

over the whole lot. What a man really goes for as a mining claim proper—that is, the ground from which he is extracting the gold—is a mere nothing compared with what he requires to enable him to work the claim. As an example of what I mean, I may be permitted to say that in my own claim I only own under 4 acres at present as a mining claim. Along with that I hold with a good title 34 acres for a dam site. I hold also with a perfectly good title 5 acres as a tailings site, and with a perfectly good title about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles 20ft. wide for race rights. Then, I have 20ft. wide and 70 chains connecting with the Government race. All these things are held by me to enable me to profitably work a claim of 4 acres. In addition, I hold a right to the water that may fall on an area of some 800 or 1,000 acres. I have no right whatever to that except to the water that falls thereon. What I have mentioned I hold with as good a title as any farmer does his farm. The other is a mere nominal title that any one can take—that is, except the water over the 800 acres in extent. That gives you an idea of the amazing quantity of country required to keep the mining going. It might be surmised that for the sake of working 4 acres a person might not be entitled to such an enormous amount. That same amount outside the four acres has enabled me and others who held the rights previous to my getting hold of them to work the ground. We have up to date worked 40 acres of ground, although under 4 acres is my present holding. That represents my rights.

15. *Mr. Wilson.*] In how many years?—I have been at it about fourteen years with the present water-rights. There were some before I started it.

16. *Hon. Mr. Seddon.*] Looking at the map there, and seeing the block marked yellow, do you think there is only a small portion of Nelson Creek reserved for mining?—There is a very small portion reserved now.

17. Is that portion reserved, in your opinion, required for mining or for purposes incidental or conducive thereto?—Most decidedly so.

18. And that is only a small portion of what the company agreed with you in Greymouth that they would not object to?—What the company said they would not object to.

19. You said the Hon. Mr. Fergus told you to hold your tongue?—Yes, to leave it alone.

20. Was anything said by the company's representatives to the effect that if the Nelson Creek Riding were reserved you were not to interfere with anything outside that riding?—We did not ask for the whole riding to be reserved—nothing at all like the whole riding. I think about thirty-five thousand acres were asked of the company, and that would have finally settled the question with us, the Mining Association. Had that been done, we, as a mining association, would have had no further necessity to go into the matter.

21. Since these reserves have been made, have you been told by Mr. Scott or any other representative of the company that the land so reserved was not required for mining purposes or for purposes incidental or conducive thereto?—I have not been informed by Mr. Scott or any other representative of the Midland Railway Company of any such matter.

21. This is Mr. Scott's evidence:—

"You see a piece marked on the map near Nelson Creek. Did you interview a person connected with the Miners' Association in regard to that, and did he give you an opinion?—Yes; the "Miners' Association" may not be the correct title, but a man came down upon the subject, and saw me before any mining reserves were made. He said, 'I would like to come to some arrangement on behalf of my mining friends in this district as to the particular lands you are going to take for the company. If you will undertake on behalf of the company not to deal with land between Callaghan's and Red Jack's Creeks, you may, as far as the Miners' Association is concerned, deal with all the rest of the land in the Nelson Creek Riding. We will not object to your dealing with any of the land outside these limits without reference to us; and as to the land within this area I mention, if you will refer to us, we will give each case fair consideration for it.'"

—First of all, is the land mentioned between Red Jack's and Callaghan's marked as a reserve?—This interview between Mr. Scott and myself took place two or three years ago, before the reserves were made, and we were perfectly willing not to put anything in the way of the company. The piece of land he refers to is at Kangaroo Creek. There was a piece they might have had there for timber which did not interfere with mining operations. That is years ago, and not since these reserves were made. I may say that I said the Nelson Creek people would not interfere with the company outside of our own riding or dominion, as we were pleased to call it.

22. If that statement is correct, what was your reason for saying so?—My reason was simply as I have already said, that we were most desirous of having settlement, and of interfering with the Midland Railway Company as little as possible. We were perfectly willing to part with every inch of ground that was reasonable so as to get settlement.

23. Then the land you refer to in the question was not within the Nelson Creek Riding?—Even if it was, we were of opinion that the Government would investigate the matter and stop the company getting it, provided it was found to be auriferous land.

24. You know the reserves that have been made?—Yes.

25. Is that land so reserved, from your experience as a miner, what you would in fairness to the company and to the gold industry—in fairness to all—would say was required for mining and for purposes incidental and conducive thereto?—My opinion simply is that not only are the reserves you have already made actually required for *bona fide* mining purposes and things incidental thereto, but they require to be added to. The mining population on the West Coast require the whole of the west side of the main Grey River. The whole of the land which has not been alienated from the Crown is required for actual mining purposes and things incidental thereto. That is, the whole of the land on the western side of the main Grey Valley, away up in the Blackball and Moonlight Ranges.

26. Now we come to the Nelson Creek side?—On the eastern side of the main Grey Valley all the low-lying lands that are of any service as farm-lands have already been taken up, and in several cases the miners are hampered now. We have no room to work, so that we do not only require all that has been reserved, but we require every foot as a reservation that has not been parted from