

210. *Mr. Ellison.*] Seeing that you approve of technical education, what is your view in connection with industrial education—that is, teaching the children trades?—By all means, I should say, teach the Maoris trades as far as you possibly can. Make them into blacksmiths, carpenters, saddlers, or anything you like.

211. Have you ever thought of the means by which such an education could be taught to the children?—None, except by the establishment of industrial schools, which I have always advocated as separate institutions.

212. *The Chairman.*] That, of course, involves the question of finding money to pay the masters?—Quite so.

213. I understand you wish to make some reference to a letter that appeared in the local Press?—Yes. I should like, if I might be allowed, to refer to a letter of mine amongst your records which appeared in the *Hawke's Bay Herald* on the 2nd March, 1906 [Exhibit No. 38]. I wish to say I am entirely and absolutely and personally responsible for this letter, and that it does not in any sense voice the opinions of the trustees or of Archdeacon Williams, and that I wrote it as a private individual and not as headmaster of Te Aute College. In addition to this, I should like to say that the Archdeacon himself was extremely pained I had written the letter, because it has always been his endeavour to defer as far as possible to the Government and to avoid anything like friction with them. As that letter of mine might be interpreted as working in the opposite direction, I should like to take upon my own shoulders the whole and sole responsibility for that letter, and everything contained in it. I am particularly anxious that should be recorded.

214. Does the District Public Health Officer visit the College at all?—Yes; he has been there occasionally, but not regularly. Dr. Pomare has visited it, and Dr. MacGregor, the Inspector-General of Hospitals, and Dr. Mason, the head of the Health Department.

GEORGE PRIOR DONNELLY examined.

215. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—I am a sheep-farmer and runholder.

216. How long have you been in the district?—I arrived here in the end of 1866.

217. You know the Te Aute Estate?—Yes. I passed through it in the end of 1866 on my way to Waipawa and the coast.

218. You have seen it from time to time during all these years, and in its improved state?—Yes. The first time I went through the estate it was covered with bush, scrub, fern, and raupo and flax swamps. I have noticed the improvements made from time to time. At that time there was very little grass in Hawke's Bay, especially at Te Aute, which was all in heavy fern and scrub and bush. The bush has all disappeared now, but the land between the present hotel and the Archdeacon's was pretty well all heavy bush when I first went there.

219. Can you give us, from what you have seen, an estimate of the amount of money spent on the property to bring it to its present state of perfection?—A great deal of money has been spent on it. At the time of which I speak we had not solved the question of breaking in the fern country. I believe the Archdeacon was the first person to fence in land to any extent for the purpose of crushing the fern down with cattle and sheep and then surface-sowing the grass. It was the first land in the province I had seen so treated, and it was quite an experiment.

220. Do you think the country or any part of it is suitable for dairying purposes?—Well, Hawke's Bay has rather a dry climate, and it remains to be seen whether dairy-farming is going to be a success. Of course all that rich land on the plain and the swamp land which would hold moisture during the summer months might become dairying lands; but I doubt very much whether the dry soils of Hawke's Bay will ever be a success for dairy-farming.

221. With regard to the value of the property?—If you would allow me I would like to make my own statement. When I first went through that country from Napier to Castle Point, the whole of this province right down to Castle Point was covered with either forest, manuka scrub, or fern. It was not a bit like what it is to-day. The original settlers had to break in the whole of Hawke's Bay. It is not like the South Island, where the settlers on arrival had grass country on which to put their sheep. We had to starve our sheep and cattle in order to break in the country in Hawke's Bay. No person coming here to-day can have any idea of what the original settlers had to put up with. And I think the Archdeacon set the first example as to how we were to break in that country successfully. I may say it has taken a lifetime almost, or the better part of one's life, to bring Hawke's Bay into its present condition, and I hold that the people of the present day do not give the old settlers sufficient credit for what they had to put up with in those days. There were neither roads nor bridges, and very little grass country on which to keep stock while trying to break in this fern country. It is very much easier to take a heavy forest and cut it down. You know then what you have to do. You fell it and burn it and sow it and in ten months you have your grass. It was a different matter with our fern country. That has taken years to bring in. When I arrived here in 1866 the Native trouble was just about commencing. Hawke's Bay was then threatened with a Native war, and had it not been for the late Sir Donald McLean, the Hon. J. D. Ormond, and the valuable assistance of Archdeacon Williams, I feel sure that in one night the Natives could have exterminated the whole of the Europeans in Hawke's Bay. The chief Tareha, who was the principal chief in those days, had the confidence of Sir Donald McLean and the Hon. J. D. Ormond, who also had the assistance of Archdeacon Williams. The principal Native chiefs who assisted Sir Donald McLean and the Hon. J. D. Ormond, who was then Native agent for this district, were Renata Kawepo, Tareha, Karauria—who was Mrs. Donnelly's father—Karaitiana Takamoana, and Henare Tomoana. At that time Napier was threatened with Hauhaus, who came down to Oamaru, and also with Natives who came down from Tarawera and Taupo, and had it not been for the friendly Natives assisting the Europeans in those days it would have been a very serious matter. That was the position of affairs when I came here. I think great credit is due to the old settlers for the way they have worked and brought all this beautiful country into its present state.