

120. *Hon. Mr. Rolleston.*] Would you say, from your own experience, whether any considerable difficulties in adjusting matters, as between miners and riparian-right holders, have cropped up?—There is the Maerewhenua difficulty, also the difficulty that arose at Tinker's. Difficulties have not arisen in Maniototo, because no great area of land has, in a position to interfere with mining, been sold, and, where it has, miners and miners' associations have been, generally speaking, successful in having such reserves as I speak of made.

121. *Mr. De Lautour.*] With regard to Kyeburn, is not that district rich in gold deposits?—Yes; the country along the base of Mount Ida Range is country which I recommend it would not be advisable to alienate, because it contains gold, and certainly in payable quantities. The place is also rich in coal: in fact, throughout the county, the coal and gold go together. In almost every claim there is, either within its boundaries or not far away, a seam of coal. The pits of Kyeburn, Idaburn, and Cambrian's supply the whole county. The population at Kyeburn is entirely supported by mining, so is that at Naseby, at St. Bathans, and Hamilton's: in fact, this county may be characterized as a mining county; it is the only, or almost the only, industry pursued within its boundaries.

122. You spoke of the system of mining carried on in the old days: would you state how mining is carried on now, and the amount of capital necessary?—In the first place, if gold is found in payable quantities—and these are very small quantities—if the auriferous deposit covers a large area, and has sufficient depth, head-races have to be cut. Tail-races have generally to be cut, and in many cases an expenditure of thousands of pounds is incurred before any gold is obtained. I think I should be within the mark if I say that within the St. Bathans Riding an amount of capital equal to at least £500 is invested for every miner at work.

123. What plant do you use?—The old system of pick-and-shovel work was first displaced by canvas hose, and that, in its turn, has given way to iron pipes. In almost every case, hydraulic mining is now carried on by iron pipes. Most of them have been made in the district of late years, though previously they were obtained from Dunedin. In the workings carried on by myself, I use iron pipes to obtain pressure. They cost £1,100, and those of other companies cost nearly as much. We use the water at a point 250 feet below its storage level, which gives a pressure of 120 lb. to the square inch. We use no canvas whatever. That is the character of the improved workings. Of course that system is not pursued in every claim; but in many cases, where poor results have been achieved, returns more satisfactory might be obtained if those carrying on had sufficient capital to employ improved appliances.

124. You might give the Committee a general idea of Vincent County, as far as you know of it?—Of Vincent County I am loath to speak, because I cannot speak to a certainty. The principles I have laid down are the same, namely, that the bases of the hills are where the auriferous treasures exist; and the principles in regard to isolated spots are the same also. I have said that a strip should be reserved along the slope of the Dunstan Mountains in Maniototo County; and I believe the same remark will apply to the slope on the side of Vincent County.

125. How far has existing settlement in Maniototo County succeeded, and what markets have the settlers? Are they dependent on the miners for a market, or otherwise?—All agricultural settlement that took place till a few years ago succeeded very well. With regard to that which is now taking place I am in doubt whether I can express so favourable an opinion. I am afraid that, if the new settlers have to be dependent upon the local markets hitherto available, they will be very poor indeed. In old times, those who went in for settling upon land did not need capital. They had very little capital, they managed with the credit they got; high prices ruled, and they speedily made for themselves an independent position. I know men who took up land near Beck's, they are now worth several thousands of pounds. The same way at the Idaburn: men without capital have acquired very good positions, but they were able to get 4s. per bushel for their oats for horse-feed. There was such a difficulty in getting land opened that those who got land first had the market to themselves, but now far more produce is raised in the district than can be consumed locally.

126. But cannot they do better if they had a greater number of stock and increased grazing facilities around their block?—Many of them are turning their attention this way, but they have not the land.

127. Do you think, in dealing with those runs on the plains, that those settlers already located in the district should get a grazing right?—I am of opinion that it would be desirable, as proposed by Government, to declare hundreds around existing blocks, and also am of opinion that it would be desirable to make mining reserves of even larger extent, for the purpose of putting an end to all difficulties between runholders and miners. I am sure no great loss to the revenue would result from doing so, and the great benefit from it would be that it would help to settle the mining population on the land within the vicinity of their workings; because upon a mining reserve a miner could take up land till required for working, and if he only exercised a little discretion—prospecting the land before he commenced to crop or improve—he might have a block of land that he could improve with safety, and which would be as good to him as a freehold: he would have it under one year's notice. Naseby, St. Bathans, Hamilton's, and other mining centres have no grazing rights now, so that any cows or horses that the people require to graze are depastured on sufferance.

128. Do you think that is right?—I am aware of cases in the locality where persons wanting to fence in three or four acres have been refused by the runholder.

129. Do you think grazing right could be given to those communities in the vicinities of their respective centres?—Those mining reserves might be dealt with by County Councils under the regulations, and be made to serve all the requirements of the mining community.

130. *Mr. Bastings.*] Do you not find that pastoral rights, instead of being to the benefit of the miners, are very often monopolized by cattle-dealers?—I should think that is very likely to occur, but we have not had the chance of it in Maniototo, having had no depasturing system of benefit to the miners.

131. Do you not think that in the regulations a maximum number of cattle should be specified for each individual?—Yes; I have heard of a difficulty like what you alluded to occurring elsewhere.

132. How many heads does the Government water-race carry?—The quantity varies according to