

16. Did the Government ever take any steps towards the acquisition of the 50,000 acres in the South out of the Company's estate which they were to have in exchange for the concession of land to the Company at Auckland? No, it was not necessary, for the 50,000 acres were only part of a larger amount they would have to give the Company.

17. Did the Company ever make any arrangements for fulfilling their agreement of colonizing in the North? Never, so far as I know.

18. Can you state what prevented their doing so? I believe the disputes arising out of Governor FitzRoy's proceedings in the first place and the native disturbance in the second, besides their disinclination to do the thing at all.

19. By the Chairman: Was not that disinclination so general as to indispose the Company to have anything to do with the North for good, bad, or indifferent? I have no doubt of it.

20. By Mr. Wortley,—You state distinctly that the Company relinquished its claims at Auckland on condition of the imposition of the debt on the whole Colony? No, what I said was that the same agreement contained the two conditions.

21. Is it your opinion that the Company considered the imposition of the debt on the whole colony including Auckland as a main consideration for its relinquishment of its land claims in the Auckland district, which you came here to carry out? I should say it was an inducement, but at the same time I have not a doubt that the Company were glad to get rid of the obligation to colonize at Auckland.

22. By the Chairman: In fact the Company never set any store by its claim to select land at Auckland? I should answer to that it would if Governor FitzRoy had not prevented the land from being chosen, of which I had given a favourable report. But in point of fact, as I have said before, they never liked the agreement, always abused Auckland whenever they could, and were very glad to escape from connection with it.

23. By Mr. Carleton: When the Company by agreement with the Secretary of State became conditional owners of a considerable portion of the best land in the town, suburbs, and country, did they not at the same time take upon themselves an *obligation in honor* (these being the *ipsissima verba*) to carry out to the best of their ability the colonising views which they expressed when the agreement was made? Yes, but I would beg to remark that the "*obligation in honor*" on the Company's part presupposed an honorable fulfilment by the Government, of the conditions of the obligation, and this was not done.

24. By the Chairman: I conclude that no member of this Committee has held private communication with you on this subject previous to your coming here? None whatever since the Committee was appointed.

This concluded Mr. Bell's examination.

SATURDAY, 8TH JULY.

PRESENT :—

MR. KING,  
,, PORTER,  
,, CARLETON,

MR. WORTLEY,  
,, MACANDREW.

MR. E. G. WAKEFIELD, Chairman.

The Honourable the Attorney-General present to be examined.

1. By the Chairman: I presume that you are aware of the nature of the subject which this Committee has to enquire into? Yes.

2. Would you be so good as to throw any light on that subject which your knowledge of facts connected with it will enable you to do? When I was first asked to attend the Committee I thought that I had no information which would be of value to them; but it afterwards occurred to me that it might be desirable to bring under the notice of the Committee a point which for some years had been before my own mind, having some bearing upon the subject of the enquiry. Mr. Attorney-General read a paper upon the subject of the Committee's enquiry.

3. You infer that there has been a clerical error, or an error through inadvertence, and you draw your inference from the context of the rest of the Act? Yes, it occurs to me that the use of the words "New Zealand" in the 20th Section of the Act to promote colonisation in New Zealand, 10 and 11 Victoria, is illogical, but any one reading the nineteen preceding sections of that Act would naturally expect to find the words "the Province of New Munster" in the 20th section instead of the words "New Zealand."

4. Are you aware of any protest from this part of the colony against bearing a proportion of the Company's debt? I recollect that some time ago, when New Zealand was divided into two provinces of New Ulster and New Munster, and when I myself was a member of the Executive Council of the province of New Ulster, that the Executive Council of that Province agreed to a strong expression of opinion against the justice or expediency of imposing any portion of the New Zealand Company's Debt upon the Northern district of New Zealand; that that protest of expression of opinion was concurred in by the then