

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 Omaha 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.