

ferous drifts on the Blackball side are ten or twelve miles wide, two miles from the intersection of the Grey Valley up to Blackball.

32. The width of the drift, I mean?—The width of the drift is two or three hundred miles, as far as we know; certainly fifty or sixty miles. I call the width across the drift or gold-bearing country. You know the Blackball Creek, and you know the intersection of the Grey Valley where it climbs up into the ranges. The run of the Blackball Creek is what I call the width of that run of auriferous drifts. What I call the length is the south and north lay—the coast-line lay—as the coast runs and as the river runs. It is proved gold-bearing from two miles from the intersection of the Grey Valley to the very top of the range, a distance of about ten miles.

33. Is it five miles from the bottom of the river to the top of the range?—I have just said it is over ten miles.

34. Then, on the Nelson Creek side: Mr. Gordon said there is a river-bed there running down to Red Jack's, what depth is that deep lead?—About 30 chains wide; I think so.

35. And are these other drifts like that drift?—No. That is one of the cross-cuts. The drift is formation, drifted in through and from the long continuous lines running parallel with the coast-line. That is, underground workings of about 35 chains wide. That is only a portion running through Nelson Creek.

36. Is it possible to define the leads with reference to the Grey Valley?—Perfectly easy, because it is proved auriferous all along the line. It is defined at Noble's, and proved auriferous. It is proved at Granville's, Orwell Creek, German Creek, Nelson Creek, Kangaroo, Arnold's, Maori Gully, New River, and proved at Kumara. It is clearly proved at Kumara, down to Waimea, Hokitika; right down to Ross it is perfectly clearly proved. There is no difficulty in defining that.

37. Do you think that any expert miner could swear that it was the same drift all the way down?—I think there would be no difficulty in swearing that it is the same line of drift.

38. The same river-bed?—I did not say river-bed. My opinion is that it is the old coast-line.

39. You and Mr. Gordon differ?—We might differ. We do not differ as to the drift being there, I hope.

40. If this drift is in such a large quantity, can you tell the Committee how it is that there are so few people working there?—I do not say it is in paying quantities there; but I say that if we were relieved from the incubus of the company, there would be a great many more miners there; with the improved appliances we have there would be, if not interfered with by the company.

41. You said there had been no more restrictions or any difficulty as to mining claims since the company came there than before?—It is the uncertainty of the position.

42. Do you say the position is more uncertain now than before?—Yes; it is much more uncertain. We do not know the day when the whole of the low lands will be blocked up on us. Therefore, the granting of the mining claims is of no earthly use unless we have the low-lying lands along them.

43. Have not the Midland Railway Company always said that, in the event of their selecting a block of land on the West Coast, they would offer the miners the same facilities as they have at present?—They have said that distinctly; but the miners would rather deal with the Government.

44. Then, in your opinion, the whole of this country ought to be taken back by the Government for mining purposes?—The whole of the West Coast should be taken back by the Government if they desire to encourage mining operations.

45. And, in your opinion, the West Coast lands never ought to have been included in the area of the grant to the Midland Railway Company?—That was my opinion from the beginning.

46. And, when included in the railway company's reserves, there was as much knowledge existing as to the auriferous character of the lands as now?—Yes; and a great effort was made by the miners to have these lands excluded from the grant. We knew the danger then as we do now.

47. Did the miners protest against these lands being included in the area when the Midland contract was being drawn up?—We did.

48. And your opinions were not considered of any value by the Government?—There was a majority against us. We offered every kind of protest, but the navvies and coal-miners of Grey-mouth and Reefton were too numerous for our protests to carry the weight they would have done otherwise with the Government.

49. Then the coal-miners and navvies and people desirous of settlement opposed the wishes of the gold-miners?—I do not know; but they petitioned the Government to push on the railway at any cost. We petitioned the Government to reserve our lands.

50. You said it was impossible for settlement and mining to develop together. Do you still maintain that?—I maintain that. Our wonderfully sad experience goes that way.

51. Is it not a fact that Kumara was developed in the first instance by settlement, and that it started on that field in the form of an illicit distillery?—I am not aware of it, Sir; but I will take your word for that.

52. I ask you if it is not true that, where you have a small settlement on a goldfield, the settlers will occupy a considerable part of their time in what you call fossicking after gold?—There are a few that fossick after gold; that is, after they have found that they have made a mistake in taking up a small part for farms.

53. In a goldfield which is comparatively poor, would it not be a satisfactory combination to have people settled on small areas who could devote part of their time during favourable seasons to pastoral purposes, and in other seasons work these gold claims?—Supposing that the claims belonged to one and the same party. If the gold-miner owned also a little patch of agricultural land as well as his claim. It would not do if one man owned a small piece of agricultural land and another owned a mining claim. The two cannot exist together.