

*Mr. Valentine* : They tell me that all these would pay well if they only had the water. At present they have to carry water seven miles across the valley.

126. *The Chairman.*] Is there any other way that you think of which might be adopted to improve the position of the colony with respect to these auriferous drifts—first, in regard to saving gold; second, in regard to water-supply; and third, in regard to appliances, such as the Ball-dredger, which might be introduced, but which are not used here at the present time?—I am in communication with a gentleman in America on the subject of the Ball-dredger. He is making inquiry as to its suitability to our beaches and auriferous drifts, and with the view of introducing his machine, which, from what I can learn, is something after the principle of the Ball-dredger. But I believe this dredge is not in general use in America.

127. Do you know whether there has been any rule laid down for rendering assistance by the Government in working these drifts by means of water-supply?—No; there is no rule laid down. I think that the question of water-supply is one for the Government to consider. Once you begin on that you never know where to stop. That is a question of policy.

128. But could there not be an increase in the yield of gold in the colony if that assistance were given?—There is no doubt about that.

129. *Mr. Guinness* : Could the Government give assistance to a syndicate by means of a land-grant system?—There is the question of policy again.

130. *The Chairman.*] Then, I understand you to say that, with increased water-supply, in your opinion there would be a considerable increase in the yield?—Yes.

131. *Mr. Allen.*] Would it pay?—That has to be tested; no doubt in some places it would pay, not in others.

132. *The Chairman.*] Do you not think there has been a great loss of capital through no record being kept of the directions of drifts, of deep sinkings, &c.; for instance, suppose that a proper record had been kept of the various lodes about the Lamplough District, would not such a record have enabled the miner to follow up these leads, and in this way have had the best possible effect: could it not be done?—The new Mining Act provides for a good deal of that; it provides for systematic mining surveys and other things to be done, and in every case they have to keep a record.

133. Do you mean the Mining Act or the Bill to amend the Mining Act?—The Mining Act.

134. But that only refers to companies; do you not think that where there are no companies, where only small parties of men have to work, in cases of that kind, it would be a great advantage if the Survey Department were to send men to take levels, to note the direction of strata and other appearances that would serve to guide the work in mines?—I question very much whether the expense would not be found to be too great.

135. Would it be expensive?—It would entail great expense.

136. But there would be a great advantage in it?—I think the main advantage would be in deep workings rather than in open workings; you can see the direction in open workings.

137. The colony has been spending a lot of money lately in aiding prospecting, has it not?—Yes.

138. In the Mines Department, then, if any one came to ask you what grounds had been prospected, where it is located, what has been the result of the prospecting, and, generally, what has been done, have you any details of that expenditure?—Yes; we have details of all such expenditure.

139. Have you any details of results?—No; not of results.

140. Have you any plans?—We know the money that has been expended in certain localities.

141. Is there no information given by the local bodies?—We know the amounts that have been paid, we know the men's names to whom payment was made, and we know the localities.

142. Do you not think that if this detailed information were furnished everybody might know the exact position of these prospects?—I think it would be a very useful thing to have.

143. *Mr. Duncan.*] Could it not be got if prospectors were called upon to furnish their reports to the local bodies, and the local bodies might forward these reports to the department?—It might, perhaps be done that way.

144. *The Chairman.*] Are you aware of the system that obtains in Victoria, where they have records of the borings, samples of the strata passed through, and drawings of the same: can you not get every detail connected with matters of this kind, the same as that obtained by the Mining Department in Victoria every month?

*Mr. Larnach* : That only applies to the chief mining localities.

*Mr. Valentine* : In Sandhurst all deep sinkings are recorded.

145. *Mr. Duncan.*] There are no deep sinkings in Sandhurst; perhaps, Mr. Gordon, you could tell us?—They are down 2,040ft. in Sandhurst.

146. *The Chairman.*] Have you information of the borings?—I have information of all the different borings.

*Mr. Larnach* : I think Victoria spends £80,000 a year in boring.

147. *The Chairman.*] Is not the colony entitled to all the detailed information that can be got from any parts of the colony receiving aid from the Government?—I think it would not cost the local bodies much to supply it. It would certainly be a good thing to have.

148. *Mr. Allen.*] You have suggested that it would be a proper thing to send a man to America to bring to New Zealand all the information he could get there: would it not be better to get a man from America?—It would be hard to get a man that has been over all the mining districts of America; and, even if you could, when he came here he might find that the ores here were different; that the system applicable in America could not be applied here. He would have to study the whole subject when he got here, and would probably be of very little good to us.

149. You were speaking only of auriferous drifts?—Of auriferous drifts.