

77. There was no application to the Government for having made it?—Quite so.

78. *Mr. Travers.*] Would you permit me to call attention to the clause, "Whereas land shown by the red border," in the preamble clause 11, "is insufficient to provide land agreed to be granted to the company under the powers of this Act," &c.?—Exactly so.

79. So that it was agreed to be granted to the company. It is stated here. Does not that recall to you that the agreement to the company was a grant for the actual 30 per cent.?—I have already stated what I knew of the views of the Minister—Mr. Rolleston.

80. He was a member of the Cabinet at the time—one of the parties to this contract—was he not?—I suppose so.

81. *Mr. J. McKenzie.*] Did the Government give up all the land they had within this area?—All, except that on the east side of the range. They gave all the land on the west side—all that lay near the railway-line, and a considerable portion near the Wellington Harbour, on the tops of the hills.

82. No alternate blocks?—No, it was all given that the Government had at the time.

83. *Mr. Ross.*] I understood that there was some land on the west side of the range that the Government refused to give?—No, only on the east side.

84. I understood that there was sufficient land on the west side to enable the company to have enough?—No; if I said so I was wrong. I said there was sufficient in the limits of fifteen miles to make up £1,500; but the Minister refused to give them any on the other side of the watershed.

85. *Mr. O'Callaghan.*] Do any of the concessions made in connection with the reclamation go towards a compensation for the loss which the company sustained in not receiving the whole of its allocation?—I could not say. Very likely that was in the mind of the Minister: but that was agreed upon before this land was valued. There was not, as far as I know, any other arrangement made about this or about certain earthworks already begun by the Government.

86. Perhaps you would be good enough to state whether or not the eastern portion of the land, which Mr. Rolleston did not agree to hand over to the company, is in rather a favourable position for the special settlement which he was establishing?—Yes, it was very good land.

87. Was that the reason, do you know, why the land was not handed over?—That was one reason, and the other reason that Mr. Whyte suggested, that it was not in the same watershed. Of course there is the great Tararua Range between. It would have been actually giving land on each side of the then proposed Government railway from Masterton to Mangamahoe and Woodville.

88. And did it weigh with the Minister at the time that there was sufficient on the other side of the watershed?—I know that was his private opinion.

89. These were the principal reasons: that the land was on the other side of the watershed, and that the company was getting sufficient?—Yes; all these reasons combined. Mr. Rolleston took up this position: that he would not agree to it at all. He told me —

90. *Mr. Macarthur.*] Was not there a period during which it was contemplated to give this land on the east side of the range, only that there were some representations made by the members for Wairarapa?—I cannot say. I do not remember that. Of course, the matter was under consideration for a period, and there were various phases of the proposals.

91. It is evident, from the correspondence we had read yesterday, that there was such a period; and that representations had been made to the Government, in consequence of which they withdrew the land on the eastern side of the range from allocation?—It is quite likely. I do not remember it.

92. *Mr. Whyte.*] And the lands that you said were given at the Hutt and elsewhere were not included?—Yes; they were in this £96,000.

Mr. MARCHANT examined.

93. *Mr. Travers.*] You are, I believe, Chief Surveyor for the Provincial District of Wellington and Commissioner of Crown Lands?—Yes.

94. Were you Chief Surveyor at the time this contract was entered into?—Yes; but not Commissioner of Crown Lands.

95. Mr. Holdsworth was Commissioner then, I believe?—Yes.

96. Did you receive any instructions for returns of lands available for allocation to the Wellington and Manawatu Railway Company in the year 1881—a request to make a return?—I received such instructions about the time you speak of in the year 1882.

97. Have you the instructions with you?—No.

98. It would be desirable that they should be before the Committee?—I think I may say, speaking from memory, that they were verbal.

99. You were authorised to prepare schedules: did you prepare them?—I did.

100. Can you state any of the instructions?—They would be to the effect that I was to forward, for the information of the Minister for Public Works, descriptions and values of the lands within fifteen miles on both sides of the proposed railway.

101. Did you make such return?—I did.

102. Have you got a record of it in your papers?—I have, but I did not know the drift of the evidence required, or I would have brought them.

103. Will you produce the return?—I can do so. I will send down for it. I remember the value I placed was about £115,000; and there were about 363,000 acres, within the fifteen miles of the railway. The value of £115,000 included what are now Forest Reserves, land in the Forty-mile Bush, across the watershed, and the Crown lands on the western side of the range.

104. And the Forest Reserves were afterwards excised?—Yes; that reduced the amount of the lands in the schedule to 210,000 acres.

105. That also excludes land in the Forty-mile Bush?—Yes.

106. And I understand that the valuation ultimately was confined to the lands which were shown upon the portion of the map marked pink?—Yes; the final valuation.