

of fencing being so great. I admitted that any contentious person might snap his fingers in the face of the settler, and drive a horse or cow along a reserve through the middle of the farm; but probably most people would be content if a slip panel were left, to allow of ingress and egress where necessary, to pass through. On making inquiry I found the diggers were perfectly indignant at the proposal of doing away with the chain of reserve. The same happened at Earnscleugh.

267 *Mr. Bastings.*] As a matter of fact, you know that the Waste Lands Board have given notice of its intention to deal with the runs?—The Board have in some cases given notice that the leases will terminate at the end of twelve months, as a matter of precaution, and have afterwards considered more carefully what should be done with the land.

268. What is your experience in regard to pastoral lands? Does it not all come again into the hands of the lessees?—It does, in most cases. The lessee gets it, but he does not get it upon his own terms.

269. You know Cable and Drummond's run?—I know that run. The lessees got it again; but they paid 6d. per acre per annum for the country, which is a good price.

270. *Mr. Thomson.*] Does much of the Wakatipu country fall in soon?—It has been nearly all relet. Since the map I am referring to was coloured, a large extent of country, about fifty thousand acres, has been released at from a farthing to a halfpenny per acre per annum. The country was well advertised, every one had a chance of going in for it, and it had some low country too. But the rabbits prevented people from giving anything like a price for it.

271. *The Chairman.*] Would you go over the Southland map, and inform the Committee as to the lands to be dealt with in that district?—The Southland runs fall in in 1883. The land for disposal is mostly in scraps along the tops of the hills. It is not of much value. With the exception of two runs, all the land to be dealt with is high or back-lying country. These two runs are the Centre Hill Run, which is country that would do for pastoral deferred-payments quite well; the other is a valuable run called Blackmont, an area of 37,350 acres, which would cut into three runs very well. It is not all suitable for pastoral deferred-payment settlement, as 5,000 acres would be too small an area in the high country of this run.

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