

100. *Mr. Macandrew.*] Can no portion of this run be worked from Wanaka side?—It cannot be worked from Wanaka side. After you cut off the Hawea flat, as it is proposed to do, the country left rises abruptly to heights from 4,000 to nearly 6,000 feet, and then runs down in slopes to the Lindis, where the homesteads must be.

101. *Mr. Ballance.*] If one man by securing a section can command the other part of the country, what object is there in cutting it up?—This object: it is just possible that a man might have a piece of low country some miles off, drive his sheep up to the high ground in summer, and bring them down to a place twenty or thirty miles away in winter. That is done in other countries.

102. *Hon. Mr. Rolleston.*] And that will insure to Government that a man cannot get the run at his own price?—Yes and on each thirty or forty thousand acres of this high country there, it is possible under the 2,000 feet line to find room for a wool-shed and yards.

103. *Mr. Ballance.*] Does that apply to all runs?—This is an extreme case. The object is to induce as much competition as possible. The only chance of Government obtaining competition is that some person, having lower country, might think it worth his while to lease this high country for summer pasture, and in the season drive his cattle up. I could almost prophesy that this country will in future be held in one large run, as it is at this moment. But it can, however, be cut up.

104. *Mr. Pyke.*] Regarding the whole of the country from Leaning Rock Creek, following the course of the Clutha and Lake Hawea for fifty miles, and back from there to the Canterbury boundary, an area of 667,500 acres, according to Government returns—I include Morven Hills and Ardgowan—is it correct to say that all this land is in the hands of one firm?—It is correct, I believe, with the exception that the runs held by the firm do not go so far north as the Canterbury boundary, nor is the aggregate acreage so large, I think; still it is a very large tract of country to be held by one firm.

THURSDAY, 21ST JULY, 1881.

MR. JOHN EWING examined.

105. *The Chairman.*] You are a gold miner, the Chairman of the Maniototo County Council, and resident at St. Bathans, Otago?—Yes.

106. *Mr. De Lautour.*] The Committee, Mr. Ewing, are principally desirous of getting your evidence in regard to the localities on the runs proposed to be dealt with, which are auriferous, or which are capable of being worked by miners, with the view of deciding what portion of country should, and what portion should not, be alienated by sale. Perhaps it would be as well to take first the country that you most particularly know, taking it by its physical features, or, if you should prefer, run by run, and describe the nature of the localities where the ground is now being worked. You might also state what ground, in your opinion, is capable of being worked by the water that is available. Suppose you begin at Kyeburn corner, at the Taieri Lake, at the entrance to Maniototo Plain, and then work round?—I should prefer rather to give my opinion by the aid of a reference to the physical features of the country than by the aid of boundaries of runs. In the first place, I may say, that the whole country is more or less auriferous, and that it is very hard to define limits within which you may expect auriferous deposits to be found. One well-marked rule however, should, I think, be distinctly laid down: that is, that all the mountain ranges and isolated hills in the county, the isolated rocky ridges, should be understood to have round their base a strip of probably auriferous country. Around most of these mountain ridges gold in greater or lesser quantities has been found, and in most of them gold workings of a greater or lesser extent now exist. The only exception to the rule I have stated is that of the Kakanui, from a point behind the Kyeburn Hundred till you get outside the boundaries of Maniototo; so far as I am aware, no gold has been found in the mountains in that locality, but from Kyeburn Hill, along the northern boundary, gold in greater or lesser quantity has been found. On the very summit of the mountains at Clarke's there are rich and extensive workings; the production of gold from that quarter is only limited by the supply of water; the workings are at an altitude of more than 3,000 feet. The watershed of this table-land drains into the Waitaki; and care will have to be taken that an outlet on the Waitaki side be preserved, or a similar difficulty to that existing at Maerewhenua will arise. Following along, we come to the workings at Naseby. I am of opinion that it would be well to have a large mining reserve at Naseby, so that the difficulties which have arisen between squatters and miners might be obviated. Mr. Barron will be able to inform the Committee on that point better than I can, so I need not enlarge on the subject. But I take it for granted that the mining reserve is made for the purpose I mentioned, and is not to be understood to include the whole of the auriferous land in the vicinity, as the whole of the land between Naseby and Kyeburn is quite as worthy of being reserved for mining purposes as this would be. Following in a north-west direction along the Hogburn, gold has been found in various places; and it has been estimated by prospectors that it would pay from 30s. to £2 per man per week. But there are no workings there, as the water is better employed elsewhere; the whole of this country is commanded by the Government water-race, which is sixty-five miles long, and heads from the Manuherikia River. There are gold workings at Hills's Creek. In my opinion the whole of the country between the main road from Naseby to Hill's Creek, and the summit of the mountains, would require to be dealt with for mining purposes. It would not need to be reserved for mining purposes, but should be kept as probably auriferous land—land that ought not to be sold. I mean all the land above the main road from Naseby to Hill's Creek. The same course should be also adopted with all the land above the main road from Naseby to the lower Kyeburn diggings, and across from the Kyeburn lower workings to the Kakanui. The whole of the northern corner of the county, starting from Blackstone Hill, where I left off before, is more or less auriferous. Gold has been found in various places; and there are immense deposits of coal. Almost every stream, in every part of this country—the watershed of the Manuherikia—reveals the existence of seams of coal. It is lignite of good quality; and in the neighbourhood of many of the seams gold has been got. Some of the seams are of great thickness. I speak now of the Upper Manuherikia Valley, between St. Bathans and the Hawkduns. Crossing Mount St. Bathans, to the watershed of Dunstan Creek, I come to a more important strip of country than any I described since referring