

7. You say you use 2 cwt. of fertilizer to the acre?—Yes. This year probably another $\frac{1}{2}$ cwt.
8. You find you get very good crops of rape and turnips?—Yes.
9. Where are these 53,250 acres—about five miles in which direction?—To the north of the proposed Putaruru-Taupo Railway.
10. *The Chairman.*] Tell us approximately where it is?—I begin about thirty miles from Rotorua, and end about eight miles from Taupo.
11. *Mr. Newman.*] The land round Rotorua is, generally speaking, rather better on the average? You are in favour of this work being permitted by the private company?—Provided that the Government will not do it, and I know they will not do it.
12. *Mr. Guthrie.*] Eventually do you think you will have to have a railway through the Waio tapu?—Personally I think the railway likely to be constructed will do Rotorua a lot of harm. The Government may not construct a railway.
13. You say, in the event of the Government not going on with this work, you think it is advisable to give the company a charter to enable them to proceed with it?—Certainly, as long as it is on reasonable lines. As I pointed out, if the charges are to be as high as horse traffic, then the railway is of no practical use. If, for instance, it enables me to get manure forward to my land at a cost of 17s. 6d. instead of 35s., at this cost I can afford to get more manure and presumably better crops.
14. In the event of an extended charter being granted to this company you are of opinion that strict conditions should obtain?—I think that is the essence of the whole thing.
15. As to the charges on the railway and the equal treatment of customers?—Supposing that I should quarrel with the company, I do not think they should have the power to charge me higher rates than my neighbour.
16. What is your opinion as to giving this company a monopoly over the hotels and tourist traffic generally?—Well, that is a serious matter. I do not know what control the Government have. They have acquired these, I suppose, legally, and I do not know whether it can be upset. The serious part of that is that they have acquired the actual thermal sights. The acquisition of the hotels is nothing. The company have the actual sights, and the consequence is that if I put up a boardinghouse at Wairakei they could chase my visitors off the ground.
17. Matters of that kind should be safeguarded?—I think so.
18. You are of opinion that it is possible to bring this land into cultivation?—I have been working at it for four years, and I am more satisfied every day that that country will be occupied by close settlement.
19. Root crops will grow as a first preparation?—Yes.
20. Will it carry a grain crop afterwards?—Yes.
21. Will it take grass after the grain crop?—Yes.
22. It will take grasses after roots?—Yes. We just disc so as not to bury the sheep-manure.
23. I suppose your experience does not enable you to say how long that grass will last?—The grass has improved from year to year.
24. What is the oldest pasture?—Four years.
25. What is the condition?—Very fair—better than when first put down.
26. What sized areas do you think would be a fair thing to divide this land into?—The land varies very much in quality.
27. Give us an average?—On the best land 200 acres, and on the poorest about 5,000 acres. Close to me there is a swamp containing about 6,000 or 7,000 acres of really first-class country that is now being improved and will be occupied with dairy farms. It is of superior quality to any land that I have seen in the Waikato.
28. After it has been drained what will be a fair value?—I understand that the owners think they will get £40 per acre.
29. Who are the owners?—Stead and Watt.
30. They think they will get £40 for it?—Yes.
31. Is there any quantity of such land on the portion that is said to be acquired by this company?—I have not been over that country.
32. Well, compare it with the poorer land in the Waikato?—I have had men working for me who were ploughing for Mr. Firth when he first took up Matamata, and they say the country which I have ploughed is of a great deal better quality than Matamata was.
33. How far away from the company's line is this land that you speak of which belongs to Stead and Watt?—As the crow flies, I should think about twenty miles.
34. As to the altitude of this land: is it as high as that land of Stead and Watt's?—I cannot say. The level of Stead and Watt's land and mine is about 1,000 ft. above the sea.
35. How does it compare with Rotorua?—Rotorua is about 930 ft.
36. How can a monopoly exist if the Government had a right of purchase?—I refer to the
37. From your general knowledge of the country, would you say that there is any land approaching in quality the land of Stead and Watt's?—There are no other big swamps that I know of as good as theirs. On the other side of Waio tapu there is about a similar area belonging to the Natives. That has been recently surveyed and subdivided, and some of it has been actually leased, and there are applications for all the sections at rentals running up to 3s. per acre per annum.
38. Would £1 per acre be a fair estimate for the ploughing and sowing of the land?—You could not do it for that.
39. What would be a fair estimate?—To put in a crop of turnips with 2 cwt. of manure would cost £2 2s. 6d. That is just about my cost.
40. For ploughing the land?—I usually allow 7s. 6d. for scrubbing—that would leave about £1 15s. for the rest.