

268. It seems to me if while a Court is sitting a Judge finds it necessary to imprest for funds it is placing him in a disagreeable position to find that his expenses will not be sanctioned, and is likely to bring about an unpleasant feeling?—Of course when any man is in difficulties for money, when he expects it and does not get it, it makes him feel uncomfortable.

269. Then it was reasonable that a man should imprest for it?—In many cases there is no previous imprest. I do not have any, nor does Judge Munro, and some of the other Judges. I find the difficulty of sending in accounts every week is very great.

270. Then how do you get the current expenses paid?—Pay them myself and get them refunded afterwards. It comes to the same thing. Some do one and some the other. In this case I do not see where there could have been any difficulty, as Mr. Wilson was within riding distance of his own home.

271. Yes, but a Judge might not always find it convenient to advance the Government £300 or £400?—Very likely.

272. Why did you think the money would be wasted? It appears the Court was sitting for a month.—I have been endeavouring to tell you that for two years nothing was done by Mr. Wilson.

273. But the Court had been actually sitting for a month, and I suppose, whether anything had been done or not, the expenses were entitled to be paid?—I said I would not recommend any more for this office at all. I was in Wellington at the time.

274. I suppose a memorandum being indorsed to that effect by you would not be likely to lead to good feeling?—I do not see that. When we get into a discussion with a superior officer I do not see why there should be ill feeling. During Sir Donald McLean's time I had long discussions with him without ill feeling. I wanted the Government to hand Mr. Wilson over to Tauranga.

275. *Mr. M. W. Green.*] In making the remark that you considered it was money wasted you referred to the whole results of Judge Wilson's labours?—Yes, during two years. Of course I understand this: that I, as chief administrator of the Act, am responsible, as far as I can see my way, for the expenditure of the funds voted by Parliament, and when I knew that in two years, in my judgment, £1,200 had been absolutely wasted, then, at the end of two years, which was surely long enough to wait, I said I would recommend no more, as nothing came of it. I say distinctly before this Committee of Parliament that that is my opinion still.

276. *Hon. Mr. Dick.*] Was not the Court sitting under your instructions?—Yes. I assigned it to Mr. Wilson.

277. Was it not necessary that the funds required by the Court should continue up to the time the Court was stopped?—Yes, I suppose so; that does seem to be so. I am speaking of general principles; I do not recollect the particular circumstances at all. I was in Wellington at the time. I remember the Court to which he was assigned was Ohinemuri; but he sent me a letter, which I think I got in Wellington, saying he would not attend. Whether he mentioned the Tauranga Land Act or not, I do not know. However, he could not attend. Then I said, "Go to Maketu, near your own home; possibly you will be able to attend there without inconvenience." And he went.

278. Would not the way have been to say, "Stop the Court; you are wasting time, but send in your vouchers for what is fairly due, and they will be paid?"—I do not know; it means, as a matter of fact, what the expenses are required for. The Court did not stop until the new Act came into force; it went on till then, and, as I have said, that was the only Court at which any work was done.

279. Did not the Act come into force while the Court was still on, and you sent a letter to Mr. Wilson, saying that now the Act is in force the Court must stop and all action cease, and that you yourself would be there shortly to inquire into the matter?—No; I said, if I remember right, the Act has been assented to or will be, and the effect will be to annul your commission, and I or Mr. Munro will come down and finish the work.

280. *Mr. W. C. Buchanan.*] Did I understand you that sometimes the Judges pay the expenses of the Court out of their own pockets, and afterwards get it refunded?—Yes; I always do so myself; I find it more convenient.

281. Then, as a matter of fact, you lend money to the Government for a short period?—Yes.

282. If you had power to stop Mr. Wilson's Court, why did you not stop the sittings of the Court instead of stopping the supplies?—I had no power to stop the Court; I can postpone one under circumstances of unexpected difficulty—for instance, the rising of a river, or the absence of a tribe. I can postpone a Court before it has commenced, but not stop it after it has commenced.

283. *Mr. Wilson (the Petitioner).*] Were districts created under clause 5 of the Act of 1873?—Yes.

284. Was Tauranga one of those districts?—I do not know; you would find by the map.

285. Did the districts comprise the whole of the North Island, and how many districts were there?—I do not know; nothing came of the Proclamation.

286. Was not the North Island thrown into six districts?—I think a number of districts were proclaimed, but a part of the Island was left out. All the King Country was never included in any district.

287. Yet it was in one of these districts, or a portion of one of them, that I was working.—No, it was not; Judges were not appointed to districts.

288. I am speaking not of appointments, but of operations.—Not as far as I am aware; the district where you were working was all over the North Island—first at Galatea, second at Tauranga, third at Wellington, and so on.

289. Did not Mr. Sheehan, then Native Minister, cause the Galatea Court to be adjourned?—I have no knowledge of it.

290. Does not this letter show it? [Letter handed to witness]—No; quite the contrary, as I read it. I have no recollection of the fact.

291. Perhaps you remember why the Court was adjourned?—I have no recollection at all about it.

292. In reference to your statement that nothing came of my Courts and the return you have there, are you not aware that I disposed of many cases in Wellington?—I am not.