

39. You say some drift into the towns after being well educated: is that because they cannot get land?—No; it is because their parents have not put them in the way of occupations. Again, some of the lands are awarded to a great number of people under the Native-land laws, and that proves a hamper to the young men.

40. Are the Natives working their farms individually or on communistic lines?—Some of the lands are subdivided and some they work on communistic lines.

41. Would they prefer to have an agricultural school under Maori control or European control?—Let Europeans control it. We want thoroughly trained men for that kind of work.

REWETI KOHERE examined.

42. *The Chairman.*] Where do you live?—I work at Gisborne, but my home is at Waiapu.

43. What is your occupation?—Assistant teacher in the Native Theological College, Te Rau, Gisborne. I have been there for six years.

44. Were you educated at Te Aute?—Yes. I went there in the year 1889. I was a student at Te Aute for about five years, and I was a teacher there for about two years. Then I went to Canterbury University College, and was there for three years. I passed the first section of the B.A. degree. Then I took up theological studies to fit me for my present position. I may take up the rest of the B.A. degree later on.

45. Have you anything to say with reference to the Te Aute College?—I am in a somewhat awkward position in criticizing my old school, but I do so hoping that something may be done for the benefit of the College. We know that nothing is perfect in this world; everything can be improved. I have read the evidence given before the Commission with respect to the leasing of the land. Of course I cannot say very much on that score, not being a farmer and not having studied land-values. But I say this: that, though the trust might have a larger rental, it would be decidedly disastrous to the school if the Archdeacon and his associations were removed from the College. Archdeacon Williams's friendship has been an inspiration to a great many of the College boys who are now taking a good part in the battle of life. I think every one is agreed that there should be a purely Maori secondary school; and Te Aute is that school, and the only one. I believe that it should never be done away with—a secondary school where the best Maori intellects could be developed, improved, and directed. Te Aute, I think, stands as a very remarkable monument of the strides made by a savage race in the intellectual world. Had it not been for Te Aute that progress would have been lost probably. I have thought out this question long before now, and I have expressed my opinions in the Maori journal of which I am the editor. I have had talks with the Te Aute authorities, and have read papers on the question at meetings of the Te Aute Students' Association. I believe that the most promising boys should receive secondary education at Te Aute; they should be helped as much as possible and sent to the University. This has been done to some extent. But I believe that the bulk of the boys who go to Te Aute should not be carried on to secondary education. I believe that the largest number of students Te Aute can accommodate in a year is about seventy-five, and of that number I think that perhaps five are fitted for secondary education. The rest should be taught in other directions after they have reached a certain standard in general education. It seems to me at present that the bulk of the boys who go to Te Aute are sacrificed for the sake of the few who can go on to the University. When a boy is not high intellectually, if he is pushed on to the highest standard at Te Aute his mind may become spent or stale, and that would unfit him either for intellectual work or even for manual work; manual work may become distasteful to him after he has been subjected to that sort of strain. I believe it would be very beneficial to the school if another department were added to the scholastic side. The authorities at Te Aute object to any addition of the kind at the College. They do not fall in with the idea. They say it should be done in a separate institution; not at Te Aute. My own opinion is that Te Aute is the place for it, because they have everything necessary to help it on. There has been much talk about technical education; but technical education, as I understand it, would not be quite the thing for Te Aute. I am the only one who has expressed that opinion. The best addition, I think, for Te Aute would not be a technical school, but would be an industrial branch—agricultural and pastoral teaching. I say that because I think that the Maori should be a farmer above all other things, for the reason that he has the land, and his natural bringing-up and inclinations ought to fit him for that sort of life. We have had Maori boys in trades and in offices. As far as I can find out, they have not been a great success there; and some of those who have worked long in offices have shown a tendency to develop consumption. That stands to reason, because the Maoris have been used to outdoor life from their forefathers down. I believe that the salvation of the Maori race depends on their working their own land. That is the reason why I have been anxious and trembling lest the Pakeha influence is so strong that it would deprive the Maoris of their land, or a certain amount of it, and thus prevent them using it now and in generations to come. If anything will kill the Maori race it will be the loss of their land. That is one reason why I say that an industrial department should be added to Te Aute. I believe the Maori is a born farmer. The life suits him. At Te Aute we have the land and we have the instructors. The pupils are there, but they are not in their places. I think, instead of employing Europeans on the station, with some little rearrangement some of the students could be put on the station and taught high-class farming instead of being pushed on to the highest classes. They might be taught up-to-date poultry-farming, too. That could be done easily at the school itself, also fruit-farming. I do not see why the school should not have its own orchard carried on on up-to-date methods, also kitchen-gardening. When I was at Te Aute we used to have our own vegetable-gardens and strawberry-beds. We used to take a great deal of pride in keeping our strawberry-beds, and we used to send some of the fruit to friends. There was a competition amongst the students as to who should keep the best strawberry-bed. That has been done away with, to the great loss of the boys. Instead of employing the students, they now have a European gardener. It is said that technical education has been taught at Te Aute. The best result of