

FIRST REPORT
OF THE
RELIGIOUS, CHARITABLE, AND EDUCATIONAL TRUSTS COMMISSION.

Wellington, 25th May, 1869.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

The Commission issued by your Excellency on the third day of February last authorised an Inquiry into “the condition and nature of “Educational and other Trust Estates held directly under Grant from the “Crown upon special Trust for Religious, Educational, or Charitable purposes, “and particularly to inquire into the extent and application of the Endowments, “Funds, and Revenues belonging to or received by the Trustees of all such “Estates in respect of the same”; and required the Commissioners to report their “opinion, resulting from the said inquiry, of the matters and things set “forth” in the Commission.

The Commissioners have been unable to complete their inquiry, but they consider it desirable to report their proceedings up to this date, postponing the required expression of their opinion until the whole inquiry has been completed, and the results of it carefully considered by them.

Messrs. Hart, Heale, and Gisborne (the two latter of whom were added to the Commission on the 20th of February last) have either singly or jointly, as authorised by the Commission, taken evidence concerning the Trust Estates in question within the Provinces of Auckland and Hawke’s Bay respectively; and the evidence in respect of the Province of Auckland is appended hereto in a printed form, arranged severally under the head of each estate affected by it, and the evidence taken in respect of the Province of Hawke’s Bay will be transmitted to your Excellency as soon as it can be printed.

The Commissioners will lose no time in prosecuting their inquiry into the Estates similarly granted in other Provinces, and in reporting the results thereof; but they most respectfully claim a reasonable indulgence for the delay which will necessarily occur in the fulfilment of this duty: both on account of the other claims on their time and attention, and of the extensive and important nature of the Commission intrusted to them.

The Commissioners have, in the Province of Auckland, confined their investigation to Trust Estates granted gratuitously by the Crown: that is to say, either without any purchase-money, or with purchase-money provided from Public Funds for the purposes of the Trust. They have not considered that the Commission either authorized or intended to authorize them to extend their inquiries to cases in which Trust Estates were regularly purchased from the Crown, or disposed of by individuals, for Religious, Charitable, or Educational purposes, and in which the public interests are not, as in the case of free Grants from the Crown, primarily concerned.

Although the Commissioners refrain for the present from forming any definite opinion on the subject of their inquiries, they would respectfully invite your Excellency’s attention to the evidence taken concerning the Trust Estates respectively held by the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Wesleyan Church, at St. Stephen’s, St. Mary’s, North Shore, and the Three Kings, in the immediate vicinity of the City of Auckland, for (in terms of the Grants) “the education of children of both races, and of children of other