

29. Are you certain you are speaking from the report of the Ranger?—Was not his report to the effect that the land had been occupied by McLennon, and the rent paid by him?—I do not remember that he reported so as to that particular section.

30. I suppose we can get the report in Wellington?—Yes, certainly.

31. Can you give a list of the names of the persons you called upon to meet the Board at the inquiry to be held on the 24th?—No, I could not tell you.

32. You can supply it afterwards?—Yes. Of course these cases you mention at Macrae's were the only cases where there was any allegation of dummyism. The other cases are for non-compliance with the conditions attached to the system under which the persons were occupying the land. We found that some of them were in arrears, and some not residing on the land as required; so we gave a number of them notice to show cause why their licenses should not be forfeited on these grounds.

33. Do you recollect having been called upon to transfer a section recently sold by the Official Assignee in Bankruptcy at a place near Macrae's?—Yes. I think that was the case the petitioners forwarded to us, and in which evidence was given before the Official Assignee. It was that case that apparently had drawn the attention of the petitioners to the fact; and they based their allegation of dummyism upon the man's own statement that he had not taken up the section for himself.

34. Do you not think, as Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chairman of the Land Board, that an inquiry should have been held before the Official Assignee was allowed to part with the land?—He sold it before we knew anything about it.

35. The statement of the man was known to you. It was pretty well known over Otago that this man had stated, at a meeting of his creditors, that he was only a dummy. The land was seized by the Official Assignee for his creditors to sell on his behalf?—Yes; it was sold, but we could not stop it.

36. Could you not have made inquiries to find out the truth of that statement?—I do not think the attention of the Board was drawn to the evidence given by the man. I did not see it. It was some time after that that my attention was drawn to it; in fact, I did not know about it until this petition came from Macrae's, in which we got a cutting from a newspaper containing an account of the proceedings before the Official Assignee, at a meeting of creditors, which contained the man's statement about this section.

37. Do you not think it would facilitate the finding out of dummyism if you reported such cases, as they came under your knowledge, to the Minister of Lands, so that he might take action?—Well, as far as that case is concerned, I did not see what action could be taken. The man had been deprived, by operation of law, of any interest in the section.

38. He stated at a meeting of his creditors, the Official Assignee being present, that he was a dummy for another man, and had not put this section in his statement of assets?—I do not remember what he stated in his evidence.

39. Was it not sworn that this man had committed perjury?—I should like to see the man's statement. I am careful as to what I state. I am speaking only from hearsay.

40. If this case had been reported upon this man might be made an example to others?—As far as my recollection goes, he intimated that he had taken up this section for the benefit of somebody else. I understood that from his evidence. The thing was gone and done with before it came under my notice. The land had passed from him by operation of law. I did not consider it was necessary to report that case to the Minister of Lands.

41. You stated to-day that, in your opinion, there were very few or no cases of application for land for speculative purposes?—That is my opinion.

42. You are aware that during the last year the New Zealand and Australian Land Company were very successful in getting sections at Kurow?—I think they got four small sections at two different sales.

43. Were these sections for *bona fide* settlement or for speculation?—They bought them for cash. I think they were for *bona fide* settlement certainly, because they were adjacent to other lands they occupied there.

44. They wanted to enlarge their already big property up there?—These sections, I think, lay alongside, or near a pre-emptive right. I did not ask them, seeing that they were buying for cash a small section alongside a pre-emptive right, if they were buying it with a view to occupying it. I do not recollect exactly, but I think they may have got four sections altogether, spread over two years.

45. *Mr. Cowan.*] They were small sections?—I do not recollect the area.

46. *Mr. J. McKenzie.*] You have stated that you did not know of any cases where speculation took place?—It never struck me, for instance, that this land was obtained for speculation.

47. Do you recollect that there were a large number of applications for these sections?—I cannot tell you how many applications there were. At the last sale, I remember the company getting one section at the ballot, for which there were eleven applicants.

48. With regard to small grazing-runs, of course those runs at Deepdell, referred to as Macrae's, were some small grazing-runs?—They were all small grazing-runs, I think.

49. Do you know of any case of one individual holding more than one run?—No; he cannot hold more than one run under the Act.

50. Are you quite satisfied that there is no one in Otago holding more than one run?—Well, if any man holds two small grazing-runs in Otago it is by mistake. I always hold the Act to say that a man can only hold one. I cannot conceive any circumstances under which a man could acquire two.

51. Do you recollect Mr. Logan's case on the Deepdell runs?—I do not know of any case up there.

52. Has he not two runs?—No; certainly not.