

was so dated, but an error was discovered in the area. The first grant was cancelled and a new grant issued; this grant was issued on the 21st February, 1853. You may ask what has this to do with the question? It is this: the Constitution Act arrived in the colony in December, 1852, and, as will be seen, the grant issued in its correct form was on the 21st February, 1853.

2. I question the *bona fides* of the Bishop of New Zealand, G. A. Selwyn, to transfer his trust in the manner he is supposed to have done. Is it possible the trustee appointed under a grant wherein provision is made for his successors to continue the trust can divest himself of such trust in as easy a manner as he can divest himself of a pair of old gloves? Again, is it possible that a trustee can divest himself of his trust and allow (as in this case) five irresponsible persons to carry on the trust? As this grant was made from the town land of Wanganui, and the school to be established was to be on the same land in Wanganui, can it be supposed to be a correct thing to appoint four residents of Wellington and only one resident of Wanganui? As a consequence I cannot think that the so-called trustees have at any time been trustees appointed in a legal or just manner.

3. During the fifty-two years this "Industrial School Grant" has been in existence such a school as provided for in the grant has never been established. A school of one kind or another has been kept up where children of the wealthy class, paying high fees, have been educated. This school is now, and has been for a time, called the "Wanganui Collegiate School."

I am strongly of opinion that the above questions, together with the past and present management of the estate and the school, are fit subjects for inquiry by a Royal Commission. I venture to express the hope that the present Government will not allow such a valuable grant to remain longer a menace to the health and a bar to the progress of the Borough of Wanganui.

I am, &c.,

JOHN MORGAN.

The Right Hon. the Premier.

SIR,—

Prime Minister's Office, Wellington, 3rd August, 1904.

I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 12th ultimo, on the subject of the desirability of setting up a Commission to deal with the Native-school reserves of the colony, and furnishing a history of the Wanganui Industrial School Grant, for which I am obliged.

In reply, I may say that I shall be pleased to give your representations every consideration. It has not been found possible to set up such a Commission yet awhile.

I am, &c.,

R. J. SEDDON.

John Morgan, Esq., Durietown, Wanganui.

9. Do you not suggest that some part of the revenue should be applied to education? For instance, how are the buildings to be put up and kept in repair, and how is the school to be kept going except out of a portion of the revenue?—Certainly I say the revenue should be applied to that purpose. I must say I decidedly object to the land being held on lease for grazing purposes. If the trust was properly managed I should not say a word about it, because it does not matter to me whether it is held by the Church of England or by the Government, or by the Borough Council, so long as it is utilised for the benefit of the inhabitants of Wanganui.

10. *Mr. Hogg.*] Your chief complaint is that no improvements have been made?—I say that most emphatically.

11. You do not make any complaint in regard to the conduct of the College?—No. I have never been on the trust land nor in the school for thirty years. Knowing the management I never had anything to do with it.

12. Has any engineer ever been consulted in regard to the drainage of the land?—Not that I am aware of.

13. Did you have at any time an estimate of the cost of draining?—Not more than that the Clerk of the Town Board said it would cost £15,000 to open it up. I said that supposing even it did cost £15,000 it should be done.

14. What do you think would have happened if this land had been in private hands?—It would have been built on long ago. There has been a dearth of building-land here, which has caused the people to go right away from the town.

15. Then, in that case, the swamp would not have been carefully reserved?—The swamp would have been drained long ago.

16. Can you give me any reason why the trustees should not have turned the land to good account?—Merely because I think it is let to certain parties for grazing purposes, and they do not want to lose the grazing.

17. Have they any object to serve in not getting as much revenue out of it as they can?—I do not know of any other reason than this, that they want to keep the land for grazing.

18. *Mr. Lee.*] You say the land is in a worse condition now than it was many years ago?—Yes, acres of it.

19. How do you account for that?—From the way it has been leased. Herds of cattle have been put in, with the result that what were once good fern-clad hills are now drifting sandhills. The cattle have broken the hills down.

20. *Mr. Elliott.*] Have you ever been Mayor or Councillor of the Borough of Wanganui?—No. I have been a Chairman of Road Boards and of School Committees, and I have been in the Provincial Council. I may say I do not live in the borough.

21. You complained just now of cattle having broken down the sandhills: do you not think that was an advantage?—I do not.

22. Below these sandhills is the swampy part of the ground?—Yes.

23. The prevailing winds here are westerly?—Yes.

24. Would that not tend to blow the sand over the swampy hollows and fill them up?—That is the argument of certain individuals, but I do not think it worthy of consideration. I think that process is a detriment.