

PARAIRE TOMOANA examined.

64. *The Chairman.*] Where do you live?—I am a farmer at Hastings.
65. How old are you?—I am thirty-one.
66. Were you educated at Te Aute?—Yes.
67. How old were you when you went to Te Aute?—Between nine and ten.
68. How long did you remain there?—Till the end of 1891.
69. What place did you occupy in the school?—I was in the highest standard.
70. After leaving school what work did you take up?—I went home to my people and went in for farming.
71. What sort of farm-work?—Agricultural and general.
72. Where did you learn farming?—At home.
73. Did you find that what you learnt at the school was of any use to you after you left?—Yes.
74. What did you learn at school?—To read and write were the principal things I learnt at school. I also learnt arithmetic and geography, and a little Latin, algebra, Euclid, chemistry, and physiology.
75. Did you learn carpentering?—Yes.
76. I suppose you saw the farm operations going on around you on the estate?—I took more interest in the farming and agricultural work than I did in my school-work. That was owing to the fact that my people went in greatly for agriculture and crops.
77. Are you in a position to express any opinion as to what sort of education should be given at Te Aute?—Yes; I have my own ideas about what they ought to teach at Te Aute. Before I went to Te Aute I saw a good deal of farming and agricultural work; but when I got to Te Aute I was put on to ordinary school-work. There I began to have doubts, and I began to criticize in my mind the knowledge of the Pakehas; and, owing to my liking farm-work better, I used never to miss an opportunity of going on to the station to see the people at work, ploughing and attending to station matters. I went on with my school-work until I finished, and since I left Te Aute I have thought much about what would be the best way to advance the Maori people.
78. Do you belong to the Old Boys' Association?—Yes; the association was originated by the fellows of my time. The first meeting was in 1889. After I left school and thought what would be best to advance the interests of the Maori people as a whole, I came to the conclusion that the best thing would be to teach them technical education and trades, and so on. From that day to this I have always maintained this, and asked that these things be taught at Te Aute.
79. Do you mean that, in your opinion, book-learning and practical work on farms, such as carpentering and blacksmithing, and so on, should be carried on together?—Yes, the two should go together.
80. But great attention should be paid, in your opinion, to the industrial side of the institution?—Yes.
81. That really sums up what you want to emphasize?—Yes. I may say that at the time I was at school technical education, such as carpentering, was carried on continuously at Te Aute. That was from 1885 to 1887. After that the technical instructor, Mr. Dunne, left the school, and the instruction declined; it was not carried on so energetically. I think there is none at all now. I was very enthusiastic over the technical education in my time at school. There are a good many buildings at Te Aute which the boys built, and forms and stools, and so on, under the instruction of Mr. Dunne.
82. What became of Mr. Dunne?—He left Te Aute and went to Wanganui College in 1887 or 1888.
83. *Mr. Hogg.*] How long were you at Te Aute School?—From 1884 to 1891.
84. During that time you were instructed by English books?—Yes, and also Maori books.
85. Were you allowed to converse in any other than the English language in the school?—In 1884 Maori was allowed to be spoken, but after that it was prohibited. But one day in the week was set aside to practise the children in translating from English to Maori and from Maori to English.
86. What I want to know is, why do you not speak the English language fluently so as not to need the assistance of an interpreter?—Perhaps my head is defective. I may say that only a minority at the school thoroughly master English; the majority do not thoroughly master it.
87. Can you write a fair letter in the English language?—Yes, I think so.
88. Do you correspond with any Pakehas?—Yes.
89. You have no difficulty in writing?—I think it is quite easy to write in English, but the people I write to write back and say I do not express myself properly.
90. Has your education been useful in business and on the farm?—Yes, very much.
91. I suppose it has assisted you in selling produce and in making bargains with Europeans?—Yes.
92. What branches have been generally of assistance to you?—The most useful to me have been arithmetic and the English language.
93. Have you forgotten much of the English language since you left school?—On the contrary, I have learnt more. I have increased my knowledge of English.
94. Then you have not been taught the English language in the school sufficiently to be able to dispense with an interpreter when you wish to express your views?—Of course, the endeavour at the school has been to teach English so as to dispense with an interpreter.
95. Do you not think the boys might be kept longer at school so as to be able to speak for themselves, and have a knowledge of both languages?—Yes, perhaps so.
96. Do you know how your companions in the schools have got on after leaving Te Aute?—One is your fellow-Commissioner.