

116. Were they not asked to plot the reserves out because they held certain positions in the County Council?—The County Councillors and sharebrokers were invited up.

117. And sharebrokers, because they were interested in the mines?—They are all more or less interested in mining.

118. Would you say these men have sufficient scientific knowledge to give a definite opinion as to whether the country is payably auriferous or otherwise?—Not without prospecting.

119. You stated that a lot of this country never had been prospected?—I believe so.

120. Then these reserves have been made in the district without the country having been prospected?—These men who laid off the blocks knew more about it than I do.

121. You stated that the district had been prospected?—Not all.

122. Were these reserves made from guess?—I do not think so.

123. How did they ascertain, if the lands had not been prospected, that they were required for mining?—I cannot say.

124. Then it was guess?—I cannot say. It was these people who marked it out, and I marked off the survey blocks.

125. Did they present any evidence that the land was auriferous?—No; not that I know of.

126. Then the reserves were made on the opinion of people in the district without any actual knowledge of the nature of the country?—I cannot say myself. They may have known it.

127. Has the country been thoroughly prospected?—I do not think it can have been; not all through it.

128. You stated that the Inangahua County did not want the reserves at first?—Yes.

129. Is it not a fact that this opinion was based upon a desire that the applications should be advertised, and that only lands which were known to be payable auriferous, or that were likely to be required for workings on such land, should be used for mining purposes?—That was it, I believe.

130. Was it not the idea of the County Council that it would be better to encourage settlement together with mining?—I think it was. I am not certain about it.

131. Did the County Council and the district change its opinion after Mr. Seddon's visit?—It was some time after—I do not know how long.

132. Within your knowledge, did several people on the County Council state that they could sell the land if the reserves were made?—I think there was something to that effect, but I am not certain about it.

133. Were you asked to give your opinion as to these blocks reserved for mining?—Yes. I had an instruction some time before this one (1891) to lay off the auriferous country, but I omitted to do so.

134. You stated that it was impossible to say where the gold is in the district. Do you adhere to that?—Yes; that is, where it is payable.

135. In your opinion it would be impossible to take out of these blocks that are made, certain lands which would be useful and suitable for settlement, and which would not interfere with mining?—There may be portions, but it is hard to say where the gold is on the Coast. They may or may not in our time ever be worked for gold.

136. Is there sufficient information relative to the district to enable you to say definitely?—Not sufficient information to say now.

137. Then these reserves have been made without sufficient knowledge as to the actual nature of the country?—Well, the country has been prospected in places, and it is presumed there will be leads between the places prospected where gold will be found.

138. Is that an assumption?—I have never prospected the country.

139. From your knowledge of the people may we take that as a general statement of the case?—I have asked very little about it.

140. What part of the land do you allude to as being fit for settlement within a mile of the railway, and the rest of it as rock?—In Blocks 51, 53, 54, 59, and 63, which contain about a mile of flat, and the rest mountains. It is all covered with timber.

141. You stated there was a considerable amount of coal at Reefton?—Yes.

142. Is that good coal?—Yes.

143. Is it a fact that a man applied for a gold claim to work a coal claim?—Yes, I believe so.

144. Had it come to your knowledge that a gold claim was applied for for the purposes of working the coal?—Yes.

145. Are there other people who got gold claims for working coal?—It is hard to say what they took it up for.

146. Is that land very richly auriferous which is overlying the coal?—In the early days it was very rich.

147. Has it been worked out?—They have given it best.

148. As not being payable?—Yes.

149. Do you know the application made by Perrotti?—Yes.

150. What is your opinion with regard to the country applied for by Perrotti?—I have never been in that country. I do not know that it has ever been tried for gold.

151. Is it the general opinion that it is not auriferous?—I think so. I think that is the general opinion.

152. Would you consider Warden Kenny an expert, and that he knew something about that district?—I do not think he pretended to be an expert.

153. Would you consider a man like Warden Kenny would be an expert in a mining country?—I should not think so.

154. Would you consider a Warden a man who would give an opinion as to what reserves