

With reference to Whangapoua, it is in the same position; ground has been pegged off awaiting legislation for the land to be resumed for mining purposes. In this block I know of my own knowledge that, some twenty-seven years ago, I went to a rush that had taken place there when gold was discovered; the ground was worked, and no opposition was made, so far as I know, to any person working the ground. Gold was found on these blocks, and some hundreds of ounces on this one; I know this, for I was there myself prospecting for some time. I discovered several reefs on the ground. At that time this portion of this block was a dense kauri forest. At the present time—I was over it some short time ago—there is not a stick of kauri standing. The miners of the Peninsula wish to have these lands resumed for mining purposes, feeling assured that if the ground is opened for occupation, so far as the “unemployed” difficulty is concerned, it will wipe it out, as it is almost impossible to get sufficient men to man the ground that would be taken up. I might say that this block for a number of years has been the subject of some heartburning with the miners, and they would like to get it opened if possible. My instructions from the Union, as their president, were to try, if possible, to get all these lands resumed for gold-mining purposes. I do not know that there is anything else that I can say; but that is the position, so far as I know, of these two blocks of land.

3. *Mr. Carncross.*] You say the opening of this land at Tairua would wipe out the “unemployed” question?—To a great extent.

4. You mean so far as the district is concerned?—So far as the colony is concerned, for at present we are trying to get men and cannot get them.

5. These are quartz-reefing grounds, and would require extensive capital to work them?—In some cases it would; but there are some in Whangapoua and some at Tairua which it would not require a great deal of capital to work. No sinking fund would be required for years; the country is mountainous, and continuous levels could be driven in for a good many years without any other machinery except what the ordinary workman employs.

6. In establishing batteries capital would be required?—That would have to come in any case, no matter what the land.

7. The unemployed could not establish such works?—The people who would take up this land would have to comply with the mining conditions, and the unemployed would get work as miners.

8. If this land were thrown open, are there people in New Zealand who would establish the necessary works and give employment?—I have no doubt of it.

9. It does not depend on syndicates?—No, not to any great extent. In some cases it might be advisable for three or four to join in sinking, and get some English or foreign capital; but it is country easily worked—perhaps the easiest for capital to work that could be found in the colony.

10. Do you think there is the capital in the colony to work it?—I have no doubt of it, if people would bring it out.

11. Bring it out from where?—From people in the colony who have it. If you look at the class of people who take up shares in Dunedin, Napier, and Christchurch, you will see that we have had more capital from these districts than we have had of foreign money.

12. Is it not purely a matter of floating the company at Home?—Not in all cases.

13. In the vast majority of cases?—I think we have had more colonial companies than English or foreign companies in New Zealand. I do not think there are more than, but rather under, twenty foreign companies in New Zealand. There are only three at the Thames proper—two in Karangahake and one in Tairua. Twenty or twenty-two would cover the whole of the English companies floated—that is, in our part of the colony.

14. Do you know on what terms the Kauri Timber Company allow this ground to be prospected?—They are such terms as to make it unlikely that any one would go there to prospect; no one would prospect or would put in four pegs under their arrangement.

15. Do you think the conditions prohibitive?—Most decidedly I do. In the first place, they claim a certain amount of ground (30 chains) around you if you get anything, then, if you find anything, you must give them a certain number of shares paid-up. So that, what with royalties and the limited time you have to go to work, it is scarcely possible you could do any good.

15A. What is your objection to the 30 chains clause?—I object to them having the right to take up 30 chains all around. Suppose I found gold there to-morrow, they would come and take up the ground all around; and if I found any gold I should have to notify that to the company.

16. Do you think that this taking up 30 chains all round, and the limit of time to commence work, would have the effect of preventing men from coming forward to prospect or work the ground?—I think that men would like to have the ground for themselves; no doubt that was the reason the clause was put in.

17. *Hon. Mr. Larnach.*] You said that most of the capital in use in England is found in the colony?—No; but that a greater proportion of the mines are floated in the colony.

18. Are you aware that the increment of capital to the colony which you are using amounts to a million and a half?—I cannot say.

18A. How much has been received in the colony?—I could not say. I do not know what mines have been floated; I could not answer the question.

19. Do you not think it is a somewhat wild statement to make—that all the capital required could be found in the colony?—I do not know the number of mines that could be floated in the colony; but I say there have been more in the colony than have been floated in London five times over.

20. That is your opinion?—I am certain of it.

21. The capital paid up?—There have been more than a dozen mines floated in the district with from £1,000 to £1,500 of capital.

22. Are not mines worked with this small capital much more expensive to work?—In some cases they have been amalgamated in order to get more capital; but, still, they have the capital, and they have good prospects. Why should I go out of the colony to get a larger capital if I can get all I want in it, if it is available?