

1877.

NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.

REPORT ON PETITION OF TE HAPUKU AND 168 OTHERS, TOGETHER WITH MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

THE petitioners state that more than fifteen years ago the chiefs and people of Te Aute, in Hawke's Bay, gave between three and four thousand acres of land to be invested in trustees for the establishment and maintenance of a school for the benefit of the Maori tribes, and that Sir George Grey, the then Governor of the colony, set apart for the same purpose an adjoining block of land, making in all seven thousand five hundred acres. The petitioners go on to say that in 1855 a school was started by the Rev. S. Williams, but that, owing to management which they consider objectionable, the attendance decreased until the school had to be closed; that within the last three years the school has been reopened, but that the children attending are mostly from tribes at a distance, which the petitioners consider wrong, as the land was intended to be set apart for the benefit of the Ahuriri Natives.

The petitioners further allege that the rent paid by the Rev. S. Williams has been insufficient, and they suggest that the land should be divided into smaller blocks and let by auction, so that a fair rent might be obtained without concealment; and they pray that means may be adopted for securing generally better management for the future.

I am directed to report as follows:—

That the Committee have inquired into the allegations made in this petition with greater care than might have been necessary had it not been for the unusual interest which appears to be taken locally in the subject. They have examined as witnesses Mr. Takamoana, M.H.R.; Mr. Henare Matua, of Hawke's Bay; Mr. Grace, Native Interpreter, of Hawke's Bay; and the Rev. Mr. Williams, who is in charge of the Te Aute School. The Committee have also attentively perused the printed report of the evidence on the same subject taken during the present session by a Select Committee of the Legislative Council, and have moreover carefully considered the valuable report on the Te Aute Native School or College Trust Estate made by a Royal Commission in 1869, which, together with the evidence taken, is published in the Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives of that year. The following extract from the report of the Royal Commission referred to, gives a clear idea of the condition of the Trust in 1869:—

“The Trusts of the four grants, comprising in all 7,799 acres of land (since slightly altered in extent and boundary by exchanges) for the Te Aute Native School or College, appear to have been accepted upon the understanding that a school would be erected upon part of the estate at the expense of the Government; that a sum of £500 would be granted by the Government for the purchase of sheep; and that a certain allowance of at least £300 per annum would be granted by the Government towards the maintenance of the school, payment of a schoolmaster, and improvements of the estate. The school was not so erected. The £500, on account of the high price at the time, sufficed to purchase 250 ewes only. The annual grant was continued for the years 1854 to 1859 inclusive. During these years a school was maintained; the attendance at which, though small, was as considerable as under the circumstances stated (*see* evidence of the Rev. S. Williams, p. 4) it would have been reasonable to expect (*see*, also, report of Mr. Henry Robert Russell, Appendix to Journals of House of Representatives for 1862, E. 4, p. 31). Upon the cessation of the annual grants (practically in 1859), the estate producing no income applicable to the support of a school, and having sustained a severe loss by fire, the school was discontinued. The object of the management since has been to improve the property until it should be capable of producing an income in some measure adequate to the support of a school. The annual profits beyond those which have accumulated in the form of improvements have been insufficient, after payment of current expenses and interest, to repay the moneys advanced, and leave a debt due from the estate at the end of the year 1868 amounting to the sum of £767 7s. 1d. The annual value of the estate has been increased from £10 in 1853, to between £500 and £600 at the present time. The sheep have increased to the number of 6,137 at the muster in 1868; and it is clearly shown that the improvements of the property have been judiciously effected.

“It will, nevertheless, be apparent that, while the object of the management—the rendering the estate productive of an available income—has been nearly attained, the children of the Native donors of the land have grown up to maturity, deriving little or no benefit from the Trust. This has led to complaints from donors and representatives of donors, having some show of reason in them.”

Shortly after that report was made the estate was let to the Rev. Mr. Williams, at a rental of £500 per annum, the lease expiring in February, 1878. It appears to the Committee that the sum so agreed to be paid was the full annual value of the estate at the time the lease was entered into, but that, on the expiration of the term next February, it will be worth a much larger sum, probably three times as much; but the Committee have no reason to suppose that there is any intention on the part of the trustees to let the estate for less than its actual value. The Committee have arrived at a very decided opinion that the management of the estate by the Rev. Mr. Williams has been good, and that its increased value is largely due to his exertions. Nor have the Committee reason to think that the conduct of the school has been deserving of the blame which the petitioners attach to it. It appears to be true that the children at present attending the school come from a distance, and no children of the original owners of the land are at present in attendance; but this, in the opinion of the Committee, cannot be attributed to any mismanagement on the part of the gentleman in charge, and it seems to be certain that in no case has admission been refused to children of the petitioners or other of the original owners. The Committee are scarcely of opinion that it comes within their province to recommend to the trustees any special mode of securing the greatest advantages from the estate, as these gentlemen act according to their own judgment on their own responsibility; and especially as the Committee have no reason to think that the management has hitherto been injudicious.

8th November, 1877.

JOHN BRYCE,
Chairman.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

MONDAY, 29TH OCTOBER, 1877.

Mr. TAKAMOANA, M.H.R., examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] You have heard read the petition from Te Hapuku and others in reference to the Te Aute College Estate?—Yes.
2. Are you fully acquainted with the matter referred to in that petition?—Yes.
3. Are you aware of the purposes for which the ground was given by Maoris originally?—Yes.
4. What were those purposes?—It was the Governor and the Bishop who asked the Maoris to give some land for a school for the children.
5. Was it understood that the school was to be for the Native race?—It was to be for the Maori children only. Those were the only children mentioned at that time.
6. Was it to be for the Maori children generally, or only for the children of a particular tribe?—I am not clear about that.
7. What quantity of land was given at that time?—I do not know what extent of land was given, because the land had not then been surveyed.
8. Was a school erected on this land by the trustees in accordance with the understanding made at the time the land was purchased?—Yes. The children had previously been sent to school at Otaki, and Mr. Williams went to Otaki and took the children back with him to Napier.
9. When was this?—I cannot say what year it was.
10. Did the Maori children avail themselves of the educational facilities provided by the school?—Yes, when Mr. Williams went there.
11. Then, was the original intention and understanding carried out in its integrity?—No.
12. I understand you to say the school was opened on the land in accordance with the original intention, and the children availed themselves of the school?—The school was not upon the land when Mr. Williams went there. It was upon land belonging to the Maoris.
13. Has there been any breach of the original understanding with respect to affording facilities for the education of Native children?—Yes.
14. In what way?—The school was objected to by Renata and myself when we put up our schools.
15. Where is your school situate—how far from this school?—It is at Pakowai, about a day's walk from Te Aute. I do not know the distance.
16. Was the ground of your objection to Mr. Williams's school that it was likely to interfere with the attendance of the children at your school?—There was no school then, because we urged that one should be put up, and one was put up at Te Aute.
17. Near it?—On the other side of the lake.
18. And maintained from the proceeds of the Te Aute estate?—I do not know.
19. Was the ground of your complaint that the school had not been put up on the Te Aute estate, but somewhere else?—The objection was that a house was put up on the Te Aute estate, but no school. The school was put up on Maori land, but that was closed.
20. Is there no school open now?—Only lately, since we urged upon the Government to put up schools.
21. Was there any reason why the Native children should not attend that school of Mr. Williams, notwithstanding that it was not exactly upon the Te Aute estate?—The school was broken up.
22. Why?—The children left because they were not being educated; they were only employed in chopping wood.
23. The children were withdrawn by their parents and friends?—No; they went away themselves; they were grown up.

24. The children, then, left of their own accord, and not at the instance or at the wish of Mr. Williams?—They left because they were not being educated.

25. Do you say of your own knowledge that no book-learning was taught them?—I did not see it myself. I only know they left.

26. Do you know of any children belonging to the tribe who originally granted the land being refused admittance into the school?—They were not prevented from attending the school, but there was no school for them.

27. Do you know of anything wrong in the present business management of the estate?—I do not know anything of that question.

28. Do you know whether sufficient rent is being paid for the occupation of the land?—That is a matter for the people concerned in the land to consider.

29. It is a matter for the trustees, you mean?—For Te Hapuku and others.

30. You were not interested in the land given?—No.

31. But although it is a matter for Te Hapuku, perhaps you know something of the value. If so, we should like your evidence on the point as to whether sufficient rent is being paid?—I do not know what the arrangements about leasing the land are.

32. You have been over the estate?—Yes.

33. Can you tell the Committee what sort of land it is?—It is level; partly bush.

34. Is it all level, or partly level and partly broken, or what?—It is hilly. Some of the bush has been burned off and the land laid down with grass.

35. Are the hills steep, or of such a character that they may be ploughed?—They might easily be ploughed.

36. Is the soil good?—Yes; it is rich land.

37. What do you think would be the value per acre of the land?—I cannot say.

38. Supposing the land were yours, and you were desirous of selling it, what would you take for it?—Perhaps £10 per acre.

39. Supposing you wished to let it, what would you expect to get for it?—£1 per acre. I have 300 acres in the vicinity, which I have leased at £1 per acre. It is the same sort of land.

40. How far is the Te Aute estate from Napier?—Thirty miles.

41. The railway runs through the estate?—Yes.

42. *Mr. Rolleston.*] Were you present at the original granting of this land by the Natives to the Governor and the Bishop?—The church was at my place, and Governor Grey and Bishop Selwyn came there.

43. What was the arrangement then made?—The talk about it took place at Te Aute, and then they came down to a place called _____, where the arrangement was completed.

44. Was there any understanding as to who was to conduct the school?—I understood it was to be conducted by Mr. Colenso.

45. Was there ever any understanding that Mr. Williams was to conduct the school?—I may make a mistake. I am not clear.

46. Are you aware whether there has been a wish on the part of the Natives that the school should be managed by any particular person?—Perhaps it was Mr. Williams, but I am not able to say clearly.

47. Have the Natives been dissatisfied with Mr. Williams at any time? Has there been any wish to change?—They object to Mr. Williams now.

48. On what account?—Because he does not conduct the money affairs properly. None of the local children go there. The children that go there belong to the Ngatiporou tribe.

49. Have you any reason to suppose that your children would be refused admittance if they applied to be admitted?—Mr. Williams would not drive them away.

50. You say you are dissatisfied with Mr. Williams about money matters. What are the particulars of your complaint?—I do not know.

51. *Mr. Williams.*] You complain that Mr. Williams did not start the school when he first went there?—Yes.

52. Out of what funds could he have done so?—I do not know.

53. Did you expect him to find the money himself?—I do not know. It was not the Natives that proposed the land should be given. It was the Governor and the Bishop.

54. Then, why do you complain against Mr. Williams?—Because we did not know the reason why there was no school for so many years.

55. I suppose you have been over the Te Aute estate?—I have seen it from the road.

56. You stated it could be ploughed. Are you aware that there are a great many stumps and roots in the land?—Yes; that is so. I said it was bush land. The bush has been burned off.

57. *Mr. Hursthouse.*] I understood you to say that a school had been built on the other side of the lake?—Yes.

58. How long after the land had been given was that school started?—Not two years.

59. Did the bulk of the Natives live on that side of the lake where the school was placed?—No; they lived on the other side. Mr. Williams lived in the pa at the time.

60. Was the school nearer the pa than it would have been if erected on the Te Aute estate?—It was in the pa.

61. Is it not possible that the school was held there for the greater convenience of the children?—I do not know.

TUESDAY, 30TH OCTOBER, 1877.

HENARE MATUA examined.

62. *The Chairman.*] You are one of the people who have petitioned the House respecting the Te Aute College Trust Estate. Are you desirous of making a statement to the Committee of your reasons

for sending in this petition?—Yes. The reason why the petition has been sent in is about the money and the school, because the money does not go to support the children who went to this school. The school has been up about five years, and it is said the parents should pay for the tuition of the children for their clothes, and a portion of their food. That is one reason why we sent in our petition. Another reason is that that land at Te Aute was given up for school purposes, but it is used for Mr. Williams's own purposes to enable him to make money out of it. These are our principal reasons why we wish Mr. Williams should have nothing to do with the land, and that some other person should be put upon it.

63. Do I understand you to say that the children attending the school are not educated out of the proceeds of the Trust?—No; the parents have to pay for the schoolmaster and for the children's clothes.

64. How much do they have to pay for schooling?—£20 a year.

65. Does that include board?—That is only for tuition.

66. What do the parents pay for board?—I do not know. I know they have to pay part of the board and part of the expense of clothing as well as the cost of tuition.

67. Part only?—Yes, a part.

68. Do I understand you to say that £20 a year is only a portion of the payment that has to be made?—The £20 is exclusive of clothes.

69. You state the children are not maintained out of the proceeds of the Trust. It is desirable to know whether that is so or not. That is why I am asking these questions?—Yes. The rule is that when a child goes to school £20 per annum is demanded. The Maoris gave up the land for the education of their children.

70. Do you think £20 is sufficient to pay all the expenses connected with the children and for the tuition of the children as well?—I do not know whether it is or not.

71. When you made your opening statement you did not allege that the Natives regretted having given the land. Do they do so?—Yes; they are dissatisfied now.

72. Do they wish the conditions of the Trust altered? Is that one of the objects of the petition?—Yes.

73. In what way?—In some new way, by which these evil things may be done away with.

74. Have you any children?—No.

75. Are there children of your tribe attending the school?—No.

76. Are they in a position to attend? Do their parents wish that they might attend?—Yes.

77. Have these parents made application to have their children put into the school?—Some wish to do so.

78. Have any applications been made to Mr. Williams to admit them?—They have applied to Mr. Williams, but they are afraid of this arrangement by which they have to pay £20 a year.

79. Has he refused them admission unless that sum is paid?—I do not know.

80. You do not know whether applications have been made for admission and refused?—They do not wish to pay the £20.

81. I wish I could get a direct answer to my question. Has any child been refused admission except £20 is paid?—He has not refused to admit them, but the £20 must be paid.

82. If the £20 is not paid, does he refuse to admit the children?—I do not know what is his answer on that point.

83. You have said, or I have understood you to say, that applications had been made for the admission of children and that they had been refused. By whom were the applications made?—Two persons whom I know asked Mr. Williams to allow their children to go to school. He agreed that they were to go, but that the parents were to pay £20 each for the tuition of their children. They were to provide clothing also.

84. Who were they?—Ereatara te Kuru and Hemi Riparipa.

85. Were you present when the application was made and Mr. Williams gave his answer, or are you dependent upon what some one else told you?—I was there when they sent their children.

86. How long ago was this?—About three years or four years ago.

87. The persons sending their children did not persist in sending their children when they found they had to pay?—They agreed to pay the money and the children went to school, but they bolted.

88. How much land was originally given by the Maoris?—I am not certain. I think about three or four thousand acres.

89. Could you give the Committee any idea of the value of the land at the present time?—I do not know.

90. If the land were yours, and you were desirous of selling it, what would you take for it per acre?—30s. or 40s.

91. And if you wished to lease it how much would you take?—1s. or 2s. per acre.

92. Do you know what is the total quantity of land in the estate, including what was given by the Government?—No.

93. Is the land level?—It is undulating.

94. What sort of hills? Could the hills be ploughed?—Part of them could be.

95. How much do you suppose could be ploughed—one-half?—I do not think half could be ploughed.

96. I see that, in certain evidence given before a Committee of the Legislative Council in the same petition, you complain of the children being put to manual labour. Is that an objection in your mind?—Yes. I object to children being employed in that way. They were not sent to school to carry buckets of water, to peel potatoes, or to chop wood. They can learn those things anywhere. They are sent to school to obtain knowledge.

97. They cannot be learning books the whole time. Would it be degrading to a child to carry a bucket of water?—Yes. Parents object to their children being employed in that way.

98. Do you allege that their employment in that way prevented them from obtaining a proper amount of study at their books?—That is the reason parents took their children away.

99. Would the parents prefer that the children should be allowed to be perfectly idle or engaged in play during the spare hours?—I have no answer to make to that question. It is not a proper one for me to answer.
100. I will separate it. Would parents have preferred that their children should have remained perfectly idle when not engaged in studying?—Parents thought the only thing that should be done was to teach the children in school.
101. Did you ever see the children doing manual labour?—Yes.
102. What kind?—I saw them chopping wood, fetching water, and carrying potatoes out of the fields.
103. Was this during school hours or not?—I do not know.
104. *Captain Russell.*] You state the money does not go to support the school. How do you know that?—Mr. Williams showed us that when he said the parents must pay for their children being sent to the school.
105. Then what becomes of the money?—I do not know where it goes.
106. Are you sure that the money does not go partially to support the school?—I am not prepared to say either one way or another.
107. Have you made any inquiries on the subject from Mr. Williams, the schoolmaster, or the trustee?—No.
108. Will you tell me the name of any single child whom Mr. Williams has refused admission to?—He has not refused admission to any, but he has always asked for the £20.
109. It is alleged that children have come from the East Coast and other parts of the colony to the school. Do you know whether these children have paid £20?—They paid the £20.
110. You state that the land given to the school is being used for Mr. Williams's purposes. Will you explain what you mean by that?—I did not say that.
111. Is the land used for school purposes or for Mr Williams's purposes?—The only thing I know is about the school itself.
112. To what is the £20 applied?—To the tuition of the children.
113. Is it not reasonable to suppose that the funds derived from the estate are applied to other expenses in connection with the school?—I do not think so, because, in addition to the £20, the parents are called upon to clothe the children, and to pay for a portion of the board.
114. You imagine that no part of the funds of the estate is applied to school purposes?—I do not know.
115. You have never taken the trouble to inquire of the trustees?—I do not know who they are.
116. I understand you to consider it an indignity that the child of a chief should be put to do manual labour?—Yes.
117. You would not think a schoolmaster neglected his duty if he failed to teach the Maori children any of the knowledge of a European?—I do not think so. The parents of the children know all those things perfectly well.
118. Would you not have Native children taught any European knowledge which involved manual labour?—I do not think a child should be sent to fetch water.
119. Never mind fetching water. I am referring to manual labour generally?—No.
120. Have you ever known young chiefs to go shearing?—Yes; they go of their own wish.
121. Have you ever known old chiefs to go and work in the sheep sheds?—Yes; they go of their own wish.
122. Do you know a great chief called Renata Kawepo?—If you ask me that question, I shall say I do not know.
123. Is there not a great chief in Hawke's Bay known as Renata Kawepo?—Perhaps he is a great chief.
124. Is he not one of the hardest-working chiefs in Hawke's Bay?—I do not think he is such a very hard-working man.
125. How can you speak positively as to the value of the estate if you do not know the area?—I do not know the area of the Government land.
126. Have you never heard the area of the Government land since it was given?—No.
127. Who first started this petition? Who was the father of it?—The people whose names are attached to it.
128. Whose idea was it originally?—Petitioner's own idea.
129. Was it not started by a European?—No.
130. *Mr. Takamoana.*] Have you stated all the reasons and all the grievances which led to the signing of this petition?—I forget some of the reasons.
131. Do you know when the school was first put up?—Yes.
132. Do you remember Mr. Williams first occupying the land?—Yes; I forget the year. He was living upon the Maori land, not the school land.
133. How long was he living upon the Native land?—Three or four years. I am not clear.
134. Was he teaching all that time?—He was teaching the first year; but when the children saw they were being put to do work they ran away.
135. Do you know how long Mr. Williams was on the Te Aute land before he built a school?—About fifteen years. That is my opinion.
136. When the school was put up, did the children of the people who gave the land go to the school?—No.
137. Why?—Because they had to do manual labour, and because their parents had to pay £20 a year, and to clothe them as well. Only the children from the Ngatiporou and the Wairoa tribe go there.
138. Who got up this petition against Mr. Williams?—The petitioners. I am one of them. Hapuku and Renata are others.
139. Where was this petition written?—At Te Hauke, at Te Hapuku's house.
140. How many persons were present?—About 200, including visitors and guests.

141. Were any Europeans invited to go there?—No. Some Europeans were there, but the meeting was not called for them.

142. Was Mr. Williams there?—Yes; and he heard the objections with reference to himself, and he heard what was going to be in the petition. He was told two things would be brought against him—first, in relation to the school; and, secondly, in relation to his action as a minister.

143. What did he do wrong as a minister?—He took up other occupations while a minister.

144. What were these occupations?—He was a colleague and on friendly terms with the Government of Hawke's Bay, who were taking action to destroy the Natives.

145. Who were the persons who made statements against Mr. Williams?—Renata was one.

146. Was Mr. Williams fully aware that a petition was going to be sent to this House?—Yes.

147. *Mr. Tawiti.*] Why is it you have sent in this petition?—Because we want a different arrangement. We want a new man and a new system.

148. You think Mr. Williams has been doing wrong, and you want the land placed in its original position for the benefit of the school?—Yes.

149. You do not ask for the land to be given back to you?—No.

THURSDAY, 1ST NOVEMBER, 1877.

HENARE MATUA examined—*continued.*

150. *Hon. Mr. Fox.*] You have told us that the Natives in your part of the country would not send their children to the school because of two or three things. You gave us as one reason that they had to do a good deal of work. Now, if these children had been living in the pa with their fathers and mothers, would they not have had to carry water and chop wood, and do these sort of things?—Yes.

151. Would it not have been equally degrading then?—No; it would have been their own work.

152. It made all the difference whether they did it by Mr. Williams's order or at the order of their fathers or mothers?—The difference is that they were sent to school for the purpose of being taught, not to be put to work, which they would have had to do at home.

153. Was there any understanding that they were not to do this wood and water work?—Yes; it was said they should not do these things.

154. By whom?—The parents told their children not to do it.

155. Did the parents tell you they had made this agreement, because you told us you had no children of your own?—They did not tell me, but they took their children away from school.

156. I see by the report of your evidence given before a Committee of the Legislative Council that you gave as a reason why the school did not succeed that they had to do work, but you did not say one word about the £20 a year pay being a reason. Why did you not give that as a reason when you were before the Committee?—Because they did not ask me anything about it.

157. They asked you what were the reasons why the children did not go to the school. Why did you not give that as a reason?—They did not ask me any questions on that point.

158. Yes, they did. They asked you why the children in your neighbourhood did not go to the school, and you did not say anything about what now appears to be the principal reason?—It was not led up to.

159. It was not led up to here, yet you volunteered the statement. However, we understand that none of the tribes immediately round the school sent their children to the school, but that the only children there belonged to the Ngatiporou and Wairoa?—Yes.

160. Do they pay?—Yes.

161. How do you know that?—Because the arrangement is that children shall pay £20 a year.

162. That does not keep the Ngatiporou and Wairoa from sending their children?—No.

163. By whom was it arranged that they should pay £20?—By Mr. Williams.

164. Are the Ngatiporou and Wairoa children obliged to work and carry wood and water?—I have not seen them so employed.

165. Have you seen the others so employed?—Yes.

166. I thought you said there were none there?—There were once. I refer to the time when Mr. Williams first went there.

167. How many years ago is that?—Ten or fifteen years.

168. You do not know that the Ngatiporou and Wairoa chiefs object to their children carrying wood and water, or think they are degraded by so doing?—I do not know their opinions on that point.

169. I want to ask you a question or two about this petition. This petition is signed by you, is it not?—Yes.

170. Did you sign your name?—Yes.

171. When you signed your name, was the petition itself attached to these signature sheets, or were the two things separate?—No. I want to explain. The petition was drafted or written in one place and the names were signed in another place, and this is a copy of the original petition.

172. Was the petition attached to these signature sheets headed "Names" when you signed?—No; it was not attached to it at the time. Renata and Hapuku were explaining the petition when I was taking this paper round to get it signed.

173. Did other Natives sign it without its being attached to the petition?—When the petition was finished it was read to the whole of the people, and it was signed.

174. Who read it out?—I did.

175. Where did you get the petition from?—Te Hapuku's house.

176. Who wrote it?—Mr. Grace.

177. Was it written in Maori?—Yes.

178. But it was not written by any Maori?—No. The Maoris made a statement which Mr. Grace wrote.

179. Do you mean that the Maoris dictated it?—The original was written by the Maoris, and then it was given to Mr. Grace to copy it.
180. Where did Mr. Grace copy it?—At Hapuku's house.
181. Are you quite certain that Mr. Grace did not bring the petition with him from Napier when he came up?—I do not know of Mr. Grace bringing up the petition from any place.
182. Who wrote the names in English?—Mr. Grace.
183. Who wrote the original?—I did.
184. You drew the petition up?—Yes; I drew it up, and it was consented to by all the people.
185. Did anybody in Napier send up word that this petition was to be got up?—I know of no words sent up from Napier that this petition was to be got up.
186. Or from Waipukurau?—No.
187. You said you did not know what the area of this estate was?—Yes.
188. But this petition states what the area is, and you drew up the petition, you say. How did you manage to get those figures into it?—I knew it at the time I drew up the petition, but I had forgotten that when I gave evidence the other day.
189. You told us the other day you never had known it?—I did not recollect the acreage when I was asked the question.
190. Perhaps your memory is not very good?—A man may forget a good many things. You may forget things, and I may not forget things.
191. You say you got this petition signed. Why did Te Hapuku sign his name in two places: once on the last sheet of the petition, and again on the first sheet of names?—I only saw him sign his name once.
192. Why did he sign twice?—I did not see him sign at the foot of the petition. It was Renata who told me Te Hapuku had signed at the foot of the petition.
193. Did you hear, before I asked you to-day, that Te Hapuku had signed his name twice?—Yes.
194. Who told you?—He told me himself. Renata also told me.
195. I want to know what Mr. Grace did in connection with this petition. Was he very busy about it?—All he did was to put the Maori petition into that writing.
196. Did he make any speech to the Maoris, encouraging them to sign the petition?—No.
197. How did he come to be there at the meeting?—He was sent for.
198. Who sent for him?—Te Hapuku, the person who called the meeting.
199. Why did he not get some Maori to do all the work?—That is Hapuku's business.
200. Where did you send to for Mr. Grace—to Mr. Sheehan's office?—Yes; to Mr. Sheehan's office, at Napier. He has no other place.
201. *The Chairman.*] When you wrote the original draft of this petition, did you do it alone, or had you any assistance in doing it?—I had the assistance of Te Hapuku's meeting. Renata, Tareha, and other chiefs were there.
202. In what way was this assistance rendered? Had you the pen and were you writing, and were they making suggestions?—I had the pen in my hand.
203. How did you ascertain the exact acreage of the land, not only of the Native land, but of the land granted by the Government?—It was told to me.
204. By whom?—By Mr. Grace.
205. Then, Mr. Grace was assisting you to draw up the original petition?—Mr. Grace was sitting there; not helping me.
206. Did Mr. Grace assist you in any other way. You admit he assisted you to the extent of giving you the acreage. Did he assist you in any other way?—No.
207. Did he not suggest to you the proper terms to use?—No.
208. Do I understand you to say that Mr. Grace subsequently made an exact copy of the draft you had written, and that that copy forms the present petition?—Yes. This is a copy of the original petition. The original is at Napier.
209. In your handwriting?—Yes.
210. I want to ask you a question upon another point altogether. It is a very simple question. What were the ages of the children who were put to work, and who were afterwards withdrawn?—They were of different sizes. Some were almost young men, and some were children.
211. Were these children withdrawn by their parents, or did they leave of their own accord? Were they sufficiently advanced in years to exercise their own discretion in that way?—Those who were grown up and sufficiently advanced left of their own accord, but the smaller ones were taken away by their parents.
212. Solely in consequence of their being put to work, which their parents considered objectionable. Was that the sole reason?—That was the reason.
213. Are you aware whether the same system, which existed in the former school so many years ago, and which you considered so objectionable, continues in the present school?—The children were doing this work, and they all ran away.
214. Yes. That is not an answer. That is a long time ago?—At the present school, when put to that work, they ran away.
215. How long ago is that?—Two or three years ago.
216. Can you give the names of any children who were put to work of that kind within the last two or three years?—Yes; I know the names of some.
217. Referring to the printed report of your evidence as given before the Legislative Council, I would draw your attention to question 275, and the answer. It is this: "I would like to know if the witness knows of any Maori boy attending the school who was asked to do any manual labour?—What I have said does not refer to the school as it is established at present, but as it formerly was." I understand you now give an answer somewhat inconsistent with that. You say you refer to a recent period?—I was not asked about the children at the present school. I spoke then about the children at the former school.

218. *Mr. Rolleston.*] Have you seen the buildings on the Te Aute estate in which the children are housed?—Yes.

219. Have you been in them?—Only in the schoolhouse. Not into the dormitories.

220. According to the evidence given before the Legislative Council the children are taught in one of the dormitories, and not in the schoolhouse?—I only saw the place in which the children were being taught. I did not know where they slept.

221. Out of what moneys do you suppose that place was built?—I have never been told.

222. Do you suppose that the moneys that are derived from the annual rent of the property are sufficient to build those buildings and to have also maintained the school?—Yes; because the land has been there for so many years.

223. What do you suppose the buildings cost?—I do not know. I would guess £3,000.

224. Do you know what the rents have been?—I only know about Mr. Williams's new lease.

225. If the rent had been £500 a year for six years, how much would there have been left for the maintenance of the school after payment had been made for these buildings?—I do not know what balance there would have been, because the amount would be £3,000.

226. Then, would it be fair to say that Mr. Williams was using the Trust money for his own purposes if these buildings were put up from moneys derived from those rents?—I have not asserted that Mr. Williams is taking the money for his own purposes.

227. Were you aware what were the conditions when the land was given?—I understood the land was given for a school, and that the school was to be maintained by the land.

228. To whom was it given?—To Governor Grey and Bishop Selwyn.

229. Had you then any knowledge of Mr. Williams?—Mr. Williams was sent for from Otaki by the people of Hawke's Bay. That is how we knew him.

230. Was that at the request of the Natives, or was it one of the conditions of the land being given up, especially with Hapuku?—I do not know that any arrangement was made that Mr. Williams was to be sent for.

231. Could you say that no such arrangement was made?—I cannot say that no such arrangement was made, but I did not hear of it. All I heard was that Mr. Williams was invited to come.

232. It is a boarding-school. Do you know whether the Maoris, under any circumstances, do not like to send their children away from home to live at boarding-schools?—I do not know what objection persons have to that.

233. Which do you think they prefer—sending their children to another place to be taught, or having them taught at the pa?—I do not know which they prefer.

MONDAY, 5TH NOVEMBER, 1877.

Rev. S. WILLIAMS examined.

234. *The Chairman.*] The Committee are desirous of having your evidence, Mr. Williams, upon the petition of Te Hapuku in reference to the Te Aute College Trust Estate. We have before us a printed report of the evidence you gave before a Committee of the Legislative Council, and if you would refer to that report it might obviate the necessity of repeating the evidence you then gave. But the Committee will be happy to listen to anything you may have to say?—I have not much to state beyond what I have already said before a Committee of the Legislative Council. I feel convinced in my own mind that this petition did not originate with the Natives. I think I have said that pretty plainly before.

235. There is one point that did not appear to come out before the Legislative Council—that was as to whether the school was ever supported in part or wholly by aid from the Government?—I showed, I think, in my evidence before the Royal Commission, that certain sums were given by the Government during the first few years after I went to Te Aute. The Government used to give me an annual grant of £300, which I got through the Wellington Education Board, to meet current expenses. I think there was a grant in addition. Then I had a further sum promised me by Sir George Grey for the erection of school buildings.

236. *Hon. Mr. Fox.*] Did you get that?—No. Bishop Abraham called the attention of the Ministry to the fact that that promise had not been fulfilled; and when Sir George Grey, on his return to this country, was at a meeting at Pawhakairo, Hawke's Bay, a chief named Paraone Hakikaki called his attention to the fact that the promise had never been fulfilled. He renewed the promise, and said he would see that the funds were provided. I after this heard from Bishop Abraham that Sir George Grey found there was a difficulty in the way of procuring this money, and that Sir George Grey would, for £900 subscribed by the chiefs of Hawke's Bay, give £100 himself out of his own private funds.

237. In going over your evidence given before the Royal Commission, I did not observe that you said that an annual grant was given?—I would not be sure that it was then stated. There was an inquiry, prior to that by the Royal Commission, by Mr. Henry Russell. Then it was clearly shown what were the exact sums received from the Education Board.

238. Will you state now when the grant in aid commenced, and how long it continued?—In 1854 I first received a grant from the Wellington Board, and I think it was continued for four years. I also had a grant from the Government of £500 towards the purchase of sheep, and I think, in my evidence before the Royal Commission, I showed that there were 2500 sheep purchased.

239. That appears in the report of the Royal Commission?—Yes. The sum promised towards the school buildings was never paid. Failing in obtaining any money for school buildings after Sir George Grey returned to this country, and after the destruction of the school buildings at Poverty Bay during the Maori war, the Bishop of Waipapa petitioned the General Assembly, asking for funds, and, failing in obtaining that, it was suggested that the money should be paid as compensation for the destruction of the buildings at Poverty Bay, but he failed in obtaining any assistance.

240. What are the purposes of the Trust?—The education of Natives, and, to some extent, for the Europeans. Part of the ground given is Native land and part Government land, so that it is to benefit both Natives and Europeans.

241. *Hon. Mr. Fox.*] Of any particular district?—No; with the exception of a stipulation in one of the grants that a school shall be built at Te Aute. I do not think the object of the Trust is at all limited.

242. *The Chairman.*] Will you be kind enough to explain how far the purposes of the Trust have been carried out?—On first opening the school there was no income from the estate, and I had to manage as best I could in educating the children with grants from the Education Board. As there was no money for building purposes, I had to erect raupo buildings, close to the Maori pa, in order that I might be able to give my services to the Natives of the whole district; and at this place, in addition to the time spent with the boarders, I gave the Natives an hour's instruction every day before they dispersed to their work. I kept this up for five years. I should have said that the Natives from Patangata and the Tamumu came to Te Aute to reside, in order that they might benefit by the instruction I gave them. But in 1859, in consequence of disputes with Te Hapuku principally, the Natives dispersed, and then, finding I could not be of much service there, the raupo building also falling into decay, I commenced erecting my present dwelling-house on the school estate, with the view of, as soon as possible, erecting a building for school purposes. As soon as possible we erected the present school building. Since there has been any income from the estate I have endeavoured to provide for a certain number of European children. We calculated that we could keep about twenty foundation scholars altogether, and I have endeavoured to keep five European boys. There are three European boys there now, two having left, and I purpose taking two or three more as soon as the additions to our building are completed, which are almost now fit for occupation.

243. Upon what terms are the Native scholars received?—The only stipulation I make is that the parents shall as far as possible clothe them.

244. We have had it stated to us in evidence that you make a charge of £20 per annum for children?—I should be surprised to hear any one make such an assertion. I have never charged a sixpence, nor have I received a sixpence.

245. Henare Matua made the statement?—Henare Matua must have known better; because I have had three children from his hapu, and I have never made any charge for them or received anything.

246. I understand you are manager of the estate?—Yes; I managed it for the Trust till 1869, and in 1869 the trustees came to the determination to let the property. Having, in consequence of remarks from certain quarters, decided to let the property, and having fixed the income they expected, they offered to let it to me; and I, having been advised by several gentlemen in the district to retain the management of it as far as possible, accepted the offer.

247. What rent do you pay?—I have been paying £500 a year in addition to the improvements I have made for the benefit of the estate.

248. When does that lease expire?—On 1st February next.

249. Can you give the Committee any idea of the value of the estate to sell?—I have always avoided giving an opinion on that point, and I would rather not give an opinion now.

250. Is £500 a sufficient rental for the estate now?—Certainly not.

251. I will just ask you, but not press for an answer, what in your opinion would be a sufficient rental?—I would rather not enter into that question.

252. Does the occupation of your time in the management of the estate interfere in any way with the instruction you ought to give to the children?—I may say I have not interfered with the management of the estate further than directing the person in charge.

253. Then it does not interfere?—Not in the least. Beyond that, I give my services gratuitously.

254. *Mr. Takamoana.*] Did you attend Te Hapuku's meeting?—Yes; I was there on 8th and 9th August.

255. Did Hapuku and Renata say anything to you?—Yes. Renata Kawepo was speaking to the resolution in reference to the Native Land Court Bill. He advised the meeting that they should upset or set aside all Government Courts of every description, and even went on so far as to advise the meeting to tear up (*pakaru*) their Crown grants, and hold the land as they formerly held it. Then he pointed to me and said, "Here is a Government man, Williams; let us turn him out, and take Te Aute property into our own hands." There was no other remark made upon this subject for a considerable length of time. The Natives, in speaking to the land question, made no reference to Te Aute, and after some time Renata rose again and said, "I have spoken about Te Aute, and not one of the original holders has said one word in my support." Renata Pakututa then referred to a conversation which we had had at a meeting at Te Aute twelve months previously. Hapuku called the original owners of the land together, and invited me to meet them. He then put in a claim for part of the rent of the estate. He said, "Inasmuch as our young people will not go to school, we ought to have part of the rent paid to us." I made the reply which has been already reported. The other Natives then said they had come merely out of courtesy to Hapuku to see what he wanted, but they had no wish in the matter. I replied to Hapuku that I could not pay any rent to them without the sanction of the trustees or of Parliament. Renata then rose again and said my reply was not satisfactory. They did not recognize Parliament or trustees or anybody else except me. Having given the land to me I was the only person responsible to them. He said "*He ana*," &c., "*Whakakohi a Te Wiremu*." Hapuku spoke and said, "You are right, my people wanted a minister, and I said I would only hear of Williams. He is the only person we have to deal with in the question."

256. Did you hear the reasons for which the meeting was called?—It was called in consequence of the completion of the whare runanga at Te Hapuku's. Many Native chiefs invited me to go there and open the meeting.

257. Were you not told that the Te Aute question would form part of the reasons for calling the meeting?—Certainly not.

258. Were you aware that the Native lands question was to be one?—There were no subjects mentioned to me when I was asked to attend the meeting.

259. When Renata was speaking, did you not think he was speaking upon some preconceived resolution?—I was aware that Renata was speaking to a resolution brought before the meeting—namely, that of the Native land question.

260. *Hon. Mr. Fox.*] If I understand you rightly, you stood towards that establishment, at various periods referred to, in a double capacity—first of all as manager, and afterwards as lessee, and also as teacher?—Yes.

261. Do you receive any pay in respect to either of them?—No.

262. From beginning to end?—No.

263. You have made great improvements on the property?—Yes, I have made all the improvements upon it. I would like to show what was the original value of the land. I have stated before the Royal Commission that for years we could not use the land. The 250 ewes given to start the property were put on the small block of 1,700 acres, the rest of the property being unoccupied. Mr. Pharazyn was in the neighbourhood about this time, and he offered me Government price for the land—a farthing per acre per annum. I let him have the land—that is, the 4,000-acre block—the land on one side of this being partly a dense bush and partly covered with dense fern, and useful only as a boundary fence. He paid me for four years £4 3s. 4d. per annum, and then he gave it up because it would not pay him to occupy the land. For three years and a half more it lay idle and returned nothing. Then Mr. Smith offered £5 per month, which he paid for seven months, and then he gave it up. Seeing the land was and would be utterly useless unless I spent money in improving it, I, out of my own funds—it being impossible to raise money on the land—fenced it and otherwise improved it, with a view to obtaining some income off the land for educational purposes. It might seem extraordinary that the land would not bring more than the amount I have stated, but at that time any settler could take up Government land at a rental of a farthing an acre, with every chance of making it his own freehold in the course of time; but any one taking up this land must do so with the certain knowledge that any money spent must be lost to him, and that there was not the least chance of making the land his own.

264. Then the difference between the intrinsic value of the land when Mr. Pharazyn rented it, and its intrinsic value now, was merely caused by the expenditure of your funds and labour upon it?—Yes, excepting a few improvements about the homestead. I have mentioned, in evidence which I have given before, that it was pointed out to me that if I failed in reimbursing myself from the income of the estate, and that if there was any loss on my part, there was not the least chance of the money being refunded to me from any other source.

265. *Captain Russell.*] From whom did you understand that?—I knew it myself, but it was also pointed out to me by Bishop Abraham.

266. *Hon. Mr. Fox.*] Then you did it at your own risk?—Yes, and not a slight risk, considering the state of the country. I have known a relative of mine to advance several hundred pounds for the purpose of improving one of the Waikato school estates, and lose nearly the whole of it.

267. We have heard a great deal from the Natives about the school having been broken up, and the children kept away from it because they had an objection to be put to manual labour—that they considered manual labour degrading, and objected to it also because they went to school to learn book-knowledge, and not to do work. Can you give us any information on that point?—At the commencement of these schools it was made a strong point of by Bishop Selwyn, and also by Sir George Grey, that the Native youths should be taught to do various kinds of work, and that they should be called upon to do a moderate amount of work out of school hours. I had a school at Otaki before this one for seven years, and before that I had to do with a school in Auckland, and at these places the boys had to do work. The Auckland School was called St. John's College, and there both English and Native boys had to work. At Otaki I had 120 children—sixty boarders—and there also they did work a part of the time, and did it cheerfully. The work consisted of cultivating potatoes for their own use, and such things as that. As to the work being of a degrading character, I positively deny that. This was carried out to some extent when I went to Hawke's Bay; but the school was not closed on that account. When I went to Hawke's Bay I had £300 a year given me to do the best I could with, but at the end of 1858 there was a change made in the Government system, and, instead of my receiving £300 per annum, I received £8 per head for each scholar. I found the cost of keeping a scholar amounted to £20 or £25 a year, and, with a debt staring me in the face, it was beyond my reach to provide £12 or £15 towards the maintenance of each scholar. Therefore, for that and other reasons, the school was closed, and I devoted my attention in this matter to the improvement of the estate, with a view of opening the school more efficiently in a few years' time.

268. Then you do not think that the fact of these children being put to a moderate amount of farm labour led to their being withdrawn?—No. It has never been brought forward till of late years. At the time they were doing the work, such a thing was not heard of.

269. They draw a distinction between the children being put to work by the master and by the fathers and mothers?—I have only heard of it during the last few years. For a number of years there has been no manual work done by the scholars, except assisting the servant to chop wood. The boys take turns in assisting the servant to chop the wood into small billets.

270. Have you known the parents of children from the Ngatiporou and other tribes object to their children doing this work?—I have received no complaints except those made in this House.

271. *Mr. Williams.*] You mean by petition?—Yes. I have also heard that Karaitiana Takamoana and Wi Parata a few years since made complaints, and that then again in 1875 there were complaints made in some evidence given by Karaitiana.

272. *Hon. Mr. Fox.*] You intimated just now that you did not think the petition was the spontaneous result of the Natives' own minds on the subject?—That is my opinion.

273. How did you get that idea?—I was told by two of the Native members of the House, in 1875, that Mr. Henry Russell had endeavoured to get some Natives to give evidence against me, and that they had declined to do so. He then returned to Hawke's Bay, and I was told by some Natives that he said he would not be satisfied until he had removed me from Te Aute. Then, again, on the 8th August, at

this meeting, Mr. Russell was present, and I have been told by the Natives since that after I retired he incited the Maori chiefs against me. I am told positively that there was nothing whatever said about the petition by the meeting, and that it was not till the 10th that papers were forwarded to the meeting requesting that signatures should be obtained on sheets of paper, and that a petition would be attached to the papers in Napier.

274. Do you know from whom this intimation came?—I was told it was by letter from Mr. William Grace.

275. Was Mr. Grace present at the meeting?—I saw him there on the 8th and 9th; but I am told he returned to Napier on the evening of the 9th or the morning of the 10th, and then sent these papers. There were some Ngatiraukawa Natives at the meeting, who returned to Manawatu, and I asked the Chairman of the Committee of the Legislative Council to allow two of them to be called and give evidence. They did so, and their evidence will be found printed with the other evidence. Nerehana and Wirihana te Ahuta are the witnesses I allude to. They state clearly that there was no petition brought while they were there, but simply columns presented for signature. I was struck by one of these men stating that he signed under the impression that it was a protest against some meeting at Taupo. He said, "You will find my signature third or fourth from the bottom of the page," and on the Interpreter turning over the leaves he found the man's name fourth from the bottom. This statement agrees with what the Natives told me in Hawke's Bay.

276. You have seen the duplicate petition to this in the Legislative Council?—Yes.

277. Do you think it bears internally evidence that it is a Maori petition?—No; I have no hesitation in saying it is an English petition translated into Maori.

278. *Mr. Rolleston.*] How many children are there in the school?—There are thirty-six on the books.

279. What kind of an arrangement is there with regard to payment for the maintenance of these children—for their food, and so on? You say the cost is about £20 a year: in what way do you receive the money?—Provisions are ordered and paid for as delivered.

280. Paid for by whom?—From the funds of the estate. I expend the money, and render all accounts to the trustees.

281. There are regular accounts kept?—Yes, and have been from the commencement.

282. Do these go to the Diocesan Board, or what?—I render the accounts to the trustees, and they have to place them before the Diocesan or General Synod, or both. I have had some difficulty in getting the accounts audited. For the past three years they have been audited by a General Government officer, the Commissioner of Stamps, in Napier. Previously to that they were audited by Mr. Henry Russell, and then by Mr. Stokes.

283. The rent paid is £500 a year?—Yes.

284. Does that cover expenses?—No. For the last two years we have had a grant of £200 a year from the Government.

285. *Hon. Mr. Fox.*] The trustees have had a grant?—Yes.

286. Not you personally?—No.

287. *Mr. Rolleston.*] That covers expenses?—Yes. But there is a balance which I have advanced myself, but not a great deal.

288. Is there any understanding between you and the trustees as to what is to be done at the termination of the lease?—None whatever. I stated in 1875 that I put in no claim. I believe I might claim a large sum of money, but I have no wish to do that.

289. *Captain Russell.*] You say there are some Europeans attending the school?—Yes.

290. Do they pay anything towards the school expenses?—No; they are children of poor parents, who are not able to pay school fees.

291. Then they are exactly on the same footing as the Natives?—Yes. They are supposed to derive the benefit from the Government land.

292. You said you had five Europeans in the school. Have you limited the number of Europeans in proportion to the benefit Europeans might be supposed to claim to derive from the school?—I have not felt myself at liberty to take in more than five, because the estate is only supposed at present to support twenty scholars, in addition to other expenses which we have been obliged to meet. The schoolmaster's salary has been paid from funds outside the estate, and the Government grant has been purely for the support of Native and half-caste children.

293. Out of what funds was the schoolhouse built?—Out of private funds, in the first instance; but that expenditure has been reimbursed from the income of the estate.

294. We have had it stated here that the Wairoa and Ngatiporou children pay £20 towards their board and maintenance?—I have never received a sixpence from any children. Their clothing is paid for by the parents; I have nothing to do with that.

295. It is not true, then, that the Ngatiporou children pay?—It is positively false.

296. I understood you to say just now that you had leased the property for £500, but, in addition to the rent you paid, you had spent large sums in improving the land. Was that part of the lease?—There was a discussion as to what I should pay. There was a difference of opinion as to the value of the estate, and the trustees offered it to me for £500. I told them I should like to spend £100 a year upon the estate, if possible, but I did not see my way clear at the time to get £600 a year out of it. My object was to benefit the estate. If I had wished to benefit myself I should not have stopped there. The estate was in a peculiar position: a poor man could not take it, because he would not be able to find the necessary money to work it to advantage, and a person having means would not take it because he would expect to make something out of it, and eventually make the estate his own. I did what nobody else would do. In saying this, I refer to the whole period of my connection with the estate until it was let.

297. There was a verbal understanding, but no written agreement?—Yes.

298. Have you spent that £100 a year?—Yes, I have spent a much larger amount.

299. I do not think it has been distinctly said, but the Committee have been led to understand

that you are obliged to instruct in the school?—My services are given gratuitously; there was no stipulation of that kind.

300. *Mr. Rolleston.*] Was there any understanding when the land was given as to you or anybody else being connected with the estate?—A stipulation was made by Sir George Grey. The object was to get me up from Otaki to Hawke's Bay, and the land was given both by the Natives and the Governor to induce me to go. Sir George Grey said plainly, "Understand, if you do not come to Hawke's Bay, the grant will not be made." And the Natives said, "We wish to understand from you that you will come, because we give this land to induce you to come. If you do not come, we will not give the land."

301. *Captain Russell.*] Henare Matua said the money from the estate was spent, not on the estate, but on Mr. Williams. I presume he meant before you erected these buildings?—Henare Matua has never taken any interest in the matter before he came here to Wellington. I do not think he ever visited the school.

302. Do you think he meant that the money was spent in improving the estate?—I do not know.

303. That is how the money was expended?—Yes.

304. Judging by past experience, do you think that was wise?—Yes, decidedly. I think it would have been much better if more money had been spent upon the land.

305. Supposing you had spent all the money in education, would the estate have now been in as good a position as it now is to return a rental?—No.

306. You think the estate has been placed in its present position simply because of the money that has been spent?—Yes.

307. *Hon. Mr. Fox.*] And the money you found out of your own pocket?—Yes—all advances before the date of the lease, and all sums over the £500 rent after that date. The £500 rent went towards the school.

308. *Captain Russell.*] Could the property have been let to any advantage, say, in the years from 1860 to 1865?—No; freeholds could then be obtained on very easy terms indeed.

309. Have you any idea what Native land would fetch as a rental in 1860?—About £100 per 5,000 acres for a twenty-one years' lease. The question will require further consideration.

310. The last witness we had, Henare Matua, appeared to have examined the school; did he do so?—No, not that I can remember.

311. Has he ever asked you for information?—No.

312. He has never complained to you of the management of the estate?—No; the only thing that Henare Matua ever mentioned to me was that he did say something about having a Native trustee appointed with the other trustees. There was no fault found with the management.

313. Was he one of the original owners of the land?—No; as he says, he is a relative of the ancestors of those who gave the land.

314. Are the Natives generally aware that the Te Aute estate consists of two blocks, one of which was given by the Government, and the other, the smaller one, by the Natives?—Yes; they have been told that repeatedly.

315. Are they aware that by the terms of the grant the land was given for the benefit of Europeans as well as of Natives?—Yes; Bishop Selwyn was very particular in the first instance about having a clear understanding with the Natives. He not only asked the question at the time, but wrote me a letter subsequently, requesting me to be very particular in seeing that they understood that the land was given for general education.

316. That was distinctly understood?—It was distinctly explained by me at the meeting. The Natives were also asked whether they would approve of scholars being brought from Melanesia, and they replied they would be glad to see them. "The more the merrier," they said.

317. I understood you to say you imagined the petition was not drawn up by the Natives in the first instance?—That is my opinion, judging from the mode of expression used.

318. Did you hear anything of this petition until it was drawn up?—The first mention I heard of a petition was when I was told by a Native, immediately after the meeting in August last, that a petition had been signed. I asked what was the object of the petition. He said he did not know. I asked again, Was there nothing read or explained at the meeting? He said "No," and added that a letter came up from Napier asking for signatures on papers with lines drawn across them; but there was no petition attached—that was to be done afterwards. On the Monday following, when in Napier for the purpose of giving evidence in connection with the *Waka Maori* case, I met Mr. Grace, who volunteered the statement that the Natives had signed a petition asking that the Te Aute estate land might be returned to them. I thanked him for the information, and told him I had been asked by the Natives themselves what was the object of the petition which had been drawn up by him. He said, "Oh, I had nothing to do with it."

319. Do you think it would be wise to appoint a Native trustee?—I would not recommend it at present.

320. Have you any opinion as to the course which should be followed in future for letting or dealing with the estate?—I have suggested to the trustees that they might arrive at the value of the estate by a valuation, or by submitting it to public tender or public auction. So far as I am concerned I am indifferent as to which course should be adopted.

321. There is no understanding between yourself and the trustees as to having a new lease granted to you?—No. I have heard it remarked by more than one gentleman of position in Wellington that it was astonishing that two of the trustees should act solely on their own judgment, ignoring the other two trustees. I therefore asked the chairman of the trustees if anything had been done, and I was furnished with a copy of the minutes of the last meeting of the trustees. It appeared that letters had been read from Mr. Stokes, and it was resolved that no steps should be taken in the matter until Mr. George Hunter, one of the trustees, visited Hawke's Bay and Te Aute and gained further information on the subject.

322. I have seen it stated in print that a reason why the estate is not to be offered for rental or cut up is that such action might injure the property of Mr. Stokes, whose land adjoins?—I should say that if that had any effect it would be to improve the value of Mr. Stokes's property.

323. You do not think that it would injure Mr. Stokes's property?—No, and, if it would, I do not think the trustees would stoop to consider that. It could not affect Mr. Stokes. There is a high ridge of almost impassable hills between the two properties.

324. *The Chairman.*] The Committee has had evidence from Henare Matua that he wrote the petition—the original petition—that Mr. Grace was present, and assisted to the extent of supplying information as to the exact acreage of the estate, and no further; and that Mr. Grace merely copied the original draft which he (Henare Matua) had made. Is that consistent with the impression on your mind?—No. Besides, Mr. Grace, in his evidence before the Legislative Council, says he sent down to Napier for the petition. Question 187 is this:—"Then, as a result of this meeting, this petition was got up?—Yes; they asked me to send down to Mr. Sheehan's office for a petition, stating what the effect of it would be. I sent down a memorandum of what was wanted, and it was sent next day in English, when I explained it to Henare Matua and other Natives, who signed it; and from the English a Native copy was made." I would also call attention to what Henare Matua says. He says, in his evidence before the Legislative Council, "I was at Napier at the time that this petition was signed." Then, at question 291, he says,—“Was your signature attached to the petition at the time of the meeting?—The signatures were attached to the petition afterwards.”

325. *Hon. Mr. Fox.*] You have said that the school is full, and that each child cost £25 per year?—I spoke then of former times, but the cost is about the same now—from £20 to £25, including education.

326. I presume the number of educatable children in Hawke's Bay might be three hundred?—Not far short of that.

327. There are now thirty children at the school, so that, if you had to educate all the children in Hawke's Bay, there would be a necessity for providing accommodation for two hundred and seventy more, together with an annual cost of £5,000 for the maintenance of the school. Do you see your way clear to do that?—No. But I may say there is a great unwillingness on the part of the children to go to school. That has also been seen in the case of the Pakowhai and Omahu schools. Not long since Renata complained to me of the children not going to his school, and said he hoped in future years the Natives would better appreciate his efforts.

328. *Mr. Hursthouse.*] Have you refused any applications for admission into the school?—I have refused no applications from Hawke's Bay District itself. There were some applications a short time ago from the Wairoa District, but I told them there was not yet sufficient accommodation, and that when there was sufficient accommodation I would be glad to receive them. I expect they will come at the beginning of next year.

329. *The Chairman.*] You have refused no application from the original holders of the land?—No. On the contrary, I have done all I could to induce them to send their children.

330. *Mr. Williams.*] You refused the others simply because you had no accommodation?—Yes. I simply asked them to wait a little while.

331. *Mr. Taiaroa.*] You never made the parents pay you anything for the children being at the school?—No.

332. Is Henare Matua's statement that you demanded £20 true or false?—It is false. I never asked or received sixpence.

333. Were you in Hawke's Bay at the time the land was given?—Yes. I arrived there a fortnight before Sir George Grey and Bishop Selwyn.

334. You have a lease of the land?—Yes; till 1st February.

335. Are you willing that the trustees should publish their intention to lease the land?—Yes; perfectly.

[TRANSLATION.]

Mokowhiti, 24th August, 1877.

WE inform you of some words which we did not see or hear; we saw them in the European newspaper, and there was also a word in the *Wananga*. The first word in the European newspaper goes on to say that the people of Te Aute have written a petition for the purpose of ejecting Mr. Williams, the minister of Te Aute. We say that we, the people of this place, Te Aute, neither saw nor heard of that petition: that is to say, the petition emanating from Te Hapuku and Henry Russell. This talk took place at Te Hauke Poukawa. Another word said at that meeting was that Crown grants should be done away with, and things should revert to their old position. We do not want to see Crown grants done away with, because we have not seen the disasters resulting from the grants; they result from the action of the people. It is false to say that the disasters come from the grants. Our opinion is that they come from the people. Sufficient are those words. . . .

From your friends,

KEREMENETA TAUKERE,
And 6 Others.

To Dr. Buller.

TUESDAY, 6TH NOVEMBER, 1877.

Mr. W. H. GRACE examined.

336. *The Chairman.*] You are a Native Interpreter, residing at Napier?—Yes.

337. *Mr. Takamoana.*] Why was it you came to Napier?—I was requested by the Natives, through Mr. Sheehan, to come into the district.

338. What were your relations to be with the Natives in Napier?—To work as interpreter for them, and between them and Mr. Sheehan.

339. What was the reason why you were appointed interpreter?—I understood they could not trust any other interpreters residing in the district.

340. Did you know, on your arrival in Napier, that Te Aute was a piece of land to the management of which exception was taken?—I heard a great deal of discussion with respect to the management of the Te Aute estate.

341. In the discussions that took place respecting that land, were you present as interpreter?—At all meetings and discussions since I have been there, I have always attended and acted as interpreter.

342. Were you requested to be present at Te Hapuku's meeting?—I was sent for.

343. What to do?—To act as secretary. They wanted a report of the proceedings to be published, and also it was their wish that notes of all their discussions should be kept.

344. Did you see Mr. Williams at that meeting?—I did.

345. Was Mr. Williams present when the speeches were made?—Yes, he came into the place after the discussion had been going on for some time—for about an hour or more. He then came in.

346. Will you state to the Committee what took place?—They had several subjects to discuss, and they had commenced the discussion on these matters when Mr. Williams came in. As soon as he came in, or a few minutes afterwards, Renata jumped up and said he was very glad Mr. Williams had come there, because he was going to talk about the Te Aute estate, and that was one reason why he was very glad he was present, so that it could not be said that any statements he would make were made behind his back. He then went on to give his reasons why he found fault with Mr. Williams in the management of the Te Aute estate. He said that when they wanted information from Mr. Williams as to what moneys were accruing from that land they could never find out; that in many instances, when Mr. Williams went to their pas to preach, he (Renata), with others, had often asked him about the Te Aute estate, and what moneys there were; and they could never get an answer. Two or three years ago (in 1873) the Maoris thought they would support schools of their own, and they thought also that some of the moneys accruing from Te Aute would help them greatly in the advancement of these schools at Pakowhai and Omahu. Besides that, Mr. McLean, who was then Native Minister, had informed the Natives that for every pound collected by the Natives towards these schools the Government would give £2. The Pakowhai Natives, it is stated by them, raised very nearly £1,000. The money from the Government they never got, and they exhausted very nearly all the money they raised in building the school. From want of funds the Pakowhai school collapsed; the Omahu school has collapsed for want of a schoolmaster. At this meeting of Te Hapuku's, Renata said some very severe things to Mr. Williams. He said he had misled them; that he came there as a minister of the Gospel, and they had gone to him as their adviser, and the result of it was that they had all been deceived; that they had determined to have the management of the Te Aute estate altered; and that, if they could not get satisfaction in that way, they would try and get the land back into their own hands.

347. Who spoke?—Renata, Henare Matua, Paora Kaiwhata, Harawira Tatere, Hapuku, and Tareha, and a few others besides. A great number of them at other times, on different discussions, also stated their reasons for distrusting Mr. Williams.

348. Was any conclusion or understanding arrived at?—Mr. Williams went away soon after that. In the evening there was another meeting, and they resolved that a petition should be drawn up; in fact, they said two petitions.

349. When was it suggested by the meeting that the petitions were to be drawn up?—It was after Mr. Williams left that it was resolved the petitions should be drawn up.

350. Did you hear what resolutions it was proposed to bring forward at that meeting?—They had several resolutions on land matters, and so forth.

351. Can you state what were the resolutions proposed to be brought forward?—The resolutions were handed to me. I got them in Napier. They also resolved that they should act together as one man against the late Government and get a new Government.

352. And after Mr. Williams had gone the petition was gone into?—Yes.

353. Who are the people that talked about it?—Renata, Hapuku, Tareha, Harawira Tatere, Paora Kaiwhata, Henare Matua, and most of the leading chiefs there took part in it.

354. Could you give the names of the chiefs who were present at that meeting?—I could give a good many of them. There was Hapuku, Tareha, Renata, Urupene Puhara, Henare Matua, Harawira Tatere, Paora Kaiwhata, Manaena Tini, Petera Rangihiroa, Meihana Takihi, Waka Kawatini, Peni Umairangi, and others. There were Natives there from all parts of the district.

355. When the questions relating to the petition were being discussed were you the only European present?—Yes, except when Mr. Williams was there.

356. How many persons were present at that meeting, do you think?—400 or 500, I should think, including women and children.

357. Where was the petition finished?—I was not present when the petition was signed, but it was drawn up at Mr. Sheehan's office, in Napier. It was signed after I left for Napier, and I think Henare brought it down to Napier after the meeting broke up; I am not sure.

358. How many petitions were there?—Two, one for the Upper and one for the Lower House.

359. Did you bring down the petitions with you?—No; Mr. Russell brought them down here, I think.

360. *The Chairman.*] Do you know anything directly about the management of the Te Aute estate?—All I know is that an agitation was made in the papers at that time, and I have also had conversations with different people on the subject. That is all I know about it.

361. You do not know anything of your own knowledge?—I do not know how it is managed.

362. Have you been on the estate?—I have passed along a road running through it.

363. Do I understand you to say the petition was drawn up in Napier previous to this meeting?—Henare Matua had the headings made out in Maori at the meeting. I sent them down to Napier by train. The petition was written out in English, and the headings by Henare Matua, and was also returned for signature. I read the petition over to Henare Matua, and asked him if that would do, and he said

it would do. Then I left. Between that time and the departure of the evening train the petition was signed, and brought into Napier by Henare Matua, I believe.

364. The petition was drawn out from certain notes?—Henare Matua had written out what they wanted put in the petition, and I sent it to Napier to have a petition prepared, with some remarks of my own.

365. Do you know when he wrote those notes?—I did not see him write them. The subjects were discussed, and I suppose Henare Matua went into his own house and wrote them.

366. Where was the large meeting held?—In Te Hapuku's large new house.

367. The meeting in the evening was held in the same place?—Yes.

368. Was it at either of these two meetings that Henare Matua's notes were prepared?—I suppose he prepared them in his own whare. He did not prepare them in the meeting. They discussed what they wanted to be done, and this petition was resolved on, and Henare Matua drew up these particulars.

369. What was the nature of these particulars?—It was almost in the form of a petition. He did not give the proper headings, as we would.

370. How was the petition in Maori prepared?—He wrote it out himself.

371. You said the management was objected to at many meetings?—Yes.

372. What was the nature of that objection made?—First of all they said they could never get an account or statement of how the moneys had been used. They objected to the management of the estate. They said in the old days when the school was held at Te Aute it was very badly maintained, and the children were made to work; but they do not know how the present school is managed.

373. What they objected to was that the management was not made known to them?—They objected to a great deal of secrecy in the management of the estate.

374. Have you ever heard an objection on the part of the Maoris to the effect that £20 a year each was charged for the scholars?—They said that when the new school was started they made inquiries, and were told they had to pay £20 a year. I suppose they had gone to Mr. Williams.

375. Have you any reason, besides having heard these Maoris, for supposing that their statements are true?—I have not got any. At the other meetings held they said the Te Aute school would never have been re-established. Bishop Williams seemed to feel very much about it, and went out to them and said he would rebuild Te Aute school, and that would do for all purposes; but the Natives would not listen to that, and went on building their schools.

376. That is only hearsay?—Yes.

377. At these meetings you attended did there appear to be a personal objection to Mr. Williams or merely to the management of the school?—They objected to Mr. Williams personally.

378. You understood it to be an objection more against him than the trustees or the general management of the school?—I think it was principally against Mr. Williams. They said they could not trust him.

379. Have you ever heard from anybody that the trustees have agreed to let that land again to Mr. Williams when the time comes?—I have heard that reported and published in the papers in Napier.

380. Have you heard what the rental is to be?—£1,000.

381. Have you heard any gentlemen in Napier say they were going to take certain action with regard to the rental of the land?—I have heard it stated, and seen it in the papers, that the land is far more valuable, and that a lease of that sort ought never to be allowed.

382. *Hon. Mr. Fox.*] You are connected with Mr. Sheehan's office?—Yes.

383. Have you a salary?—Yes.

384. Are you directly paid from Mr. Sheehan?—It comes out of the Native fund, I believe.

385. What fund?—What they call their Native law fund.

386. What is it, do you know?—I do not know.

387. Have you any idea?—No.

388. Who finds the money?—I presume the Natives do.

389. Does Mr. Sheehan send you to the various meetings?—Yes.

390. Do you go to every Maori meeting in the place?—All what I call their principal meetings.

391. What do they want with you?—They want business conducted in European style, and notes taken and kept in the office.

392. You go as interpreter and secretary?—Yes, to take notes and report. What took place at the Omahu meetings was published.

393. You say that the Natives at that meeting you speak of complained that the management of the Te Aute estate was very bad?—Yes.

394. Did they specify any one particular in which the management was very bad?—They said the property was much more valuable, and that the money was not being got for it which could be got.

395. Did they specify any one particular in which they affirmed the estate was badly managed?—No.

396. Did they specify anything about the trustees?—I think they included the trustees in what they said generally. They said they could never make out what was being done with the money. They said some money ought to be coming from the land.

397. Did they specify any one particular, either by the trustees or Mr. Williams, in which the property was badly managed? Did they say the rent was not paid, the land not fenced?—I will tell you exactly what they said. They said the money was being stolen. They said they did not know where the money went to, and where it was paid; that Mr. Williams was managing it, and they could not find out any particulars from him.

398. Who got the signatures to the petition?—The Natives.

399. Whom did you give the petition to?—To Henare Matua, at Te Aute.

400. Did he get it signed?—Yes.

401. You say that Mr. Russell brought the petition down to Wellington?—I think he did, unless it was sent through the post.

402. I understand that this petition was never read at the meeting?—Not that in Maori.

403. What was read?—I presume Henare Matua's notes, and the explanation I made to him of the English.

404. Did not the English document arrive the morning after the meeting?—It arrived before those names were signed. Neither the English nor the Maori was read out while the meeting was going on.

405. *Captain Russell.*] I understood you to say that you acted as interpreter because they said that none of the others were trustworthy?—Yes.

406. Then you are, so to say, retained by the Maoris?—Yes; I receive a salary, and I presume it is paid by the Natives. It comes through Mr. Sheehan's hands to me.

407. As you are retained by the Maoris, would it be part of your duty to act for and advise as against Europeans?—I do not consider it part of my business to advise in anything.

408. You consider the Maoris have a prior claim on you?—Yes.

409. Is that proper, considering your position as an interpreter?—If retained, it is perfectly proper for me to act for them.

410. Is it not the duty of an interpreter not to be a partisan, but to act simply as an interpreter?—Right throughout the Island interpreters are engaged by parties. At that meeting I was acting as the Natives' clerk.

411. Then your position is partly that of a secretary?—Yes; I do general work in the office as well.

412. And you think that is compatible with your duties as interpreter?—Certainly; I presume I can do any work. I could not make a living as interpreter alone.

413. Have you ever looked into the management of the Te Aute estate?—No.

414. Never made any inquiries?—All I know is principally from what has been published in the papers in Napier.

415. I understand you to say the schools are not now at work?—Yes.

416. And you imagine that is from want of funds?—The Pakowhai school decidedly.

417. Is there a trust fund for the Omaha school?—Yes; they lost the teacher recently.

418. You say you are sometimes employed in Mr. Sheehan's office?—Yes.

419. Do you know the details of the work that goes on in the office?—Yes.

420. Can you tell the Committee whether Mr. Sheehan is likely to be paid for drawing up this petition?—No; he is not paid.

421. I suppose you are thoroughly acquainted with the Maori language?—Yes.

422. Is that good Maori in the petition?—It is very good Maori, and every word of it could be understood.

423. Is the idiom Maori?—I consider it is good Maori, therefore the idiom must be good.

424. Is it so worded and expressed that a Maori could understand it without very considerable assistance from Europeans?—I consider it good Maori, and easily understood by any Maori.

425. I think you stated it was only from hearsay you knew the trustees were re-leasing this land to Mr. Williams?—Yes.

426. Who told you that?—It is the conversation of nearly every European in the Town of Napier, and the thing has been discussed in the newspapers.

427. Do you believe everything that appears in the newspapers?—Not always; but this, I know, caused a great deal of agitation in Napier.

428. Have you taken steps to find out whether it is true?—Not personally; it did not concern me at all.

429. Have you read the evidence given before the other Committee?—No; I have read my own: it was sent to me for correction.

430. *Mr. Williams.*] Do you know the contents of this letter?—At the other Committee the interpreter commenced to read it.

431. Do you know to whom it is addressed?—To Dr. Buller. I know the Natives that signed it were not at the meeting at all.

432. How do you know this is that letter?—Because I know it by the appearance.

433. *The Chairman.*] If I understood you rightly your statement went to support the allegation of this letter—namely, that the persons signing that letter were not present at the meeting?—Yes, that is so.

434. *Mr. Taiaroa.*] Do these people live at Te Aute?—At Mokowhiti, near Te Aute.

435. Do you know any special reason why they were not present?—They never attend any public meetings called by the chiefs. They are considered nobodies, almost. At the time of the meeting they were down at Napier attending the Commission on the *Waka Maori* libel case.

436. Were they the original owners, or had they interest in this Te Aute estate?—Other Natives told me they have no interest in it whatever.