

expression of opinion put forward by some of the witnesses that more European children should be admitted into the school, if that is agreed to there will be no room for Maori children at Te Aute. I think Te Aute should be left entirely as a Maori school. I think somebody stated before the Commission that the presence of European children was a help to Maori children in their studies at Te Aute. I, as an old boy, say "No, that is not the case." They are no assistance whatever, and if you ask any of the old boys they will back me up in my statement. If you get hold of some white boys who have gone to Te Aute you will find that they have become more "Maorified" than European. Then, their language has been affected because of the fact that the majority of the children at the school are Maoris. The best way to advance the Maoris after they leave school is to get them openings in towns and apprentice them to trades. One thing I have been considering of late years is in regard to the masters at Te Aute. The Maoris look upon Te Aute as the largest Maori school in New Zealand, and we old boys also view Te Aute in the same way. That being the case, we old boys think that the masters at Te Aute should be of the very highest class, and should not be selected from amongst Te Aute boys, but from amongst masters who have had long experience, and who have got certificates. Another thing I would like to say something about is in regard to the teaching of religion at Te Aute. I may say that none of the school-time is absorbed by that. The services are held at their proper time, and I think, in view of the fact that you are training the children up, that religious instruction is a most important matter. In my opinion, the children at Te Aute at present are lazy and indolent—I mean, comparing the children who are there now with what they were in my time. The children at the present time are not so energetic in some respects as in my time, and they go in too much for fine dressing and personal adornment. That will teach and encourage them when they go back to the kaingas to keep up this dressy fashion, and I think that will be detrimental to them when they return, and also to the people in the kaingas.

123. Do you say they are extravagant in their tastes?—Yes; it has a tendency to make them extravagant. They think of nothing but clothes, and to dress and look well. Perhaps the masters at Te Aute have reason for teaching them to be tidy and clean, and to dress well.

124. You do not object to them being clean and tidy, I suppose?—No; that is good. I mean there are too many collars, and so on.

125. Has Mr. Thornton a good influence over the boys?—Yes.

126. Do the boys respect him and venerate him?—Yes.

127. Are the Maori people, both young and old, fond of gambling?—In Hawke's Bay they are.

128. Do they do much of it?—Yes.

129. Too much?—Too much for some.

130. Did the boys at the school bet amongst themselves?—We used to.

131. On horse-racing or on the totalisator?—No.

132. Is there much betting on the totalisator amongst the Maoris?—Yes, in Hawke's Bay.

133. Too much?—Yes.

134. Do they lose their money on it?—I think so.

135. Is there anything else you would like to mention?—I would like to explain that when I said I supported technical education at Te Aute I did not wish it to be understood that I confined my remarks to Te Aute only. I apply them also to Hukarere, and every Maori school.

136. *Mr. Lee.*] Do you think the best use of Te Aute is to make it a high school for Maoris and for nobody else?—Yes, if you include technical education.

137. *Mr. Hogg.*] Do you think an agricultural college would be an advantage?—Yes, very much indeed. Perhaps that would induce the Maoris to go back to their own districts and to hold on to their lands, because then they would know how to work them.

138. Would you sooner see an agricultural education given than so much Euclid and some of these higher branches they are taught?—Yes.

139. *Mr. Ellison.*] Do you not think it would be to the advantage of the boys attending the school that etiquette and manners and the proper way to conduct themselves should be taught them also?—Yes, very good. They are taught now at Te Aute about these things, and how to sit at table, and to conduct themselves at table; but deportment and how to behave were not taught in our day. When travelling I heard people remarking on the steamer that these Te Aute boys were gentlemen by nature. Perhaps they were talking about Mr. Ngata. He was the eldest of us there at that time. There were sixteen of us.

GEORGE PRIEST examined.

140. *The Chairman.*] I understand you wish to tender yourself as a witness in consequence of what you have seen in the Press about the value of your property?—Yes.

141. You are a farmer on land adjoining the Te Aute property?—Yes. I hold between 200 and 300 acres. I have been there about twelve years.

142. What do you wish to say?—I wish to say that the value put on the Te Aute College land is considerably less than the value put on my land. I am speaking of the values of the Government Valuer. I believe it was Mr. Griffen who valued the land. My section at Maraekakaho, 34 acres, was valued at £424 capital value, and £360 unimproved value, which works out at £12 per acre capital value. Another section of 32 acres is valued at £384 capital value, and £310 unimproved value, which works out at £9 13s. 4d. per acre. My other two sections, comprising 126 acres, are valued at £1,555 capital value, and £1,334 unimproved value. My land is of an average quality with the land about there. Now, while these values have been put on my property, Te Aute has been valued at £3 per acre unimproved value. I consider it unfair that for the same sort of land one place should be valued so high and the other so low.

143. Have you appealed against these values?—Yes; but I could get no redress. The matter came before the Court, and I appeared and Mr. Griffen appeared, and the Court heard evidence, and when the evidence was finished the Court said the case would be considered.