

413. *Mr. Hislop.*] How long ago?—In 1862 or 1863. About 1868 four more quarter-acre sections were let as building sites, and no more were let until the property came into the hands of the Corporation. Since it came into the hands of the Corporation it has been better managed, because they immediately took steps to let further portions of it, and most or all the remainder has been let during the last few months. It has taken some twenty-seven years to let some twenty acres.

414. *Mr. Bunny.*] I should like to ask you a question about the Hospital. Were not these reserves made by Dr. Featherston, and the Bishop of New Zealand never had anything to do with them?—No, they were given by Sir George Grey.

415. Did not the Provincial Government, when the present Sir William Fitzherbert became Superintendent, insist on handing these reserves over to local bodies, because they could be better managed by people on the spot?—They were managed by people on the spot for years before; in fact, from the very first.

416. Was not a Bill passed under which they have been handed over to a local body for years past?—I am aware that a Bill was passed to hand it over from the Hospital Trustees to the Corporation.

417. You stated you were going to mention other reserves which were not better managed than this, and I am showing the Committee that a Bill was passed, when that was seen, to have them handed over to the Corporation?—Yes.

418. Because they could not be managed by people at a distance?—No; it was people at Wanganui who managed them from the first.

419. Simply as agents?—We knew nothing of anybody but those in Wanganui as taking part in managing it. I was going to mention about the town belt. It was given to the Town Board in 1862. Fifty acres were let about a year afterwards, and fifty or sixty acres more about a year later, when the deepening of the school drains enabled it to be dried. Other parts were let at intervals as soon as tenants could be found for them; but the bulk of it was only let within the last two or three years, and a large portion only a few weeks ago—some parts are unlet still. From 1862 to the present time, it took the whole of that time to let the land.

420. *Mr. Wright.*] Do you not think the management would be better conducted by responsible persons, than by those three persons who are practically irresponsible?—They only manage under the Trustees, and these last are responsible to the Synod.

Mr. WILLIAM McLEOD BANNATYNE examined.

421. *The Chairman.*] You are one of the Trustees for the Wanganui Industrial School?—I am.

422. Are you familiar with the manner in which that school has been conducted?—No; I have never been at Wanganui. All that I have had to do with the Trust has been with regard to the accounts. I have always felt full confidence in the Bishop, and left it to him to look after the scholastic part of the school. My experience has been particularly confined to accounts—receiving accounts and rents, and matters of that sort.

423. You have no knowledge as to how the school is conducted, I suppose?—I cannot say I have.

424. Do the Trustees hold periodical meetings?—No fixed meetings, but whenever there is anything to be done—whenever leases are falling in.

425. Have they ever drawn up regulations for the management of the school?—Not that I am aware of.

426. I suppose regulations for the management of the school have never been discussed by the Trustees in formal meeting?—No; not that I am aware of.

427. *Hon. Mr. Gisborne.*] How long have you been Trustee?—Since 1862, a few years after the Trust deed was passed.

428. Have you ever seen this school?—I have never been at Wanganui.

429. Have the Trustees ever considered any measures for carrying out the original conditions of the grant with regard to having a free foundation for industrial training?—I believe it was carried on previous to my having anything to do with the school.

430. Since you have been Trustee, have the Trustees ever considered any measure with a view of carrying out those terms?—We have talked over them, but did not consider it desirable to return to the old system, because it would be very expensive; and in the next place we did not consider it could be carried out.

431. *Mr. Montgomery.*] What do you consider are your duties as Trustees?—To revise the management of the Trust, as far as we can do from here; but the greater part of that duty was done by the Bishop, who used to go occasionally to Wanganui and represent the other Trustees there.

432. Do I understand that you considered it your duty merely to see that the ground was let and the rents collected?—I do not consider that it was all our duties, but it was all I could do.

433. Do you not consider it was part of your duty to see that the Trust was carried out?—I believe we did it, so far as we could through the Bishop, except with regard to the industrial portion of the school. So far as the education of the school was concerned, I always understood that was carried out.

434. You are aware that the rents amount to between £600 and £700 a year?—I do not know the exact amount, but I believe they have increased since 1877.

435. Do you know the number of scholars that are trained?—I cannot say exactly. I think there are from twenty to thirty, but I am not quite sure. I think the latter number was about the average.

436. There are school fees charged to the pupils?—Not to the Natives, I think.

437. To European children?—I think there are, except when they cannot afford to pay, when they are allowed to be educated free. If any charge is made it is very trifling.

438. Are there any free scholars there?—I think there are.

439. You do not know the number?—I do not.

440. You do not know whether there are any or not?—I think I can safely say there are.

441. Are there any Maori children attending the school?—Yes, those are the ones.