

1849. What did you think of the Murimotu land as compared with that north of Lake Taupo : did you see the land to the north of Lake Taupo?—I should say it is very similar indeed to that.

1850. Not better land than that?—The Patea end would be better, but going down the Wangaehu River it certainly would not be a bit superior.

1851. *Mr. Larnach.*] What would be your estimate of the extent of land fitted for settlement in the country you have been speaking of?—You mean the east of the line?

1852. Exactly?—I do not think there is an acre until you reach the Rangitikei.

1853. That is to the eastward of the central line?—Yes.

1854. That is, on the country you are acquainted with?—Yes.

1855. But there is a large quantity of stock now on the Murimotu?—There is supposed to be ; but they run over the limestone ranges.

1856. Do you know the number of cattle running up there?—I have heard it estimated at four or five thousand on Haselden's run, but that would be practically in the bush.

1857. Have you seen any of the cattle there?—No.

1858. Do you know how many sheep there were on the Murimotu Block at one time?—It is estimated to carry 40,000 ; but when I saw it there was scarcely a sheep on it, nor was there any feed. I mean, of course, Moorhouse's run which is estimated or is said to be carrying 40,000 sheep. The plain is only part of it which I have said had no stock on it when I went through it, except, apparently, a few stray sheep. The run, independent of the plain, is of immense size.

1859. Why had the sheep decreased : had they died?—I do not know.

1860. Have you no idea how many sheep there are now?—I am told about forty thousand.

1861. Now?—Yes.

1862. Have you seen the quality of the sheep?—I saw a few ; they were merino sheep ; nothing but merinos in that country.

1863. Where they in good condition?—Fairish.

1864. In what part of the year was this?—In the spring.

1865. *The Chairman.*] I would like you to be quite positive as to where you struck this line. You say when you came south from Lake Taupo you struck the Wangaehu River?—Yes

1866. Then, you cut only the upper end of the Murimotu Plain?—Yes ; I followed Wangaehu down about eight miles, which is not far from the nearest hills on the western side of the Murimotu Plain. The distance would not be more than two miles.

1867. *Mr. W. White.*] What kind of land does the Napier line pass through?—You mean from Murimotu to Napier?

1868. Yes?—It is low-lying hills.

1869. Would you call it good land?—Good merino sheep land, but not good for settlement.

1870. Not any of it?—Not any of it.

1871. Is it bush or open land?—Open land, nearly all.

Mr. G. L. R. SCOTT, Surveyor, Palmerston North, examined.

1872. *The Chairman.*] Have you had any practice as a railway engineer, or only as a surveyor?—Only as a surveyor.

1873. Will you tell the Committee what part of the country you have travelled over contiguous to the proposed routes for the North Island Trunk Railway?—I surveyed a block of about twenty-five or thirty miles inland from Stratford.

1874. Have you travelled over any of the country between Te Awamutu and Stratford?—From Stratford about thirty miles inland, and along the track.

1875. Which track?—There is a horse-track over about eighteen or nineteen miles.

1876. From Stratford?—Yes.

1877. And you have only travelled about thirty miles from Stratford inland?—Yes.

1878. Do you know anything of the Marton line?—I was upon the Otairi Block three years ago.

1879. How far is that?—About twenty-five miles from Marton, but I do not know very much of that country.

1880. Then, the Committee are to understand that the only portion of this country you know is the piece within about thirty miles from Stratford?—Yes ; there is a 30,000-acre block there that I surveyed.

1881. Do you know the confiscation boundary, coming away from Stratford?—The boundary of the block that I surveyed was on the confiscated land. The confiscated line formed the north-west boundary of the block.

1882. Do you know where the projected line of railway is?—Yes.

1883. Was that marked out when you were there?—Mr. Carkeek went up about a couple of weeks before I started, and I followed his tracks up.

1884. Could you tell from this map (No. 1), approximately, how far along that line your survey commenced?—At about the 25th mile.

1885. From Stratford?—Yes.

1886. And how far up the line did it extend?—In a direct line through the block it would be five miles in width, but it would be more by the railway, perhaps a mile more.

1887. How far on either side of the line would that be?—On the north-west side it would be about a couple of miles.

1888. That is, between the railway and the confiscated boundary?—Yes.

1889. And what on the east side?—On the east side it would be about seven miles.

1890. What is the nature of that land?—About half on the north-west side is second-class land.

1891. Second class compared with what?—It is broken country.

1892. What proportion of that to the north-west of the railway track is fit for agriculture?—None, I should say.

1893. Is there any of it that would plough?—No ; none of it.