

6. *Mr Hall.*] You say that it requires an area of about 20,000 acres to carry on a factory?—Yes.

7 Must the soil necessarily be twenty-five miles from the factory?—I am glad you have mentioned that point. We have now an illustration of where they are growing sugar-beets in England, and sending them across to Germany, and selling them at 16s. per ton; and I presume it is profitable to them. If English farmers can send their roots across the German Ocean and get 16s. per ton, we ought to be able to grow them in this country and send them by rail. In America roots are sent over eighty miles by rail.

8. The factory would have to be in a waterway or near a railway-station?—Yes.

9 Can you point to any area of land that you know of where it would be practicable to start a factory?—Yes, quite a number in the Waikato. In the Waikato we are particularly well served in the matter of facilities for transport. Apart from roads, we have the Waikato River from Cambridge and the Waipa River from Pirongia right down to the Waikato Heads, all a navigable waterway. We also are well served with the railway, and have plenty of coal in the district, and the right kind of limestone for sugar-manufacture.

10. You have allowed £2 per acre for the lifting of the crop and carting to the factory. Now you say that 12s. per acre would be absorbed in the lifting and topping?—Roughly speaking, yes. That, I understand, is the Ruakura estimate.

11 You have 18 tons of material to cart and to rail to your factory for the remaining £1 12s. Now, this 20,000 acres must necessarily be a considerable distance from the railway. I would ask you if it is practicable to carry 18 tons of crops many miles over a road, and then pay for the railage to the factory for the remaining £1 8s. per ton that you allowed for it?—The answer is, it can be done in other countries, and there is no reason why similar results could not be obtained in this. I have not calculated railway charges.

12 Where do you get the metal for the roads?—For the Hamilton Borough we get our metal from Te Kuiti, and our metal on the street costs us 8s. per yard. A great number of the roads are metalled with gravel. We have no stone in the Waikato, say, within a radius of twenty miles of Hamilton. We have no hard road-metal, but we have plenty of gravel, which will stand fairly heavy traffic, but, of course, we prefer the hard Te Kuiti stone where we can get it.

13 *Hon. Mr T Mackenzie.*] Unfortunately I was called away, and I have not had the advantage of listening to all your very valuable evidence, but I should like to put one or two questions to you. I note you say the experiment at Ruakura was a failure?—That was about 1901, but of late years, I stated, we have every confidence that the work done is first-class and satisfactory to the district.

14. The yield per acre—do you know what that was?—I have not the figures.

15. The question of comparative costs: Your estimate is that it takes £8 15s. 6d. per acre to deliver. Have you worked out that on the basis of the results—that is to say, with the present price of sugar?—I have not calculated the price of sugar as sold, but the price which the factories usually pay for roots.

16. So that really you have not worked out the costs in relation to the yield from the sale of the sugar manufactured?—Not in these calculations. In the sugar-beet industry there are two totally different industries. In all the evidence you are taking you must remember that the growing of sugar-beets and the making of sugar are two separate industries.

17 You think that sugar-beet can be grown and sold at £1 per ton at the factory, and that under proper management the sugar-factory could then sell sugar to the retailer or the wholesaler at £20 per ton?—I would not be sure of my answer.

18. *Mr. Buchanan.*] You refer to Mr Graham: what is Mr Graham?—He is a retired surveyor and Native interpreter, and in comfortable circumstances.

19 Has he had such experience as a farmer and cultivator of land as would lead you to intrust your money to him for expenditure?—He is rather a theoretical man, and is reputed to be more theoretical than practical. However, he has made a success of his own business. I would not intrust my money to him alone for a commercial venture, unless he had experienced business men associated with him. Mr Graham is a man who thinks a great deal ahead of the present time.

20. Now, take your own case. Have you had any practical personal experience in cultivation?—Yes.

21 In this country?—Yes, in the Waikato.

22 For how long?—For some years. I have had considerable practical experience in farming in the Waikato. Some years ago I was in partnership with a gentleman in the Waikato, farming. I was finding the capital and he was to take charge of the work. The partnership did not prove satisfactory, and I bought out his interest, and managed successfully in general farming. I have grown wheat and oats and dealt with stock profitably. At present I am interested in dairying, and would add that at times I have performed almost every kind of manual work on a small farm.

23. Did you reside on the farm?—No. I reside in Hamilton, and managed my business from Hamilton.

24. That meant you did not have the practical direction your operations upon the farm devolved upon your manager there?—No, entirely upon myself. I did all my labour by contract, and supervised everything myself. In all my farming operations I was not resident on the place.

25. What the Committee wish to get at is the value of evidence of different kinds that is put before it, from the practical point of view?—In other words, I presume you want to justify or otherwise my evidence as to the lands in the Waikato. I claim that my evidence is justified on these grounds: that I have had practical experience, and I exercise an intelligent observation.