

was not let. Subsequently it was discovered that the ecclesiastical law and the civil law were at variance, and some said the ecclesiastical law only allowing a twenty-one-years lease interfered with the letting of the property. But the Trust Board took upon themselves to let it for periods of forty-two years, and since then the General Synod has taken the first steps to bring the ecclesiastical law into harmony with the civil, so as to give the trustees power to take advantage of the Public Bodies' Powers Act. Mr. Cochrane knows all the details in connection with the trusts, which do not directly come before me. All that comes before me is as Chairman, and it is my business to see how the boys at St. Stephen's, and the girls at the Victoria School are looked after. I have always formed the conclusion that the Natives were getting as good benefits as were possible under the conditions. I mean by this that these two schools were the best channels whereby, under the various trusts, the Natives could derive the advantages of the trusts.

1. *Mr. Wardell.*] Can you tell us the process by which boys from the Waikato are admitted to St. Stephen's?—Applications come to the Trust Board, and boys are either sent as Government scholars or on the foundation. We take in as many as we can. The Government scholars are so-many, and then others are on what we call the foundation—the proceeds from the trust.

2. We understand that St. Stephen's receives Native pupils from the northern part of this Island?—Yes. I do not think we have anybody from Taranaki; we have always had some from the Waikato.

3. Are you aware whether the applications for admission to the school have exceeded—especially from the Waikato—your capacity for accommodation?—I could not answer offhand so that my reply would be very valuable; but my impression is, from the last two or three meetings of the Trust Board, that the applications for admission are in excess of the accommodation at present. But whether these applications for admission are in excess owing to increased demand from the Waikato or not, I could not say.

4. You are not familiar with the financial conditions of the school—such as expenses of maintenance, &c.?—Not with what it is to-day, because we leave it to a sub-committee of the Trust Board, to go into it very carefully—Mr. Batger and Mr. Robertson—and they know all the details. I do know that our trust funds are now being drawn on to their fullest extent; and on the occasion of the last meeting, at which we had applications to admit boys, we had neither room in the school for them at present nor money to support them on the foundation.

4A. I understand St. Stephen's is supported from various trusts other than those which are the immediate subject of inquiry?—Yes; there is a definite St. Stephen's trust.

5. And revenue from other lands than these blocks in the Waikato?—Yes, I think so. I cannot say exactly where it is, but there is a definite St. Stephen's trust with clauses in it different to these others. It specifies that there must be a school at Taurarua, and it has not been altered. Some of the trustees felt—and I must confess I have a great deal of sympathy with them—that the school might, with more advantage to the Maori race, be in the country; but it is impossible to do it.

6. Are you able to say, as a matter of opinion, whether smaller schools in one or two localities would tend more to the advantage of Native pupils than concentrating them in one position here at St. Stephen's?—As a matter of my own personal opinion, as the result of two years' observation, it would be infinitely better to continue combining the efforts, but to combine them in such a manner that the Natives could be taught not only, as we teach them, carpentering, but farming, blacksmith-work, and such things. That is my own opinion. If one could thus concentrate all the efforts and have one good farming and technical school, it would do a great deal of good for the Maori people.

7. Can you tell us whether any educational establishment of any class exists in the Waikato, either upon or in the neighbourhood of the blocks into which we are inquiring?—I know of none except the Native school near Mahuta's place on the other side of the river from Huntly—a State school.

8. You know of none under the management of the Church of England in the district?—No.

9. *Mr. Quick.*] The one you refer to is an ordinary Board school for Maoris?—Yes.

10. Have you any idea of the number of children attending it?—I do not suppose there are more than forty or fifty.

11. As far as you know, the Government are not doing more in the Waikato for the education of children than you are by your trusts?—Not in the sense of boarding or technical schools.

12. They do not teach industrial pursuits?—I do not think so. We did offer lately a site at Kohanga for a State school, but nothing has been done in the matter. I think one reason why there may have been a time when Waikato boys may not have come to the school was this: probably the fall in attendance was synchronous with the antagonism to Christianity on account of Hauhau-ism. It is only within the last few years there has been any sort of general movement of kindness towards Christianity. Even since I have been here I have seen the most remarkable change take place.

13. *Mr. Wardell.*] Has the practice of Hauhau-ism absolutely ceased?—It is hard to say what has ceased and what has not. You might say Te Whiti-ism had ceased, and yet it has not. It is on the wane very decidedly, but one cannot altogether say any of these things have ceased. Probably it would be unwholesome that they should cease suddenly, as one might have the same sort of sudden change that took place in the early days. Going back to the question about Taranaki, I do know there is a girl from Taranaki in the Victoria School. It was a great advantage to get some one from Taranaki. The Victoria School is partly supported by the St. Stephen's trust, and in part by the Government, and in part again by a foundation. The Victoria Ladies' Association collect so-many scholarships, and the Government provide a minimum of twenty. The foundation-stone of the Victoria School was laid by the present Prince of Wales, and it was only opened two years ago. It is distinctly prospering. It is very valuable. The education of the girls is limited to primary education, unless a girl shows exceptional ability. The chief aim is to give the girls what is called the three Rs. They do all the housework, and we are trying to teach them the elements of agriculture; we have no space