

Reserve. Out of these about 500 have been granted. One of the reasons for the remainder not being granted, is owing to the fact that, when a party applies for a second 50 acres, Government require proof that the first has been improved; although, in many instances, treble the amount of improvements have been made on the first 50 acres. A man applies for a 100 acres; the Government send up a certificate for 50. If he applies for 200, Government will not grant it unless he has made improvements on each Block of 50, notwithstanding he may have made triple the amount required on the first 50. This applies to the majority of cases not yet dealt with.

*Mr. Nicholson.*  
Continued.

Of the 500 granted, how many have been settled upon and cultivated?—Approximately the aggregate acreage applied for is 20,000 acres. The number of applicants is [400]\*, that is an average of [50] acres to each. I should say that more than two-thirds of the land applied for is improved either by fencing or cultivation. In my estimation, the best of the available land has been taken up. There were 13 applications for land upon Trewick's Run, at the Beaumont (137) surveyed and refused on account of the depasturing license not being cancelled. The applications were for 50 acres each. Numerous applications have been made since then, but refused for the same reason. With respect to the Block of 3,000 acres (found to be 2,500, including a Mining Reserve) out of Run 123, there have been seven applications for 50 acres, and one refused, because within the Mining Reserve. The only reason I can give for the sudden increase in the number of applications in 1866, is the extension made that year of the 10 acres previously allowed, to 50 acres.

*Hon. Mr. Domett.*] Mr. Grundy says Mr. Smith applied for, and had land surveyed under a Pre-emptive Right within the Agricultural Reserve; is this so?—It was only 10 acres. I know nothing more than that it is recorded in the Maps of the office as belonging to Mr. Smith under a Pre-emptive Right. It is my impression that it was sold to him before the Agricultural Reserve was made. The extent and acreage taken out of the Agricultural Reserve for Mining Reserve, within which no Agricultural Leases can be granted, is [9,550 acres approximately.]\* The persons now applying are generally those who are already holders of agricultural land, and the land applied for adjoins previous applications. Strangers applying, in most instances, enquire for ground either on Run No. 123 or 137, and are informed that the same is not open for application.

### No. 11

Mr. William Tolcher, being duly sworn, examined:—

I have resided on the Tuapeka District over seven years. I came at the first of the rush. I was one of the early applicants for land under the 10 acre system. With regard to that, I experienced, with others, very great difficulty in getting land or encouragement for settlement, and soon found that 10 acres were not sufficient to support a man. The 50 acre system in 1866 came into vogue. I had taken three Blocks of 10 acres, but could not get any more adjacent, the land available and adjacent not being fit for agriculture. I accordingly relinquished farming, and gave it up as not offering sufficient inducements. I was Secretary to the Progress Committee of Tuapeka. At that time direct application was made to the Superintendent for land to be thrown open for settlement. I think it was in 1864 or 1865. A deputation went to Dunedin on the subject. It was known there that the leases of the two Runs (123 and 137) were about to expire or nearly run out, and to prevent their renewal this application was made. This shows the complaint is of old standing. I was down the Tuapeka River lately, from the boundary of the Goldfields to the junction of the Tuapeka and the Clutha. There is a number of miners living on the west bank of the Tuapeka River, who desire to be able to run some cattle in conjunction with their mining operations, and cannot do it. I think there are about 20 to 25 parties of four each, or from 80 to 100 men. They have some good payable land, and if land for cattle were given them, they would very likely become very eligible settlers. I wish to add my testimony to that of others, that 200 acres is not too much for a man to have, to enable him to succeed as an agricultural settler.

No. 11.  
*Mr. Tolcher.*  
22nd Feb. 1869.

### No. 12.

Mr. Evans, being duly sworn, examined:—

I am farming on the Agricultural Reserve, adjoining both the Runs 123 and 137. I have about 71 acres under Agricultural Lease, and 10 freehold—fully 30 in crops. I have no cattle on the Reserve at present. I have been obliged to sell them for want of pasturage. The land near me is wholly occupied by others—miners and agricultural leaseholders—who have come since. If my cattle go on the Run, I shall be summoned for trespassing. I have already been fined, with four others, on Mr M'Lean's complaint to the Resident Magistrate. The land is wholly taken up where I live with gardens and paddocks, and a great portion by mining. One or two besides me have been obliged to sell their cattle for the same reason as myself, and some have been obliged to move them over towards the Waitahuna. They have to pay ten shillings a head for their cattle being looked after there, besides the assessment. The settlers on that side would have taken mine on the same terms, but I preferred selling them. I was paying assessment for 18 head of cattle when I sold them. I suppose 200 acres, or thereabouts, of the ordinary pasture land in Agricultural Reserve would have been sufficient for the cattle I was keeping.

No. 12.  
*Mr. Evans.*  
22nd Feb. 1869.

\* See Supplementary Evidence, (No. 17).