

1875.

NEW ZEALAND.

REPORT ON PETITION

OF

SIX HUNDRED AND SEVENTY INHABITANTS OF WANGANUI.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

REPORT.

THE Committee, having given the petition their careful consideration, have directed me to report as follows:—

“The Committee regret that, owing to the refusal of the Government to furnish, for the information of the Committee, a copy of the opinion of the Attorney-General on the Industrial School Estate at Wanganui, they are not in as full possession of the legal bearings of the case as could be desired. The Committee, however, are satisfied that the spirit and intention of the grant have not been fulfilled. They find that the grant was the subject of inquiry by a Royal Commission in 1867, which resulted in the following report being made:—

“Wanganui Industrial School Estate.

“This was a grant of about one-third of the then existing town site of Wanganui to trustees of one religious denomination, for the purposes of education. The whole of the land had been laid out in streets and quarter-acre sections, the former of which were shut up by the Grant, and the latter abolished, and the extension of the town in that direction precluded.

“The rents of this estate have been appropriated to the erection of a schoolmaster’s house and Grammar School, except a small portion to the support of the school, which, though excellent of its kind, is not a fulfilment of the trust contemplated, inasmuch as the class of children apparently intended by the grant to be benefited are not such as can afford to pay the fees necessarily payable, to enable them to attend the school. Looking at the magnitude of the grant, and the loss which the people of the place have suffered by the diversion of the land from its original purpose, the Commissioners recommend that the land should, whenever practicable, be laid out again, and rendered available for town purposes, and that the annual proceeds should be so appropriated as to give the inhabitants of every denomination and every class a fair share in the benefits accruing from the grant.”

In the opinion of this Committee the Government ought to take the subject of this trust into their most serious consideration during the recess, with a view to such legislative action next session as may be required for the purpose of placing the valuable estate in question under trustees periodically elected, and for insuring the application of the proceeds to the purposes originally intended by the grant.

13th October, 1875.

THOMAS KELLY,
Chairman, Public Petitions Committee.

APPENDIX.

To the Honorable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives of the Colony of New Zealand, in Parliament assembled.

The Memorial of us the undersigned, Inhabitants of the Borough of Wanganui,

Humbly sheweth,—

1. That in the year 1852 the following Crown grant was issued: “Victoria, &c.—Whereas a school is about to be established at Wanganui, in the Province of New Munster, New Zealand, under the superintendence of the Right Reverend George Augustus, Lord Bishop of New Zealand, for the education of children of Our subjects of all races, and of children of other poor and destitute persons, being inhabitants of islands in the Pacific Ocean: And whereas it would promote the objects of the said institution to set apart a certain piece or parcel of land in the neighbourhood thereof for the use and towards the maintenance and support of the same: Now know, that We, for Us, Our heirs, and