

854. Do you consider that the interests of a trust are rather to be subserved by retaining lands than by selling them?—We must confine ourselves to this particular trust. I would rather not speak generally.

855. Well, I mean this trust?—As I said just now, I object on principle to selling any of the land at all.

856. You have reasons for that principle, no doubt?—I do not know. It may be that I object as a matter of sentiment. There are associations in connection with the land, especially for those who have been, like myself, connected with it for a long time. I feel a great interest in this land from the fact of Bishop Selwyn's connection with it. I believe, if Bishop Selwyn were alive now he would resist to the death any tampering with it.

857. You have told us that it was first stated to the Board that the portion which was actually required by the Government, and which they have since retained, was all they intended to take: when did the Board receive intimation that the Government proposed to take the larger area?—I believe it was when that letter of Mr. Kissling's was received. Prior to that I think it was mere talk—mere rumour.

858. Was it rumoured then among the members of the Board that the Government were going to take the greater area for defence works, or that the Government were going to take the whole block for the purpose of conveying a portion of it to another individual?—Nothing was said of that; no one dreamt of it.

859. The impression on your mind then was that they were going to take the whole area for the purposes of the fortification?—That was then the general impression. At all events, that was my impression. When I heard of it I said, "Oh, nonsense! They don't want it."

860. Was it in any way mentioned amongst the Trustees, or did they convey, either publicly or privately, to any person that any of the Trustees wished to sell either this or any other portion of their estate?—I never heard of it. And, knowing as we did the objections of the General Synod to parting with land under any consideration, it is hardly likely at all that such an idea ever entered into the mind of any member of the Board.

861. You regarded these lands, and especially those given by the Government and Bishop Selwyn and others, as being, in a certain sense, sacred—you objected to their being taken?—Except under very peculiar circumstances.

862. One was the needs of the country?—That was one.

863. When Mr. Brewer had made the arrangement with Mr. G. S. Kissling for the transfer to Mrs. Kissling of the 3 acres 2 roods he wrote to the Under-Secretary for Public Works advising him of the arrangement, and apparently desirous that he should approve of it. In that letter he makes this statement: "Now, the Trustees cannot sell, although they would like to." Can you say whether that statement was a fact?—No, it was not.

864. That letter, I may mention, was under date 21st November, 1885, and your Board had a meeting to consider a letter which Mr. Brewer had written to you on the day before that date. I would call your attention to that letter. It is as follows: "*Re* land required for battery at Point Resolution.—Sir,—I am directed by the Hon. the Defence Minister to state that it is proposed to take the whole of the land at present in the occupation of Mr. G. S. Kissling. The property being let for such a long time to that gentleman at a nominal rental, the principal part of the compensation-money will be awarded him. As, however, the Government wish your Board to be treated with every consideration, I am requested to state that the sum of £632 will be awarded for your interest. Will you please let me know at your earliest convenience if you accept this offer, so that arrangements can be made for paying over the money? If you do not accept, the case will have to go to the Supreme Court." Were you present at the meeting of the Board at which that letter was considered?—I think so.

865. Did it convey to your mind the impression that the Government were going to take the whole of the land for defence works?—That was always my impression.

866. Formed from that letter?—Yes; that is my impression. We should never have dreamt that the Government had any intention of handing over a portion of the land to Mr. Kissling.

867. Did you know that the 3 acres 2 roods were to be transferred to Mrs. Kissling before the £632 was paid over?—From what I have heard to-day, the payment of the purchase-money seems to have been delayed, and no doubt it was not paid over when I knew that the Special Powers and Contracts Act dealing with the case had been passed. That was the first intimation I had of the transaction, that Mrs. Kissling's name had been mixed up with it at all.

868. The Act came into operation about August, 1886. Do you say that until you saw that statute as an Act of the New Zealand Parliament you were not aware that Mrs. Kissling was going to get the 3 acres 2 roods?—I was not.

869. It was not merely a Bill at the time; it was an Act?—I did not see it until it came up as part of the bound volume of statutes. I do not say that it was even the day I received it or perhaps a month afterwards, but, still, it was about that time.

870. There could be no mistake? It was not a Bill you saw, but the Act when actually bound up in the volume of statutes?—No.

871. *Dr. Cass.* Was no copy of the Bill sent to the Trustees?—None that I saw, and I think Mr. Cochrane, the secretary, would have informed us if he had received any such communication, as in the usual course it would have had to come before us.

872. *Mr. Nairn.* Had you seen "The Public Works Act Amendment Act, 1885," before the arrangement was made to accept the £632?—No. I suppose as a Justice of the Peace I ought to, but I had not.

873. You were also a Justice of the Peace in 1885?—Yes; but my literary pursuits did not lead me into delving into these books.

874. When the letter to which I have just referred was received from Mr. Brewer, in which he states that the Government are going to take the whole of the land, were you of opinion, as a