

is exactly what has been done. On some portions of the blocks reserved there is gold-mining actually going on. In these instances we have merely followed out what Mr. Wilson said was the proper thing to do; and that is the view that has guided the Government and the officers of the Government in recommending the making of these reserves. Then, coming from the Hokitika River to Kumara, in each one of the reserves made there are a number of workings and a large number of miners employed; and within these blocks which have been proclaimed, had any person applied to purchase the freehold of the land, the application would have been refused by the Waste Lands Board. Time after time applications have been made in different places where there is flat land adjacent to workings, and the Waste Lands Board, on the advice of the responsible officers, have refused them. Had the land been open for selection within the last twenty-five years it would have been taken up long ago, when we had a larger population and men much better off. I now come to a point where we have been at issue—namely, as to a block of land between Kapitea and Kumara. The company applied for a block of land there. An application was made by an enterprising sawmiller, named Morris. A portion of this very land some time previously (in the early days of the Coast) was applied for. D. Cochrane was the applicant, and it was absolutely refused. There was a block sold at the Loop-line, or at the corner of the Loop-line and Greenstone Road. The Waimea water-race was there and a race reserve, and the land applied for by the company, you will find on reference to the map, runs side by side. The boundary-line of the land applied for by the company is the water-race and the river. From Foxe's Range southward, on the hill, you get to Duffer's—that is to the south-west. Further south you get to what is known as Callaghan's workings. To have sold any of this land would have been simply madness, both on account of the race there and a prospecting party being at work. A little on the right the County Council was subsidising a tunnel to Kapitea Creek, which would have commanded the whole of this ground, it being the impression of the miners there that this flat is payably auriferous. I was so satisfied of this that I was one of the principal promoters in spending money in prospecting. I think there are eight or ten mining-claims taken up broadside on to the land the company applied for. The Mining Association objected, and I was in Court at the time. No one appeared for the company at all. The President of the Mining Association went into the box, and after going into the matter, he said there was every possible chance that the ground was payably auriferous; that even if it was not, they could not work at Kumara without the wooden blocks for paving the tail-races, and must have the timber; and as this was the only place where they could get the timber, the land was conducive to mining even if not actually auriferous. They were told that another party had applied—namely, Carlson and Wilson. The Warden said, if Morris got the land he would sell the timber to the miners, and it would be just the same. The witness said, if Morris got the land he would have the sole control of the timber, and would make the miners pay through the nose for it. At all events, the Warden's letter will speak for itself, and show the decision he came to. He says there is no direct evidence as to the ground being payably auriferous, and as regards the timber, they could get it from Morris just the same as if the land were reserved. The reserve was not made at that time, and it was left open for months. The company could have applied to take the timber off if they had only wanted the land for the timber, but they did not take advantage of that. Before it was applied for by Morris for timber purposes there was a considerable time during which the company could have exercised their right under section 18. Later developments at Callaghan's have proved that some of the old shafts had not been bottomed. A company has bottomed these shafts and struck payable wash. The consequence is, that the Government are aiding in driving a tail-race tunnel to Kapitea Creek to these shafts which were given up as non-payable in the early days. And the view I took first of all, and that of the experts who advised the Government, has been proved by subsequent events to be correct—that the direction the gold will go is from Callaghan's to Fox's. That is the only case where the Government have taken any land when the Warden's opinion was against it being taken; and, as I have said before, the decision in that case was given against the evidence taken on the matter.

THURSDAY, 8TH SEPTEMBER, 1892.

Hon. R. J. SEDDON attended and made a statement.

*Hon. Mr. Seddon:* I think in my evidence the other day I got as far as the Teremakau River. The next reserve I desire to refer to is that near Jackson's, on the Christchurch Road, which includes the Taipo reefs. In bringing the reserve down to the road or down to the river, our reason for doing so was this: that the line of reefs was traced crossing from Jackson's to the main range, and again in the opposite direction towards Reefton. The line of reefs seems to go towards Ball Hill. Taking that line of reefs, I say it was impossible to make the reserve in any other way. We have reefs and leaders all through the reserve; and I should say that within 5 chains of the road near Jackson's there are two reefs, both gold-bearing, crossing the flat. Any one going up the creek will find the reefs, and one is about 10ft. thick. The original prospectors of the reef took me down and showed them to me. It is low-lying ground down to the road. The whole of the land was taken up by Jackson to the junction of the road. The road to the reefs I allude to was made by the County Council. The reserve is made up to the freehold. Mr. Wilson or Mr. Scott said the flat ground should not be taken, but should be left for selection as required by the company. My answer is just the same as Mr. Scott's with regard to the land on the flat at Blackball, that it is required for carrying on mining operations and for mining purposes. That is one reason. The main reason is that the reef goes right across the road. In reference to this matter, Mr. Wilson pointed out to me that the company would want the use of the land on the north side of the road, as they were going to put up a station there. In a case of that kind I said the Government would be quite willing to give a piece of land for that purpose. I think, if we have the power, a point