

Back Creek itself would have been worked years ago had it not been for the want of water. There has been a little water, but it has been very scarce. If the Humphrey's Gully Company will not bring the water in we cannot see where it is to come from. It has been said that the Kanieri Lake water would be too low, and, therefore, the only water we can get is through the Humphrey's Gully Company's property, which is capable of bringing forty heads of water for use in connection with other works. If they brought water in from the Blue Spur, there is any amount of auriferous ground there. I have been from twenty-five to thirty years in that district, and know there is plenty of gold there if they can get a water-supply; and the population would increase considerably, whereas if the water is not brought in the population will decrease. The County Council Chairman says that there is 300 or 340 acres, but there are 400 or 500 acres of ground that is auriferous. I know for a fact that Brighton Terrace would have been worked when I was first there if water had been available. The district is all gold-bearing, and there is a large basin which has been proved. Claims have been working there for a considerable time, and most of the gold is got at Back Creek.

95. *Hon. Mr. McGowan.*] To your knowledge they have been working there pretty well for thirty years?—Yes.

96. And of course some of them did very well when on very rich wash; but, where there is an area of several hundred acres of auriferous ground there are bound to be certain parts which are richer than others?—Certainly.

97. And the richer parts would become less and less every year?—Yes, if the claims were worked out.

98. You say the whole of the ground is auriferous?—Yes.

99. Well, could you afford to throw your water away on poor ground. What you want is sufficient water to enable you to sluice that ground, and that is what you want to place before the Committee?—Yes.

100. *Mr. R. McKenzie.*] You know the Kumara Goldfield?—Yes.

101. You know that, and you know that before the Waimea Water-race was constructed, claims were abandoned which turned out excellent sluicing-claims afterwards?—Yes. Brighton Terrace has been driven through in portions, and it supported a large population. It is a mile back, fronting the river. In reference to the £15,000 or £20,000 subsidy which the petitioners request the Committee to recommend to the Government, I might mention that the Humphrey's Gully Company propose to make the water 5d. per head. If it were made 6d. the extra penny could be set aside for the payment of interest on the capital.

102. With regard to the trial survey, could you not get the Westland County Engineer to go over it?—They have no Engineer.

103. *Mr. Moss.*] Do you know the ground yourself?—I have not mined the ground, but I know it as well as a miner does.

104. Are the rich patches which are being worked now scattered or in one portion of the field?—They are not scattered. The gold is universal, but the miners know in what direction the richer portions lie.

105. Is the gold supposed to have come from a distance and to be evenly spread over this field, or is the good gold in one particular spot along four or five miles of this terrace?—I could not say that it was in any particular spot. Some of the claims are rich and others are poor.

106. Are all the claims getting good gold together or scattered?—They are scattered all along the terrace.

107. *Mr. Smith.*] Could you give the Committee any idea of the amount it would cost to get a preliminary survey and report, with maps showing the position, so as to enable it to arrive at the approximate cost?—No, I do not think I could.

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