mean, including rent and fees, the receipts amounted to £15,000 a year?—Yes. The trustees are living rent-free, and I see also that an effort is being made to exempt them from the borough rates. Now, I will show you how the trustees mismanage the estate. I say that, instead of £1,200 a year, the estate ought to produce £5,000.