

233. What have they to do with the King-country?—They show the effect of liquor under license.

234. We have it on the evidence of a member of the House that at Hastings (Napier) there is no drunkenness. Would you be surprised to hear from reliable witnesses that at Hastings there is virtually no drunkenness among the Natives?—I should not be surprised, but I would attach very little importance to it.

235. You would not accept the word of a member of the House and accept that of a parson?—No, sir, some people do not see drunkenness.

236. If we have evidence here that there is no drunkenness at Te Kuiti, would you be surprised?—No, sir, I am not surprised.

237. Are you aware that there is very little drunkenness at Te Kuiti?—I should want to see, myself, before I believe.

238. At Otaki there are a great number of Natives?—I have heard so.

239. You do not believe in hearsay evidence, then?—I have not been there.

240. You do not think that Natives in this respect should have the same power and privileges as Europeans?—No.

241. How, then, can you attach any importance to their signing a petition?—There may be some weight in their asking to be saved from liquor, but I should be very sorry to give it to them because they asked for it.

242. As far as the Natives are concerned, you are prepared to accept any of their evidence when it suits your particular views?—I say, as Mr. Seddon said in 1895, that Maoris, in regard to liquor, should be treated as European children are—liquor should be kept from them.

243. You are familiar with the Maori. I suppose you are aware that the Natives of the King-country are in disposition greater than those in Taranaki?—Probably, but not very much greater.

244. You do not lead the Committee to understand that you treat the Maori of the King-country differently to the rest?—No; my point is perfectly clear. When a paper like the *London Spectator* says that two centuries of prohibition is necessary for the Kaffir and the negro, a generation is not too much for the Maori.

245. Does the *Spectator* understand anything about the Maori?—No, but they understand the negro and the Kaffir, and I understand the Maori.

246. Would you give the Maori a vote for a representative in Parliament and not a vote on the liquor question?—Yes.

247. The fact that they have the same electoral system and the same representation, does it not argue a high order of intelligence?—Yes; but not a knowledge of alcohol. The Maori knew nothing of liquor till we brought it. The Fijian had his kava—an intoxicant, but the Maori had nothing of the kind.

248. Are not the Fijians a drunken race?—No; the sale of liquor to Fijians is absolutely prohibited, and the law is enforced.

249. Have you ever attended any of the Maoris' big meetings?—Yes.

250. Where?—At Waitara, when Rewi came to meet Sir George Grey, and recently at Rotorua.

251. Were you present at the large meeting held at Waihi, on the Waikato River?—No; I have read of it.

252. Did you hear of the Natives getting intoxicated?—I did not hear of it; I know that Mahuta has set his face against alcohol.

253. Yes; Do you know that Mahuta and his chiefs crossed over the river and got liquor at the Huntly Hotel?—I was not aware of it, but I should not be surprised.

254. Then, do you think it is fair and just of you to go and denounce them as drunkards?—I have not denounced them as drunkards. I say that there is a great deal of drunkenness amongst them. I have seen their women drunk at Mania and elsewhere, where the men got the liquor and gave it to the women, not breaking the law technically, but in effect.

255. You were present at Te Kuiti when Mr. Gittos made that statement?—Yes.

256. You believed it?—I was shocked, and obliged to believe it.

257. You would not believe me if I told you that Mr. Gittos was mistaken; you would not believe me?—Not always; you would not believe me in some things.

*Mr. Lawry*: I certainly would not.

258. Would you be surprised if I told you that I have been at many of these dances?—No, I should not.

259. And would you be surprised to hear that I have not seen the slightest signs of immorality?—No; what one man sees another does not see.

260. *The Chairman*.] Has Mr. Gittos been at these dances?—Not at the dances, but at Te Kuiti when they were held.

*Mr. Lawry*.] No testimony except silent testimony.

*Mr. Isitt*.] I am aware that Mr. Gittos moved about amongst these Maoris as much as any one.

261. *The Chairman*.] He must have been at the dance, and an eye-witness, to have made such a statement?—I know that Mr. Gittos went to Te Kuiti to do what he could. I heard him dissuading some young Maori girls from going to the dance.

262. Has he a down upon dancing?—No, he is a large-hearted man.

263. Do you consider dancing wrong?—No, sir; I do not consider it necessarily wrong; it may be associated with evil things.

264. Yet Mr. Gittos was apparently unable to control and prevent them committing these evils?—A Maori population under the influence of liquor would be a very difficult thing to control.

265. He did not mean to imply that the whole of the Natives were under the influence of liquor?—No, but a very large number of them.