

year 1866 one Mr. Revell was appointed schoolmaster at Kohanga, and at the beginning of the year following he had a daily average attendance of twenty-five scholars, which fell off before the close of the two years that Mr. Revel remained there to about half the number. The school estate was let for a term of two years to a Mr. Spargo at £50 per annum, Mr. Revell receiving from the trustees this amount supplemented by them to the sum of £75 in the first year out of other sources. Mr. Revell also received aid from the general Government and support also from the Natives, but the latter amount did not come up to the sum promised by them. Since Mr. Revell's removal the school has entirely ceased, and at present there is no school and no revenue arising from the estate."

7. *Mr. Quick.*] How far does your recollection go back?—I have been in the diocese since 1860.

8. *The Chairman.*] Your books do not show that anything was received during the period you speak of?—I cannot discover any rent actually paid into the trust. I may explain that in the early days, these trusts were worked by trustees appointed by Bishop Selwyn. These trustees did all their work voluntarily, they had no clerk to look after accounts, and the only records are, in some cases, small books referring to the school, and Church almanacs in which reference is made to accounts. I can find no record of income from this property during the early years of the trust.

9. Spargo's lease must have been antecedent to 1869: it was not then current?—No; I believe the land was then in a fair state of cultivation, but after that, on account of disturbances, people drifted from there to where land was to be had of better quality, and freehold instead of their having to lease it.

10. *Mr. Quick.*] The place was devastated by war for some period?—From 1864 to about 1869.

11. Are any of the old trustees alive still?—No, not one.

12. *The Chairman.*] Can you give any explanation as to why land should recently be let at £37, whereas it was let for £50 thirty or forty years ago?—My explanation would be that in 1869, or thereabouts, things were too unsettled for any one to take it up on long lease. It was only let after the Church had improved it to a certain extent, and got it into order. There were buildings on it then, which were afterwards allowed to go to ruin. No one cares to build on leasehold land. About that time, also, the Waikato land had been confiscated; the military had had grants given them, and the tendency was to go on to land which was said to be very good, and nobody thought of settling at Kohanga, which even now is a place not easy to get to; settlers would not think of going there. The Maoris did nothing to it, and allowed it to get overgrown with weeds and gorse. The trustees had no money to spend on it.

13. *Mr. Quick.*] It is unrateable land there?—The rates paid on it have been very small; for many years it was not rated at all.

14. Is there a great deal of Maori land in the neighbourhood?—Yes; there is a large block alongside leased to the same man who has this.

15. What are the terms of the lease?—The lease is for twenty-eight years from January or July, 1897; the first seven years at 1s. a year, and afterwards at an annual rental of £37 10s. (1s. an acre); the land to be cleared of gorse and grassed, which has been done, or is about being completed. It is let to Mr. A. Muir. He is a farmer living in the neighbourhood—at Tuakau, I think.

16. *The Chairman.*] Are you able to say the arrangement of the whole lease was a fair transaction?—I think it was a very good lease, because the tenant undertook to spend £500 in improvements, including clearing the gorse, fencing, draining, and grassing.

17. *Mr. Wardell.*] What do the receipts represent?—Rents; nothing else.

18. (To the Chairman): The figures are all from records; I can speak to the figures, and the information in the epitome is all from documents.

19. *Mr. Quick.*] Where did the rents come from for the seven years prior to 1896?—There was a seven-years tenancy granted to a man named Crawford, who was going to work a flax-mill on the banks of the river. He was not going to cut flax from the land, but to use it as a sort of depot for flax.

20. You put down there being no receipts from 1854 to 1869 to the disturbances owing to the war?—Yes.

21. And from 1869 to 1889 to the fact of confiscated land being taken up which prevented any inquiry for this land?—Yes. This is only an impression. The trustees hoped to be able to utilise the Church land for a school again, and there was perhaps a little delay on that account.

22. *Mr. Wardell.*] You are not in a position to give us information as to receipts and expenditure in connection with the school carried on on the property, or the expenditure of money-grants from the Government made in connection with it?—No; I can find no record of it.

23. *Mr. Quick.*] Mr. Maunsell was driven out by the war?—Yes; he left about 1863, and the scholars were dispersed.

*Witness:* I should like to call attention to an irregularity in the two grants. The measurements do not fit in very well. The grants have never been accurately surveyed and the boundary of one does not fit quite into the adjoining one. The Maoris claim there ought to be a reserve. We have only leased to Mr. Muir what is contained in the grants, and he is perhaps exercising rights he is not entitled to. I should like to explain, on behalf of the trustees, that they were approached a few years ago to have a school erected there for Maori children; and, after receiving reports from the Government Inspector, Mr. Muir was approached and he was quite willing that a certain piece should be taken for a school on a site to be agreed upon. The Government took a site which he was not willing to grant, because it meant fencing a long road. There is a piece of 5 acres reserved as a cemetery, and when the gorse was cleared and it was surveyed off, we undertook to fence it off. The Education Department thought they would like to put the school there, and we were asked to dedicate the road and this piece for a school-site. Mr. Muir objected in the first place, and the Maoris objected; and I have here the following letter from the Maori clergyman who wrote on behalf of the Maoris: "The people of Kohanga asked me to inform the General Trust Board of their view with reference to the marking-off the 4 acres for the school. They do not approve of the site of the school (4 acres) being taken from the place set