

chased this race when the channels are in working order there will be still a shortage of water on the field.

25. You say that after the completion of these two channels, Nos. 4 and 5, there would be then a shortage of water, even supposing the whole of Holmes's twenty-four heads and all the Government water were brought on the field?—Yes; that is so.

26. What do you say with regard to twenty-four heads being constantly relied upon in Holmes's race? Is it a more or less permanent source of supply than the Government one?—That depends on the weather. Holmes's dams usually last twice as long as the Government one. If you have a week's heavy rain Holmes's dams get full, and last six weeks without any rain. The Government dams after a week's heavy rain get filled, and last less than three weeks.

27. Do you say that Holmes's dam is a more permanent supply?—I do not say that; but it has less demand on it. The Government dams will fill quicker than Holmes's will. One gives 125 heads and the other twenty-four.

28. What is the number of miners who can get employment if sufficient water is supplied to them, when No. 4 and 5 Channels are completed?—There are only two parties connected with No. 4 at the present time: one claim has six shareholders and the other I cannot say exactly, but as a rule about eight men are working there.

29. Can any more be connected with it?—Yes.

30. How many if there is sufficient water brought in?—Well, there is a large extent of country at the head of this channel. Any one taking it up would have to construct his own race to connect with the channel. Within the last five or six years an enormous area of ground has been taken up that prior to that time was not considered payable. Like everything else, we have had the best at first, and when that was worked out we have had to take the inferior.

31. There is room for more in the channel?—Yes, it would carry twelve parties.

32. Averaging how many men each?—Five. That is, if the channel was in full work and a sufficient supply of water.

33. What do you say about No. 5 Channel?—It has thirteen claims at the present time, some having four and some five men. Say an average of four, that is, fifty-two men: these are connected with the channel now.

34. *Hon. Mr. Larnach.*] If your wish in this matter was carried out, would the supply last on the field: would you then have a permanent supply for the number of men?—You mean without any lost time? No, we would not have a permanent supply.

35. How long, through the dry weather, would you be without sufficient water?—This last year was an exceptionally dry one on the Coast, and we lost a lot of time.

36. How much?—I am not prepared to say.

37. Have you lost three months?—No.

38. Two?—Yes.

39. Even in the dry season, would this mean a loss of a month? Would you say the half?—Yes, I think so.

40. *Mr. Mills.*] If this purchase is made by the Government, what extent of ground do you consider there is for working, and what number of men would it employ, and for what length of time?—The number of men on the Kumara Goldfield now is about three hundred connected with mining. There is a large extent of ground; it is impossible to say the extent. I thought, years ago, the field would have been worked out in a few years: the good ground is worked out, and the miners have gone back to the poorer ground. These two new channels would give it a longer life. If they were not constructed the ground would never be worked. The Government has constructed this channel (No. 4) at a large expense, and if they purchase this race it will recoup them for the outlay in constructing the channel. I should not like to state the time the claims will last—say ten or fifteen years.

41. What number of men would you say it would employ?—From 250 to 300.

42. I understand you to say they now averaged 300 men?—Yes.

43. Would there be a constant supply of water and no lost time?—Yes; there would be a constant supply, except in very dry weather.

44. Can you tell the Committee anything about average earnings?—We often see a report that the average earnings in Kumara are so much per week; I have seen it stated as £3 per week, but I am confident the average is not more than £1 10s. per week. There are fully one-third not making more than £1 a week; they are simply fossicking.

45. I understand they lose a lot of time for want of water now?—Yes; men lost a lot of time in the last twelve months in particular. One or two years we had it pretty wet weather, and had sufficient water all the time.

46. *Mr. R. McKenzie.*] I suppose you have had levels taken to show that the water could be turned into the Government race?—No, we have not; but it was surveyed years ago, at the beginning of the Kumara rush, by Mr. Gow, and levels taken.

47. Do you know the country?—Yes; I would undertake the contract to bring it in.

48. What is the distance between Holmes's dam and the head of the Government race?—I should imagine it is about half a mile.

49. Is it a country you could cut a race through?—Yes; the water would flow of itself if put through the dam.

50. *Mr. Guinness.*] It would be a distance of half a mile to construct?—Yes.

51. *Mr. Duncan.*] What length would the tunnel be?—It need not be a tunnel.

52. Well, a cutting, then?—I think a cutting or tunnel would have to be made at an estimated cost of £100 to bring water from one race to the other.

53. Would there be 20 or 30 chains of tunnel to make?—No; I should say about 3½ chains.

54. *Mr. McKenzie.*] Do you think the flat below will be worked; I mean below the Hokitika road?—Yes; I expect all that will be worked in the future. It is being worked now by two or three parties who have their own race.