

to lie before them by-and-by. The principal difficulty that had to be encountered was connected with the language question. The authorities of the school had, very wisely I think, thrust aside the use of the Maori language; they had determined to make the school English as far as possible.

6. When you talk of the authorities, who were the authorities at that time?—After a very little time the authorities were practically Mr. Thornton (the headmaster) and myself. He entered upon new courses as they opened themselves out to him, and it was part of my duty to criticize these and point out what I thought might be further improvements; or in a few cases I may have told him, and, in fact, did suggest to him, that the older plan was probably the better, and that it was not quite desirable to get entirely rid of the Maori work. These exceptions, however, were very gradually eliminated by a kind of natural dialectic, and, as a rule, what was done may be taken to have been the result of our combined work, experience, and consultation; or, in the first place, of his suggestion or adoption, and my criticism. One of the first things that had to be done in connection with the work was to determine what the aim was to be. It had soon been found that unless there was some standard to work up to there would be an indefiniteness in all that was being done. I found that Mr. Thornton had already begun to set his pupils to work for the University Matriculation Examinations, and that he wished to make these his school goal, so to say. It seemed to me that there was no other course of equal value open. The elementary schools were at this time just beginning to do their proper work, and it seemed plain that before very long it would be quite possible to bring boys attending the Native schools up to the pitch of the Fourth, Fifth, and even the Sixth Standards of the public schools. Soon it seemed that the next thing to be aimed at was the affiliation of the elementary schools to the boarding schools. In the boarding school itself we gradually came to think—Mr. Thornton being generally the suggester, I being the critic when criticism seemed to be required—that the work should be assimilated in some degree to that of the English public school; but that the ultimate aim of the work should be the fitting of the best of the Maori boys to be leaders of the Maori people—to be the guides and guardians of them from the Maori point of view. In fact, to gradually be in a position to take my place, or my successor's, as the critic of the system in use in the school, and its adaptation to Maori needs. Time went on, and good work, according to Mr. H. B. Kirk, M.A., my able colleague, and me, was done. An account of this work may be seen at length—perhaps sometimes at too great length—in my reports for all these years. I have them at home, and if members of the Commission so desire I could supply a copy for their use. The whole thing is drawn out in a long panorama in these reports, so to speak. As time passed various questions arose; one of early date was this: Besides this ultimate aim of relation to university work, was there any other object particularly desirable? At a very early period it was seen that all the boys could not possibly become graduates, or university professors, or members of Parliament, and so on; and it seemed to us desirable that, as far as possible, attention should be directed to all possible means of giving the Maoris superior skill in connection with the rudiments of handwork and matters of that kind that might by-and-by lead to improvement among the Maoris outside of mere literary work. This was kept steadily in view, but from one cause or another was not acted on so fully as it might have been. It must be remembered, though, that at the time referred to we had not the light that we now have on the subject. Even the teaching of handwork in European schools was still a sort of *terra incognita*. We did not know where we were in regard to that, and still less where we were going, or what we ought to do. However, this matter was never entirely lost sight of, and I feel bound to say here, in defence of Mr. Thornton, supposing that he is attacked in any way—I do not know whether he is or not—that any shortcomings that there were in regard to this very point—the cultivation of hand and eye—were rather his misfortune than his fault. In the very early days neither he nor I, nor any of the rest of us, knew our way about sufficiently to be able to set things on the right track, as far as hand and eye work was concerned. But many attempts were made, and Mr. Thornton did, as far as in him lay, what could be done in the way of getting the boys to learn to handle tools. At one time the attempt seemed rather promising. A master was appointed who was fairly well skilled in the use of tools, and who seemed to be pretty competent.

7. Was that Mr. Dunn, who afterwards left and went to Wanganui College?—Yes. Though it is almost an insult to Mr. Thornton to apologize for him on this particular point, or any other, I must say that I never saw in him the slightest sign of indifference in regard to this handwork. Certain it is that he always tried to do his very best according to his lights and his facilities. But now, looking back over past years, I am inclined to think that from some cause or other this very important subject—more important now than ever, just because it is in contrast with the effects of the light that has appeared in other parts of our educational system—was overlooked to some extent, and so this shortcoming of Te Aute, if it may be so-called, is brought into greater relief. It is my opinion—if that is worth anything, and if I may take the liberty of saying so—that it ought to be one of the objects of the Commission to see this matter of handwork put on a sound and solid basis before considering it done with. I should now be glad if the members of the Commission would give me a lead. It will give me pleasure to say all that I know in any particular direction.

8. I should be glad to hear what you have to say in regard to the education of the two races together: whether in your opinion the school should be kept as a school entirely for Natives, or whether it is desirable that Europeans should also be admitted?—That is a wide and difficult question. There are many issues in it. One would really have to adopt a "yes-no" policy in replying. For instance, when you think how much it might improve the power of the Maori boys to speak English, you would say that it would be desirable that the English and the Maori boys should be together. Here is another point of view: In certain subjects the tendency would be for the Europeans to go ahead of the Maori boys, and so discourage them. I should just like here to propound a tremendous heresy, and have done with it. I think the intellectual capacity of the Maori—I will not say of the average Maori, but of the very large upper portion of the Maori race—is equal to the intellectual capacity of the corresponding portion of Europeans. That is not to say that the