

87. Supposing you had the responsibility, as representing the Government, of proclaiming reserves in order to preserve the interests of the mining community, as intended under the contract, do you think you would be able to reserve very much less of the country than they have done?—Not perhaps in large blocks. The actual area of probable payable goldfields is not large, but you could only reduce reserves by cutting it much more in detail.

88. I am speaking of the yellow country?—Yes.

89. You would be able to leave a good deal of country out available for settlement?—Available for settlement, and which would not be required probably for gold-mining.

90. And land that would be fit for settlement within a reasonable time?—Yes.

91. Could you give a rough idea of the cost of surveying the country on the lines suggested by Mr. Lord—that is, cutting out the presumably auriferous country round the creek-beds, &c.?—It would increase the cost of survey about 2s. an acre.

92. That is the additional cost of survey to select the lands more carefully than has been done?—Yes.

93. That is, 2s. an acre for 184,000 acres—£18,400?—Yes, if such acreage were cut out; but I would assume it to be done in course of settlement surveys.

94. *Dr. Newman.*] If you survey 100,000 acres, you say 2s. an acre is the cost of the survey?—In this case, supposing you took 30,000 acres, covering actually known or probable gold-workings, then you would see it would take 2s. an acre, which would be £3,000.

95. You do not mean to say that 30,000 acres would cover the area that should have been reserved out of this 184,000 acres?—No; that is only a quantity assumed for calculation. It would be a difficult thing to arrive at the actual amount. It is much a matter of opinion.

96. My idea is to arrive at, roughly, the cost of the survey, and the relative proportion of the saleable land valuable to the company?—Yes.

97. Would it be worth while to keep back such a proportion as could be kept back, when you say it is only a third of the area?—Yes; that is only fair.

98. *Mr. H. A. Gordon, Inspecting Engineer, Mines Department (by permission of the Committee), in the absence of Hon. Mr. Seddon.*] You know that the country is taken up on the reserves from 81 to 62?—Yes.

99. You have said that the creek-beds and gullies are the only places where the gold is likely to be worked?—And the previously-mentioned deposits on the old river-beds—the ground as described by Mr. Lord.

100. Do you know in what direction the leads run—do they run at right-angles to the present creeks?—Most of those creeks running into the Grey have been worked. There are also the remains of the old leads, which may have been the bed of the Grey or other river before the present surface was formed.

101. What is the run of the leads of gold; are they running in the direction of the present creeks, or at right-angles to them?—Some of the leads are at right-angles.

102. Is there not almost a continuous line that breaks here and there from Antonio's, or Slab-hut Creek, through Duffer's, Nelson Creek, No Town, and down to Maori Gully; is it not almost a continuous run?—There are evidences of a lead here and there.

103. Is not the gold in the creek-beds very likely merely a concentration of the gold from the original leads running at right-angles to the creek?—Yes, and also the concentrated gold which has been brought down by the natural sluicing of millions of tons of stuff from the mountains.

104. Does that lead run within the first reserve made here back from the railway [Map referred to]?—It is difficult to locate on the small map. From Duffer's that lead does run within these blocks.

105. And likewise about Nelson Creek and No Town?—Yes, that is about Try Again. I think so.

106. You know the workings about Try Again?—Yes.

107. Is not gold being traced further down over the area near the Grey River?—There are probably a number of workings since I was up there. As far as I know it is in the bed of the creek there.

108. You do not know about any workings right on the top of the range between Nelson Creek and Callaghan's?—I cannot follow it on this map. There is gold at Callaghan's.

109. You say it would be possible to cut out the auriferous ground by survey. If you had the survey to do on the part of the Government, could you say which was auriferous and which was not?—It would be difficult to do, but I say it could not be done in large blocks.

110. Could you really go and survey the auriferous part of the ground? If you exclude the beds of the creeks and gullies, would it be possible to exclude any other portions not auriferous?—This was done in the system used for settlement areas on goldfields. Of course it could not absolutely exclude every possible chance.

111. It would not be possible then to select land for settlement that is not auriferous?—It would be possible to select land on which there was no strong probability of ground being payable auriferous. The probability is always against gold being found.

112. I think, in answer to a question, you said there was far more ground worked in the early days than lately; is that so?—I should think there would be, as the miners stretched over the whole country, and large patches of shallow ground and creek-beds were worked.

113. Would not one man, with the process of sluicing adopted by companies, work far more than thirty men at the earlier period?—He works more cubic yards, perhaps; but the man in the early days could go over a larger surface than a company sluicing.

114. There is a great deal of shallow ground on that area, taking the terraces?—It is all worked out principally. The fact that it is accessible has caused it to be worked.

115. Is there not a great deal of shallow ground on that area which, although too poor to work a few years ago, it pays to work now with large quantities of water under the present system?—Some make it pay now with the water, if they have it.