

86. *Mr. Ngata.*] With regard to the position of the trustees: practically they have nothing to do with the educational work of the College?—Not unless it is referred to them

87. They have been more concerned really with the management of the property?—I think they are interested in all its branches.

88. I mean they have not taken any direct part in advising those immediately connected with the work of the College in the direction in which the education should take?—No, except in giving their general opinion. They have trusted it more to Mr. Thornton and myself.

89. *The Chairman.*] I have been asked by the Inspector of Native Schools to ask you when the school was first established on the property?—It is given in Mr. Russell's report [Exhibit No. 23].

90. I suppose you superintended that school single-handed?—Yes. A part of the time I had a young man with me.

91. Then it was closed in 1859?—I think so.

92. And then for a number of years nothing was done?—That is so. Then I was constantly badgered with letters and papers, but I made up my mind I would not open again until I could do it satisfactorily. If there was any mistake I opened it a little too soon, and I was riding dead horses a little too long. Still, I was advised to open with a small makeshift place, and treat them as day scholars. I thought it would be a mistake unless I could begin with some possibility of carrying on a satisfactory school.

93. What was taught in the school at first?—We had the raw material at the beginning. We had a good deal of the alphabet, and so on. We grew up gradually.

94. Who was in charge of the school before Mr. Thornton?—Mr. Reynolds. He was a very good teacher.

95. *Mr. Ngata.*] I suppose it is fair to say that Mr. Thornton and you are practically responsible for the system of education now prevailing at Te Aute?—Yes.

96. Can you define the position of the Education Department with regard to the College?—It is under their supervision, and they have assisted us very materially by good advice. We have looked upon them to a great extent as the father of the institution.

97. For many years I think you have tried to work the College in with the general Native-school system?—Yes.

98. Can you specify the objects aimed at by yourself and Mr. Thornton in the Te Aute system of education—I mean, with reference to the Maori people?—I have aimed at working it up as high as I could. I would, perhaps, rather leave that to Mr. Thornton. In fact, I may say that Mr. Thornton has relieved me of the burden of the work, as I am getting up in years.

99. Your principal aim has been to make the institution as useful as possible to the Native race?—Certainly.

100. Part of the object of the inquiry is to find out whether the present system of education carries out that purpose, and is of the best possible use to the Native people?—You perhaps know more about the system of education at Te Aute than I do; but I would say it has been of the greatest assistance in stimulating the Government village schools throughout the country.

101. A good deal has been said about the education of children of both races: you say that, so far, the system has worked harmoniously in the co-education of the two races?—Yes.

102. Would you favour any extended admission of European boys into the College, or any increase of the proportion that is admitted?—I think the previous answer I gave was that I should be rather sorry to see it extended—at all events, to the detriment of the Maori race, considering the immense advantages the English have in their various institutions.

103. *Mr. Lee.*] Do you not think that the presence of a few Europeans amongst the Maoris would be very beneficial in assisting them to acquire English?—I think in moderation it is strongly beneficial. I think it has led to both races respecting each other more.

104. *Mr. Ngata.*] I cannot help thinking there is something else at the back of this agitation for the inclusion of European boys into the College: would you go so far as to say that it is an assertion of right for admission into the institution under the terms of the grant?—I do not think it was ever entertained by the donors or originators of the trusts. It was always represented to me that it was inserted to prevent the absolute exclusion of Europeans. I have referred to St. Stephen's School. Sir George Grey was the originator of that school, and he constantly visited it, and had it under his own observation. There was only an occasional English boy admitted. I took that as interpreting the mind of the donor.

105. If you had any large proportion of European boys in Te Aute, say, a third, would any difficulty be experienced in working such a mixed institution?—It is exceedingly likely that the position of affairs would be changed from what it is now. It works harmoniously as we have been carrying it on; but I have dreaded myself the possibility of throwing the school over altogether and excluding the Maoris, or making it so distasteful to them that the Maoris would not come.

106. There are other institutions where they are supposed to have children "of our British subjects of both races" besides Te Aute?—Yes; it was a general open trust that was made use of.

107. Do you know the circumstances in regard to the Wanganui trust?—Yes, it is one of these trusts. It was a purely Maori institution originated by Sir George Grey, and the money was provided for the buildings and for draining the property out of the Government grant for Maori education; and when the building was burned down by accident, a writ by Sir George Grey was issued to provide £1,000 out of the same fund for the rebuilding of the Wanganui College, which, however, was not made use of.

108. Can you say whether at Wanganui there has ever been any large proportion of boys other than Europeans?—Practically none of late.

109. They have never had a Commission of inquiry in regard to Wanganui?—Not to my knowledge.