

26. You say that you got your work done by contract?—Yes.

27. Does that mean that you mapped out a month's work, or a period of work, upon the farm, called for tenders, and accepted a tender to get the various descriptions of work on the farm done by contract?—Yes. I mapped out my work on the farm for a season, and it was all done by contract. I would go to Maoris in the locality, and say, "I want 20 acres ploughed," and I contracted with the Natives to plough for me. I went to people carting in the district, and engaged them to do my carting.

28. In sowing the seed, for instance, had you a servant acting as clerk of the works, seeing that the seed was put in and dealt with properly?—No, I had reliable men to whom I intrusted that work.

29. I think the Committee understood you to say that you considered 20,000 acres necessary to provide the supply of beets to a factory?—Yes, for a four-years course. That is a workable figure. Roughly speaking, with 15 tons to the acre that would be 75,000 tons from 5,000 acres. In regard to that matter, the manufacture of sugar from beets is carried on by the factory in what is termed a "campaign," lasting about a hundred days.

30. I find you say the cost of skim-ploughing is 6s.. What size of enclosure had you in your mind—I mean, how many acres?—I should say, for a small area, 5 acres. If a dairy-farmer goes in for beet, he would not care to take on much more than 5 acres at a time.

31. What considerations led you to that estimate of acreage?—The growing of beet-root is usually a small settler's enterprise. It takes work, and he may have difficulty in providing labour. His resources may not permit him to furnish the necessary labour for a large area, that would be my reason for suggesting a 5-acre patch.

32. Do you know that on such a small acreage as that the cost of labour is liable to be prohibitive without the best labour-saving implements?—Yes; but, of course, a man who has brought out labour-saving implements can go in for larger acreages.

33. Would you be surprised if I asserted that on a reasonable-sized area I could perform the operation of skimming at half the cost that would be involved in a small area of 5 acres?—On a large scale, not at all surprised.

34. Would you be surprised that the cost would be about half or less?—I am certain that the price I have put in is a big price for skimming. Skimming, in my opinion, can be done for less. I submitted that estimate to a farmer in the district, and he said, "You are safe by putting it at 6s."

35. You put the cost of 6 in. ploughing at 8s. Now, what acreage would a team of four horses, ploughing 6 in. deep, get over in a day on a large-sized paddock?—It would depend upon the stiffness of the soil and the quality of the team. We can get men to contract to plough at 8s. an acre without any trouble.

36. I merely asked you what acreage would a man plough per day with a team of four horses?—It would vary somewhat. It might be three or four acres, more or less, according to the ability of his team and the nature of the soil, not to mention the men.

37. Would you be surprised to find a man ploughing 5 acres per day upon a 50-chain length of furrow?—I am not surprised at anything, because he might accomplish anything.

38. Would it then cost 8s.?—The man ploughing would make money out of it. You must strike a conservative estimate for small areas. I know some men ploughing who do make money; others again are always in debt and struggling along.

39. Would you put the cost of 6 in. ploughing and subsoil ploughing at the same rate of 8s. net in each case? Could you subsoil at the same rate as the ploughing?—This is what is usually done in our district: When we want to subsoil we reckon to double the price of ploughing, but I have had ploughing done at 6s. per acre. At Ruakura they estimate their ploughing and subsoiling at 15s. per acre. I am putting 16s. in the estimate, so that the expenses charged against the cultivation of an acre of beets may be fair.

40. You have given the cost in each case as the same—viz., 8s. The point is this: If 8s. is a fair cost for 6 in. ploughing, do you consider 8s. a fair price for subsoiling?—The operations go on together. The extra work involved in the draught and all the rest of it—that is extra; that is where the difference comes in.

41. Would you amend your estimate for skimming when you realize that, instead of one furrow, you could have two for skimming, or three? Farmers frequently plough three furrows for skimming?—Yes; but not for a small area. Small farmers do not usually keep three-furrow ploughs.

42. Would you not amend your estimate in one case or the other? Is the whole thing not out of joint?—I should be quite prepared to amend it. I say, and I have stated all through my evidence, that my calculation for skimming is a conservative one. The man I am advocating is the small settler. It is the small settler, the dairy-farmer, you must primarily look to to cultivate in the beet-root industry.

43. You put down the cost of hand-hoeing and weeding at £2 per acre. How many times would you cultivate and hoe, both horse and hand, during the growth of the beet?—The first operation would be to thin out the plants, then, after that, horse-hoeing would be followed up as was necessary. There might be a big crop of weeds, and it might want horse-hoeing once or twice, or more.

44. How many times do you estimate the operations would be repeated during the growth?—That is entirely according to the growth of the weeds.

45. Would you be surprised at an estimate of £7 per acre for the cost of that cultivation?—Yes.

46. As to lifting, topping, and carting. By what process would you lift prior to topping?—That depends upon the class of soil. Some you could pull.