

188. You are aware of the regulations issued by the company? Do you consider they are an improvement on the Government regulations for taking up land?—Excepting the term wherein the company retains its proportion, they are pretty much based on the Government regulations.

189. You said just now that the object of preventing any one mining within 30 chains was to prevent wild-cat schemes being floated?—Yes, that was the tenor of it.

190. Then, if a man makes a find of gold, the company retains 30 chains on each side of him for themselves?—Yes; after he has his area.

191. They retain three-quarters of a mile?—Yes.

191A. This is the position: the company take up three-quarters of a mile on every claim?—It would not be on every claim. It would be on one at the end, but not on all.

192. Of course, you understand that the people who will be mining over these blocks will be scattered all over them, and the company reserves 30 chains on each side of a claim?—Yes; it is so specifically stated to prevent their dealing with syndicates.

193. You have said the object of the company was to prevent wild-cat schemes?—I meant the promotion of further companies with small capital. It wants a large capital to handle this business.

194. It practically reserves the land for the benefit of the company?—Yes; except that the company cannot expect to get better terms for themselves than the others, excepting that they can arrange to get the other company to open it. No one can tell which is "wild cat" and which is not till it is properly opened up.

195. There would not be more than half the area open for mining?—Not for prospectors to peg on, but open to be taken up by syndicates who will spend fair sums of money.

196. Do you know the Whangapoa lands?—No, I have not had time to go over them.

197. Can you give us any reason why Opitmines has not been thrown open?—Yes, because the Kauri Timber Company tied it up on account of the kauri upon it; but that particular block was never intended to be included with Tupararahi. This has been pointed out to the manager of the Kauri Timber Company, and he has admitted it was not in the original agreement, and within a short space of time I understand it will be open with the rest. That is the intention of the board.

198. Do you think the mining community as a whole will approve of the regulations issued by the board?—Yes, I think so, except that particular class we have spoken of who desire a redivision of the adjoining blocks.

199. *Mr. R. McKenzie.* I should like to know the area of these blocks that the regulations allow prospecting upon?—I do not quite understand.

200. You say you issue licenses for mining, and reserve 30 chains on each side. I want to know the size of these blocks you issue licenses for?—What we call licenses are, in fact, miners' rights, and, having a license, a man may peg out exactly as if he had a miners' right on Crown lands.

202. What size is his claim?—It may be up to 100 acres if he goes on to the land and makes a *bona fide* find 80 chains from any one else; otherwise, he would have 60 acres.

203. What shape is it?—Rectangular—the same shape as the mining regulations require.

204. So that virtually the company will save of each ground?—Yes, in that sense.

205. *The Chairman.* You issue what you term a miners' right?—Yes.

206. For which you charge?—Five shillings.

207. That entitles them simply to go on the land?—To prospect.

208. And the rent, supposing you lease to them, how much?—Same as New Zealand regulations, 10s.

209. Per half-year?—Per acre. Oh, no.

210. *Hon. Mr. Cadman.* I have the regulations, and they say half-year. [The Hon. Mr. Cadman read the regulation on the subject.]

*Mr. Allen:* That is only 10s. a year, and not half-year.

211. *The Chairman.* Do you think three months is sufficient time to allow a miner to come in contact with the capitalist and float his mine?—It does not say so there.

212. I think it gives him three months?—No, it gives him three months absolute protection after he gets his license, and it gives him twelve months to do what you say.

213. Do you assist the prospectors?—We have two clauses about prospectors. A man goes to the company. "I have a find. I have no purse, and can carry no risk; but I can show you a *bona fide* find. Will you help me to open it up?" We say, "Yes. If you show it to our mine-manager, we will take you on as wages-man, and give you time to open it up." If it then is such a find as may be floated as a legitimate thing we undertake to float it, and out of a company of £150,000 nominal, of which his share is £7,500 fully paid up. At the same time, the working capital is £30,000, and his interest is of tangible value. That is to say, there is information in his brain of no mortal use to you or him, but we can convert it into £7,500.

*Mr. R. McKenzie:* I look on that as not assisting a prospector at all.

214. *Mr. Fraser.* What my question was directed to was more than giving aid to the prospector in the initial stage. Does your company in any way offer to assist a man to go out. Supposing he has experience as a miner, is there any way by which the company can assist him for a few weeks?—No, Sir, there is no such thing in the regulations at all. I would not have advised it at all.

215. *Mr. R. McKenzie.* On the other hand, instead of assisting them, you charge them for a license?—Five shillings.

216. You charge them 10s. an acre for rent?—They get a fifty years' title for that. The Crown do the same.

*Hon. Mr. Cadman:* I would like to have it put on record as to the misapprehension I was under when I asked Mr. Gordon about the rent. It is 10s. yearly, and not half-yearly.