

the Act then the whole of the negotiations changed, and you tell us it was because you were to get the whole block for £2 10s.?—Yes.

61. And if you had to take the road-line at all you would have had to pay more for it per acre?—Yes.

62. I asked you before why you reckoned it was a good bargain for the Government to have the whole of that block, and you said because it gave access to the whole of their block. You do not appear to have had any idea at all what price they were going to charge for the road alone?—If the road alone had been taken under the Public Works Act it is hard to say what it would have cost us. There is the fencing on both sides, the cost of the value of the land and the claims for severance, besides the cost of proceedings under the Public Works Act.

63. You seem to have considered all those expenses?—Yes.

64. You say you put 14s. upon those sections as the value of them?—Yes.

65. They have never yet been offered for settlement?—No, not yet.

66. When they are offered for settlement what price will be put upon them?—That I could not tell you.

67. Will you recommend that they be increased by the 2s. which you say is the increased value?—That 14s. includes the 2s. increase.

68. Then the original value of those sections was 12s. according to your valuation?—Yes.

69. As a practical surveyor, you think the value of those sections has fairly increased by 2s. because of the acquisition of this block?—Yes.

70. *Mr. Coates.*] Did you make up for the Department an estimate of the whole cost of the road including severance and fencing?—Yes, I have made it up.

71. *Mr. Witty.*] In the first place you reckoned 15s. per acre was sufficient for the land that was acquired according to your own report?—No, 5s.

72. You had authority to offer 15s.?—Yes.

73. And did you think that 15s. was a fair price?—It was more than the productive value of the land was worth, but it is not equal to the additional value given to the adjoining sections.

74. But still you thought it was a pretty good value?—Yes.

75. And you have since stated that you thought the land was really cheap enough at £2 10s. an acre, or an increase of £1 15s.?—Yes.

76. Why?—On account of the additional value it gives to the Crown sections adjoining.

77. Did it not give the same value when offering 15s. as when offering £2 10s.?—But we could not get it for 15s.

78. You say it is a fair bargain for the State, but has not the State the right to be fair as between the State and the individual?—I think the State should pay as little as possible for any land it gets.

79. But had it been taken under the Public Works Act the road-line would have cost much more?—Yes.

80. And the value would not have been put on those sections?—No.

81. Roughly speaking, there is £2,000 of an increase, computing 19,000 acres at 2s., in the value of this Pohokura Block?—Yes.

82. That is without counting the land that is purchased?—Yes.

83. Who offered to take £2 10s. an acre: was it Mr. Russell or Mr. Ballan?—Mr. Ballan, I believe.

84. Up to that time Mr. Russell had not appeared in the matter—not until after the offer of £2 10s. was made?—No.

85. The price given to the Natives for the whole of the land, I understood you to say, was 3s. 10d.?—Yes.

86. Then, you still think that in giving £2 10s. per acre for this land the State has made a good bargain?—Yes.

87. The negotiations were broken off on the 23rd February, 1911, were they not?—Yes.

88. And then it was reported that no other roads were practicable except at a prohibitive cost. You were practically bound to acquire this land of Ballan's to make the Pohokura Block of any value at all for settlement?—Yes.

89. *The Chairman.*] You say that it is a fair price at £2 10s., and you justify that by saying that the road would have cost a great deal more if taken under the Public Works Act. What would it have cost if taken under the Public Works Act?—I could give a rough estimate.

90. What is your rough estimate?—About £1,550, besides the cost of severance and cost of proceedings—that is, for the road and fencing.

91. But you fenced on one side under this agreement, have you not?—Yes.

92. Under the Public Works Act you would have fenced only one more side than you did fence?—Yes.

93. Does this land go through any other land but Runanga No. 1A?—Yes, it goes through Runanga No. 1B.

94. Was that land purchased?—Yes, from the Natives, at 3s. 10d.

95. What was the area of the block?—I do not know.

96. Was it 409 acres?—Oh, no.

97. Then, did the Natives receive any compensation for taking that road through?—No, the whole piece was purchased from them.

98. This—i.e., Runanga 1B—is all Crown land?—Yes.

99. And is this other piece, Pukahunui, Crown land?—No, that is private property.

100. And does the road go through Pukahunui?—Yes.

101. Did the owner get any compensation for that road going through?—I do not know whether that has been taken yet.