

197. Surely they should teach the Maoris to translate Maori into English, and English into Maori?—The Maoris can do that now.

198. It forms no part of the ordinary curriculum of Maori schools?—You do not want to teach a Maori the Maori language. He knows it already. I hold that translation is a fundamentally wrong way in which to teach languages.

199. We have in the case of the Maori a noble race of people: is their literature and language not worth preserving?—That is a different question. The Native schools do not exist to preserve the Maori language. If the schools are to exist to preserve the Maori language you will utterly destroy their usefulness for other purposes.

200. Do you not think it would be well if every Maori was his own interpreter?—So he will be when he gets to know English well enough. The best thing to do is to teach him English in the best method you can. I hope the Maoris will never be taught English by translation, otherwise they will be going back a whole cycle educationally.

201. Speaking from my own observation, you rarely meet a Maori who can talk good, fluent English?—I have met a very large number who can.

MONDAY, 4TH JUNE, 1906.

HARRY BORRER KIRK examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] You are Professor of Biology, Victoria College, Wellington?—Yes.

2. And before that you were Assistant Inspector of Native Schools?—Yes, for about seventeen years.

3. One of your duties was to visit Te Aute College from time to time?—Yes, occasionally. Perhaps I ought to volunteer a statement. I had other duties to perform in connection with the examination of teachers, and those duties kept me in town at the time Te Aute was generally examined, so that I did not have the opportunity very often of visiting Te Aute.

4. Still, you very often visited the Maori schools and people, and you know a good deal of their habits and customs?—Yes.

5. Speaking generally, what system of education is most suitable to the Maori race?—I was scarcely prepared for so big a question, but I think that the village-school system in some form is essential to Maori education, and I think, in addition to that, some schools—not exactly secondary schools, but schools standing above the primary schools are also necessary.

6. In your opinion, is it not desirable that the Maoris should be taught more manual and technical work in the schools?—Yes, it is undoubtedly my opinion that the Maori should be trained as far as possible so as to be able to use his hands intelligently. I do not think that should go the length of making him an artisan.

7. That applies also to Europeans?—I would carry manual training further with Europeans. With regard to the Maori, it seems to me that if Maori education is to be really successful in a higher sense than producing so many fairly cultured Maoris—if it is to be successful to this extent, that it shall be a chief factor in elevating the Maori race, then it should not go far enough to give the Maori a distaste of kainga life; but it should go far enough to lead him to see that the life of the kainga should be conducted on a somewhat different line than exists at present: that he should do all he can to raise it, but his education should not go so far as to make the society of uncultured people—especially the people of his own race—distasteful to him. It seems to me that the Maori is particularly liable to contract habits about the age of puberty—or, say, from twelve to eighteen years of age, or even somewhat later—which remain with him as life habits much more than is the case with Europeans—habits of thought and habits of life; and that it is much more important that he should settle down to his life work early than it is in our own case.

8. I suppose you have noted down some points upon which you would like to make a statement to the Commission?—I am sorry to say I have not. It was not until Friday night that I received intimation that my evidence would be required by the Commission, and I have been excessively busy ever since. I did not think that a voluntary statement would be expected from me. I could, of course, state my views on the whole question, but they may be more diffuse than if they were put in writing.

9. We shall be glad to hear your opinions. One of the main points is this: it has been suggested that at Te Aute there should be more industrial training than has been given in the past—that industrial training should be made much more a feature of the College?—I am entirely of that opinion. I know that the method of tuition at Te Aute has been under consideration by the Commission. On that subject I have views. It seems to me that no blame whatever can be attached to the managers of Te Aute for the way in which they have conducted the school, because an experiment had to be made. The limitations of our race in the matter of taking a broad view of educating such a race as the Maori made it necessary for us to arrive at sound conclusions by the process of experiment. I think in the course of that experiment it has become obvious that there are better lines than those on which we ourselves are educated—better lines, at all events, for the Maori—and that the time has now come—perhaps it came some years since—when the course in the Maori secondary schools ought to be amended, not only as to the teaching of the literary subjects, but also as to the instruction to be given to the average Maori; that there should be an increase in the manual work, and in everything that will give the Maori the use of his hands. I am speaking of Te Aute now. My view on that point is that we should give University advantages or secondary-school advantages only to the few among the Maoris—to those coming among us to live as Europeans, and who in that sphere will do more good to their race than if they go back to live in the kainga. But, in the case of the average Maori, his place is amongst his own people;