

271. What was the cause of their falling away?—We found it impossible to keep them there. Afterwards the school buildings were burned down, and from that time they were educated in Wellington.

272. Are there any Maori children educated here now?—Not that I know of.

273. Has any attempt been made lately to induce the Maoris to attend the school?—That I cannot say. Every Maori school I ever knew has proved a failure. Even those established several years ago by the Government up the Wanganui River—both have had to be closed in spite of the endeavour to interest the Native chiefs in the matter by getting them to act as Committee-men. The Natives do not seem to appreciate the advantages of education.

274. Of course you are aware there are Native schools all over the Island?—Yes; but so far as I am aware they are none of them doing well. Even the Grey institution at New Plymouth, which was formerly most flourishing, has been given up.

275. I suppose you have no knowledge of Native education all over the Island?—Simply from common notoriety. I know the Native schools at Kai-iwi and Putiki have both been given up, as well as the Government ones up the Wanganui River.

276. You are acquainted with the terms of the grant?—Yes.

277. It provides for industrial training?—Yes.

278. Is any industrial training given now in the school?—In the first instance the Natives received industrial training, but they were persuaded that they were being ill-used and enslaved by the master, because they were employed growing grain and vegetables for the school consumption, building fences, and erecting a small windmill to grind the corn.

279. That applies to the Natives?—Yes.

280. That is some years ago, is it not?—That was at the outset.

281. What year might that have been?—1854 or 1855, or thereabouts.

282. And there has been no industrial training since then?—Not since the Maori pupils left, so far as I know.

283. And no Maori pupils since then?—Maoris remained at the school up till 1860, or thereabouts, and were afterwards sent to Wellington to be taught.

284. Has any attempt been made to give industrial training to Europeans?—Not so far as I am aware.

285. No effort has been made?—Not that I am aware of.

286. Are you aware what the school fees are now?—30s. in the junior classes, and £2 in the senior ones.

287. And the school fees at the beginning were 1s. a week?—Yes, so far as I recollect.

288. So that the scale has risen from 13s. a quarter to 30s.?—Yes. I may mention that several years after the school was started, the Government appointed Commissioners to report upon it. Those Commissioners came to Wanganui, and refused to recognize the settlers' children—about thirty in number—as pupils of the school at all, on the ground that they paid school fees, and were not fed and clothed out of the school funds, and by confining their report to the three or four Maori boys they made the school appear a failure, when it was not. In consequence of that the Trustees closed the school to the settlers' children, and endeavoured to get more Maori pupils. Whilst things were in this state Sir George Grey, by whom the grant was originally given, came to Wanganui. He was very much annoyed at finding the position of affairs, said the Commissioners acted very wrongly in refusing to recognize the settlers' children, and the Trustees acted wrongly in closing the school, and, in explanation of his views, he said that the object of the Government in granting the land was that it might form an endowment for a great educational institution in that part of the colony similar to Eton, Harrow, and Winchester at Home.

289. That was Sir George Grey's view?—Yes.

290. Was he at Wanganui at the time?—Yes.

291. *Hon. Mr. Gisborne.*] In what year was that?—I think about 1858, or a little later.

292. *The Chairman.*] These Commissioners, you say, reported upon the Maori boys attending the school, and left out those paying fees?—They took no notice of the latter.

293. Are you aware that a Royal Commission inquired into this Trust in 1869?—No; I never heard of it.

294. You have not seen the report of that Commission?—No; I have not. I saw in a Blue Book the other day some evidence Mr. Peat had given lately.

295. You are familiar, you say, with the terms of the grant?—Yes. It is somewhat as follows: For the maintenance of a school for the education of children, British subjects of all races, and of the children of other poor and destitute persons, inhabitants of islands in the Pacific Ocean. I believe that is something like the terms of the grant. There has been an incorrect version of the terms printed repeatedly in the Wanganui papers. I have myself furnished the correct terms to both papers, but the garbled one is always used to make it appear that the Trust is misapplied.

296. Would you not consider the Commission was reporting in accordance with the terms of the Trust when they refused to recognize those who were paying fees?—We did not consider so; in fact, until quite recently the understanding of that grant was simply this: that, primarily, the persons entitled to the benefit of it were the children of British subjects of all races. It did not matter whether they were high or low, rich or poor, born or naturalized subjects; all that was necessary was that they should be the children of British subjects. It did not matter whether they paid fees or not. The school funds in those days would not admit of keeping more than about half a dozen boys there as boarders, without payment.

297. Are you familiar with the regulations of the school?—Just so far as relates to the school itself.

298. Is there any provision for free education?—No doubt, if it were required. But it has never up to this time been needed. I do not know a single individual in Wanganui who could ever have claimed the benefit of that institution on the plea of poverty and indigence.