

if his parents desired him to go on, I would send him straight away to the higher schools—that is, if I could make satisfactory boarding arrangements for him.

101. What would your ultimate object be in the case of a promising boy of that kind?—If he were a promising boy I should say he should go into the more difficult professions. The most useful to the Maoris would be medicine, with the view of working amongst their own people.

102. In specialising for the position of a medical man, and studying in an institution in England, would the student not get out of touch with the Native people?—That is possible.

103. It would take a Maori a year or more to get into touch with the Maoris again, would it not—Dr. Pomare found that?—That is quite possible. But if you send a boy to the higher schools at once you will make his time as short as possible, and he will come back to his people all the sooner. I recommend it, because he will be a shorter time away from his people.

104. I see that you propose to allow two hours a week for religious instruction?—That is religious instruction as part of the school curriculum. I do not include worship in that time—the morning and evening services.

104. Have you thought out a scheme of instruction in elementary agriculture—what the cost of it would be—what changes in subjects it would necessitate, and what fresh expenditure to the College?—The College authorities have had our opinion as definitely as it is possible to put it to them, both in respect to agriculture and woodwork. The question has been before the school authorities since 1896.

106. With regard to elementary civics, what does that really mean—geography, civics, and health, four hours?—I have already given a definition of civics. It would require a little modification in the case of the Maori. There is a general definition of civics and history in the public-school syllabus [Exhibit No. 43].

107. This course of elementary agriculture and manual instruction would have to be taken by every boy attending Te Aute College?—Yes, I should say so.

108. Compulsory subjects?—Yes, I should say so. I can see no harm in doing it. There might be a few cases where exceptions could be made; but, generally speaking, I do not think it would be advisable to make exceptions.

109. Eventually, I suppose, it would be possible to establish scholarships in connection with Te Aute, so as to enable the holders of those scholarships to go on, say, to Lincoln College?—Yes. Senior National Scholarships now are tenable at Lincoln, and many Senior Education Board Scholarships are tenable at Lincoln.

110. If the Te Aute Estate were cut up it would produce more revenue and still leave 500 acres for the use of the College?—Eighty pupils do not want 500 acres.

111. *The Chairman.*] Under the existing lease the trustees have the right to select 100 acres?—That is quite enough.

WILLIAM WATSON BIRD examined.

112. *The Chairman.*] You are Government Inspector of Native Schools?—Yes.

113. When did you first enter the service as Inspector?—I first entered the service as Organizing Instructor and Practical Teacher of Native Schools in the beginning of 1901. On the appointment of Mr. Kirk as Professor of Biology, Victoria College, and upon his subsequent retirement, I was appointed to the Assistant Inspectorship in 1902. On the retirement of Mr. Pope at the end of 1903 I became Inspector of Native Schools.

114. Your duty is simply to inspect and report?—To inspect and examine, and generally to advise the Department on the condition and working and circumstances in connection with all the Native schools—that is to say, in connection with, during 1905, about 111 institutions, consisting of a hundred Native village schools, five Native mission schools, and six secondary schools. The secondary schools are St. Stephen's and Te Aute Boys' Schools, Queen Victoria College, Hukarere, St. Joseph's, and Turakina Girls' Schools.

115. Have you a knowledge of the Maori language and character?—I can conduct the business necessary in Maori, and I think I can claim to have a knowledge of the Maori character, as I have been constantly amongst the Natives since my appointment. My district extends from within eight miles from the North Cape to Stewart Island.

116. Will you kindly state to the Commission what is in your mind on the various matters referred to in the Commission?—I began by saying that I was appointed Organizing Instructor of Native Schools in 1901. My duties were twofold. First, as Practical Teacher, to assist wherever I could the teachers in our Native village schools in methods of teaching; and, secondly, as Organizing Instructor, to do what I could to introduce to the Native schools handwork and manual instruction. The scheme of manual and technical instruction was drawn up by the Inspector-General. Since the beginning of 1901 in the Native village schools quite a new feature has been introduced—namely, handwork and manual work of various kinds—and in nearly all the Native schools to-day those occupations which were regarded by the Department as being most suitable for the Maori children are being carried out. The scheme was designed to begin with the training of the hand and eye of the smallest children, and to lead up to manual training of the bigger children, and was directed to the end of making them useful members of Maori society in Maori districts. The final stage of this hand and eye work has been the establishment in Maori schools of workshops. If I may refer to evidence that has been given before this Commission, I would like to say that apparently *pari passu* with this new feature in Maori schools has begun a desire on the part of the parents for manual and technical instruction, and it is not correct to say now what could have been said twenty or thirty years ago, the old people object to manual work. If, as it has been said, a Maori rangatira comes to a secondary school and finds his child engaged in digging, I think he has a perfect right to object. If you, Mr. Chairman, went to a school and found your child engaged in scrubbing the floor, would you not object? But if, on the other