

937. Many?—Several.

938. For instance, I see there is one at $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and the next is taken at $7\frac{1}{2}$, then at $8\frac{3}{4}$, 10, and so on: is that where they were taken?—There were some intermediate ones taken, but they were not put down where they made no difference in the section.

939. Would you call the estimates based on this reconnaissance survey good or rough?—They are pretty good; they are approximately correct.

940. Have you any experience of how a survey based upon barometric readings, such as you have made in this case, works out afterwards when a proper detailed survey is made—I mean with regard to cost?—No.

941. Can you say whether the survey in this case is likely to tally with a detailed survey as regards cost?—Yes, I think so; very closely.

942. You think it will come very close?—Yes; approximately so.

943. *Mr. Larnach.*] What experience have you had in laying out railway lines?—Ten years.

944. In what part of the Island?—All through Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, Wanganui, and Wellington.

945. Any lines in the South Island?—No.

946. Then, your comparisons have been in respect to lines in the North Island?—Yes.

947. So that it is all pretty similar country?—Yes.

948. Have you been through any more of the line in question for any distance beyond the 51 miles?—I walked through hurriedly from the 78th to the end.

949. And as to the stretch between 50 and 78 miles?—I have not been through it.

950. Do you know anything of that country?—No.

951. Is there any country on that line that is particularly rough or rugged?—Between 78 and the end, you mean.

952. Yes?—From 85 miles to 90 it is pretty rough; the remainder is not.

953. *Mr. Fulton.*] Were you surveying through the Seventy-Mile Bush on the Napier extension line?—Yes.

954. How does this line compare with work that you were doing there?—I have seen nothing on this line so rough as at Takapau. No viaducts would be required, and the bridges would be low.

955. *The Chairman.*] That is on the Stratford line?—Yes.

956. *Mr. Fulton.*] And how would the quality of the land compare?—It would be scarcely so good, I think, on this line. The first twelve and a half miles, however, would be as good as any on that line; but after that it is more hilly.

957. *Mr. Larnach.*] Do you know anything of the central line?—No.

958. Nor the coast line?—I have been through the country there.

959. How does the Stratford line compare with the coast-line?—I consider there would be more good country opened up by the Stratford line.

960. *The Chairman.*] Is the country on the bad piece that you spoke of as much broken as the Rimutaka country?—The hills are not so high.

961. Is it broken country like that?—Not so broken as that.

Mr. P. SMITH, Assistant Surveyor-General, Auckland, examined.

962. *The Chairman.*] This Committee has been appointed, as you are aware, Mr. Smith, to inquire into the various routes proposed for the North Island Trunk Railway, and it has been suggested that you, in your official capacity, have traversed the country through which the proposed lines run, and have a large amount of knowledge of that country. The Committee will be very glad to know what part of the country you are acquainted with?—I have a knowledge of the country from Te Awamutu for twenty miles southwards. Then, again, I was at the head of the Mokau.

963. *Mr. Larnach.*] Personal knowledge, I presume?—Personal knowledge. I also know the country on the central line due west of Lake Taupo. Again, I have a knowledge of the country from Murionotu through to Marton. I have a slight knowledge of the country from Taranaki to the Mokau, and the country up the Mokau River itself to the head of the Mokau. I have also travelled over most of the Napier line.

964. *The Chairman.*] You say you know the country personally from Te Awamutu for twenty miles southwards: will you tell the Committee what class of country that is, whether it is good or what?—In Auckland we should call it first-class country. It is a mixed pastoral and agricultural, principally agricultural; that is, the portion I know myself.

965. How much of it is fit for settlement?—I made a rough estimate of the lands which are known to be suitable for settlement, agricultural and otherwise, in the Upper Waipa Valley, and there are something like 300,000 to 350,000 acres.

966. How far will that extend south?—To about Te Kuiti.

967. And is that the twenty miles that you speak of?—That is beyond the twenty miles.

968. How many miles south of Te Awamutu would that be?—It would be about thirty-five miles.

969. There is only one route passing through the piece of country you are describing now, coming southwards?—Just at the point I have mentioned; that is, close to the junction of the two proposed routes.

970. And do you consider the whole of that land fit for settlement?—Yes; the area that I have mentioned.

971. And what is the balance beyond the 350,000 acres?—It is a much rougher country, and the greater part of it forest. It is what we should call pastoral country after it is cleared.

972. Then, are the 350,000 acres all open land?—Nearly all open.