

210. Do you know the Taitapu Block?—It was purchased, I think, since 1873, and it would not affect that.

211. *Mr. R. McKenzie.*] I see you were interviewed by a *New Zealand Times* reporter?—Yes.

212. Was that interview arranged at your own request?—Not exactly. It was purely accidental.

213. It was not intended to prejudice the mind of Parliament against this Bill?—Certainly not. I did not think the members could be prejudiced.

214. You said you had no shares or valuable consideration from this Kauri Gold Estates Company?—I did.

215. Do you think it is a legitimate purpose to resume lands for public works?—Most undoubtedly.

216. And for settlement?—In certain cases.

217. Are you of opinion it is not legitimate to resume land for mining?—It might be legitimate, but not politic at the present time, when there is any quantity of land lying open for mining which is not taken up. And it is only opening a door to allow people to blackmail capital coming into the country.

218. You come here to oppose the Bill as a representative of English capital?—I am not opposing the Bill, because I am not in the position to do this, but if I could approve it I would do it to the utmost; I am only stating what I think of it.

220. Does this company object to work its ground under the ordinary mining laws?—I cannot say.

221. Do you know what capital they have?—About half a million.

222. Do you know any of the shareholders?—I could not tell you the shareholders. I believe I know them, but then it would only be surmise.

223. Do you know the Kauri Timber Company's ground?—Yes.

224. Do you know the ground it proposes to operate on?—Yes.

225. Do you think the tailings would prevent them floating the timber down the creeks?—I should not think that.

226. You think it would not have any injurious effect upon the floating of timber?—It might in some cases.

227. You think that could not be raised as a legitimate objection to this Bill?—It could be raised as one.

228. Do you consider it a legitimate objection?—It would be legitimate if you put in tailings wholesale, and so stick up the timber.

229. Do you think these tailings will find their way to the sea?—No doubt they will find their way there eventually.

230. You know Taitapu: how will this Bill affect it?—I do not think it will at all. It has been alienated since 1873.

231. As to the number of companies that have been floated in the Auckland Provincial District, are you aware how many there are?—I could not tell you exactly the number at all.

232. What percentage of them are likely to be profitable?—They have not had an opportunity of proving that, because the claims that have been taken up lately have not been developed to see if they are payable or not; but there are plenty of claims taken up upon which there is not the slightest chance of the shareholders getting their money back.

233. On what grounds do you base your opinion?—Some knowledge of mining, and the indication of the ground I have gone over. I do not pretend to be a geologist, able to see what lies buried in the bowels of the earth.

234. Have you ever known places in New Zealand where there was supposed to be no gold, and they were afterwards proved to be payable?—No man can tell what lies buried underneath the surface.

235. Do you not think the statement about wild-cat schemes is likely to frighten English capital?—It would be a good thing for the colony to frighten them from going into some companies, because I am sure some of these will never pay.

236. You consider yourself justified in putting this statement to the world?—Perfectly so. It will make people more careful before they take up those schemes.

237. Have you any personal motive?—No; I have an interest in the development of the goldfields.

238. Does it mean that other people are coming into competition?—There is no one coming into competition, because we are too happy a family.

239. What effect, supposing this land is opened up for mining, will it have on the Kauri Timber Company?—I do not know the Kauri Timber Company's business.

240. I mean, any danger of burning bush?—There is a danger of burning bush in the summer-time. We have seen enough of that at Puhipuhi, where there was a splendid forest burnt.

241. If this Bill is passed do you think the English company you represent in the colony is likely to discontinue its operations?—There is a great deal of capital that would be spent in such things as these, but they will take it elsewhere.

242. Do you think they will take up Crown lands?—I do not know.

243. Would you recommend them to withdraw their capital?—That is my business; I will not tell you.

244. You are here to give evidence?—I could not answer such a question as that.

*The Chairman:* How do you put your question?

*Mr. R. McKenzie:* If this Bill is passed, what effect would it have on the company represented by Mr. Gordon, and how would he recommend them to act?

*The Chairman:* The first part of the question is in order; the second part is undoubtedly not in order.