

the season. They do not send down a stream equal to its full capacity, but they allow it to carry about equal to twenty-five Government heads.

133. Is it much used?—Yes.

134. Is it under a Board of control?—It is under a Trust; I am one of its members.

135. Is it it used at all for mining on the road between where it takes its rise and down to Naseby?—It is not. It has been used, but only for prospecting in two or three localities intervening between its source and Naseby. So far payable gold has not been found, but we are strongly in hopes that ground worth working will be discovered. It is a very long strip of country: the race is sixty-five miles in length. This water will be available for the whole of the Maniototo Plain for the purposes of irrigation.

136. *Hon. Mr. Rolleston.*] Is gold-mining carried on on freehold now to any extent?—I am not aware of any case in the county of mining on freehold.

137. The sales up to the present time have never interfered with the mining interest in this respect?—They have not.

138. Have you any opinion of what the effect would be supposing lands were alienated on which gold deposits existed?—The effect would be to deprive those who were most likely to work the ground from being able to do so. I think the ground would not be worked at all.

139. Has not the privilege of running a certain number of cattle been abused to some extent, and have a few not been running a large number of cattle while the inhabitants of the towns, who were intended to have a limited number each, have practically had no advantage?—Yes; I am aware that individuals have had great numbers of cattle running on country that they had no right to.

140. *Mr. Bastings.*] But they never had the facility of running cattle in your county?—They never had, but that has not prevented people from having cattle.

141. *Hon. Mr. Rolleston.*] A great many cattle have been kept on runs by cattle-dealers?—Yes. The good nature of certain runholders or managers has been imposed upon. Indeed, in some cases, hundreds of cattle have been kept upon runs in this way.

142. You have read the propositions of Government about cutting up the runs?—I have.

143. What is your opinion of the advantages of proclaiming hundreds in these flats—do you think that the proclaiming of hundreds around the blocks of land that have already been sold would be advantageous?—It would be advantageous. One benefit it would have would be to allow land being gradually taken up by the present settlers, thus giving them an opportunity of increasing their holdings from time to time.

144. *Mr. Macandrew.*] How many years have you been resident in the district?—Nearly eighteen years. I know the locality very intimately.

145. So far as I understand the gist of your opinion it is this: that there ought to be a large mining reserve at Naseby, a reserve from Naseby to Hill's Creek, from Naseby to Lower Kyeburn, and from that to Kakanui?—I do not say there should be a mining reserve from Naseby to Hill's Creek. I say the land in the locality, being probably auriferous, should not be alienated.

146. Have you any idea what number of people could be supported on the Maniototo Plains if they were cut up into agricultural areas, and the water-race brought to bear for purposes of irrigation?—My opinion would not be valuable on that point. I have never gone into the calculation.

147. *Mr. De Lautour.*] There is a distinction which, perhaps, might be brought out more clearly between areas proposed to be set apart as mining reserves, and other areas which it is proposed not to set apart, but which are not to be alienated—I understand you to say there are areas which you do not want to have made mining reserves, but which you think should not be alienated?—Yes.

148. Then, as to outlets, it will not be necessary to reserve them, but they should not be sold?—Yes, that is correct.

149. *Mr. Shrimski.*] In answer to Mr. De Lautour, you stated you knew little or nothing about the Maerewhenua?—I have been there. I have seen the workings, but it was merely a passing visit some years ago.

150. *Mr. Macandrew.*] Are you of opinion that mining and farming could be combined to a large extent, if the regulations were suitable?—I believe that, if encouragement were offered, nearly all the money made at mining—and that, in many cases, is very considerable—would be expended in improving the face of the country. I have long thought that, if that were done years ago, when the country was tied up in leases, which still exist, the face of the interior would present a different aspect to what it does now. In my knowledge scores of diggers went home to Britain with money. They did not go because they could not obtain land, for they had no idea of settlement; but if the land had then been open, and one or two had settled upon it, the example shown would have been followed, and nearly all these men with money would have gone on the land. As an answer to your question, I may instance Clarke's: this gold field is situated above the winter snow-line, and for nearly half the year the miners cannot work their claims. They come down to live, and in their spare time might be improving a holding.

151. Would there be any objection on the part of miners to acquire the freehold of their claims?—I am afraid so. The present regulations requiring work to be done have been evaded, and to my knowledge claims have been held for eight or ten years without anything being done to them.

Mr. DAVID BARRON, District Surveyor, Mount Ida, examined.

152. *Mr. De Lautour.*] You have heard Mr. Ewing's evidence as to the localities where auriferous areas possibly exist. Without going over it all again, do you think that is correct?—It seems to me to be all correct.

153. Can you suggest anything that is omitted?—He has mentioned everything. We talked over this matter before, and agreed what, in our opinion, should be done. I have had an opportunity of seeing the maps referred to in the evidence before the Committee met to-day.

154. Then, perhaps, your evidence may be more valuable if we approach the plains that may be dealt with for settlement?—Before you take up that matter I would say that there is one point in