

127. Then the most profitable part for the company to construct was between Brunnerton and Reefton?—I do not say that.

128. Where have the principal returns been from?—On the Reefton line.

129. How much at the Springfield end have you got in the way of profit?—For the five miles from Springfield we have got practically no revenue.

130. From Spooner's Range to Motupeka?—No revenue.

131. From Jackson's to Stillwater you have got revenue?—Yes; that is a large timber district.

132. Was there not any source of profit in respect to the Blackball coal?—Yes; to the company and to the Government railways.

133. Why not say it was the most profitable part which you have constructed?—I understood you to mean that we could make.

134. At any rate, the section made was the easiest made, and the most profitable?—Most profitable as against what other part? At any rate, we made this railway, and it has turned out a profitable section.

135. How much money was spent between Stillwater and Jackson's during the time the line was being constructed between Brunnerton and Springfield?—I could not answer that question without looking at the books.

136. Was not the railway finished between Reefton and Greymouth before you communicated with Lake Brunner on the other side?—I could not answer without looking at the books.

137. How many miles is it from Lake Brunner to Stillwater?—About twenty miles.

138. You have forty miles to Reefton?—Yes.

139. And twenty miles to Lake Brunner?—Yes.

140. Did you go on to Reefton, or did you stop at the Greymouth end of it?—The railway-station is on the Greymouth side of the river.

141. Then you stopped. You did not make the bridge over the Inangahua River?—No.

142. It would be rather expensive?—No doubt.

143. How much did you spend on the Nelson end, and how many miles did you make?—We have made five miles and a half, and spent something over £60,000 on it. Under the contract we had to spend £60,000 at Belgrove and £60,000 at Springfield.

144. And you did not go much beyond the stipulated amount at either end?—No. We came to the Committee in 1892, and asked for an alteration in the contract, in order to enable us to go on with the section from Belgrove to Reefton and from Springfield to Jackson's.

145. Had not the company an interest in the Blackball Coal-mine? Were they not promoters of that coal-mine?—No. We had nothing to do with it. It is news to me to hear it said that the Midland Railway Company promoted it.

146. Did you know a gentleman named Leonard Harper?—Yes.

147. Was he not one of the promoters of the Midland Railway Company?—He may have been one of those who sent the delegates Home, but I do not know.

148. Was he not connected with the Blackball Company?—I believe he went Home to float it, but not in connection with the Midland Railway Company.

149. Do you know Mr. Alan Scott?—Yes.

150. He was manager of the Blackball Company?—No.

151. Not in connection with Leonard Harper?—He was his partner once, and was afterwards manager for the Midland Railway Company.

152. And his partner was manager of the Blackball Company?—I do not think that he was manager.

153. There was a tunnel made at Brunnerton before you started operations?—On the Government line.

154. Did the Government hand you over a piece of line with the tunnel between Brunnerton and Stillwater?—I do not know.

155. You would not say it was not so?—No. It must have been before 1889.

156. You have referred to several tunnels. Is there not a large tunnel outside Brunnerton?—I know it; but I referred to the tunnels we made—one at Kaimata, another at Reefton, and another about a mile long at Belgrove.

157. You did not include this tunnel?—No. It was not made by the company.

158. On this forty-mile section is there not a large tunnel between Stillwater and Brunner-ton?—Yes; I referred to the tunnels made with the company's money at Reefton, Kaimata, and Belgrove.

159. If the colony had spent a large sum of money in constructing a line between Brunnerton and Stillwater, would not the company get the benefit of that?—I do not know that it is a benefit to the company.

160. Were you not here at the start?—No.

161. And you do not know, notwithstanding all the time you have been with the company, that this tunnel was made by the colony and given to the company?—But that tunnel is not on the Midland Railway at all. The Midland Railway peg is north of the tunnel. That tunnel does not come into our property.

162. I always thought it was on your property?—No; it has nothing to do with us at all.

163. Now I come to the timber trade. When was the Greymouth-Hokitika line finished?—I could not tell you. I will take it from you.

164. Are you aware there is a large timber trade on that line?—Yes.

165. Do you know Stratford and Blair's mill?—Yes.

166. Do you know Morris's?—Yes.

167. Do you know Gardner and Wilson's?—Yes.

168. Do you know the mill at Paeroa?—Yes.