

125. In that case, then, the owner of the Runanga Estate would have had to maintain five miles out of the ten miles of fencing?—Yes.

126. Since the sale has taken place, or now that it has taken place, he will have to maintain the whole ten miles of fencing?—I do not think he would, but that is a matter of arrangement.

127. He would have to be called upon to maintain it?—The people on the other side would be able to get a fence.

128. But this fence is running along the road?—But it is between the road and the Pohokura section.

129. And he would have to maintain it?—No, only if he puts a fence on his side of the road. If he built the fence he would have to maintain the whole ten miles of it.

130. *Mr. Guthrie.*] You have been in the district and seen the whole of the land yourself?—Yes.

131. You are the only witness we have had before us who has been on the land. As a marketable piece of land what would you consider the value of that district by itself?—You are not taking me as a land-valuer?

132. No, give me your impression?—Anything from 10s. to 12s. 6d. per acre.

HARRY EDWARD WALSH further examined. (No. 7.)

1. *The Chairman.*] The Committee desire to know whether the land marked green on the plan is flat land or not?—That marked green is.

2. *Mr. Nosworthy.*] What is the other land?—The edge of the bush.

3. And is not that land between the fenced land and the edge of the bush flat land?—No, very steep.

4. Then the fenced land is over steep ridges?—It runs across the ridges.

5. *The Chairman.*] Is the Runanga No. 1A cleared land or bush land?—There is a patch of bush near Runanga No. 1A on the left-hand side of the road going up about half a mile from the road.

6. *Mr. Nosworthy.*] The line coloured red is the boundary between the Runanga Estate and the Government sections. Under ordinary conditions the owner on one side of the fence would have to put up a fence all along the road at his own expense. The owner of the property is responsible for fencing the whole of the piece against the road?—That is a matter of agreement.

7. *Mr. R. W. Smith.*] The ten miles along the outside of the road will have to be fenced, will it not?—Yes.

8. And the maintenance of that fence will have to be carried out by the owner of the Runanga Estate?—Yes.

9. So that through this sale the owner of the Runanga Estate will be called upon to maintain five miles more fencing now?—Yes.

10. If this purchase had not been made from the Runanga Estate, and these sections had not been sold by the Government, would not the tenants have had to pay half the maintenance of that fence—supposing no sale had been made except the road?—Yes.

11. And now the sale has been made, will not the owner of Runanga have to maintain the whole ten miles on the other side?—Yes.

12. So that it is adding five miles on to the fence he will have to maintain?—Yes.

13. *Hon. Mr. Buddo.*] You know the piece coloured purple on the plan?—Yes.

14. What is the nature of that piece of country?—From the right-hand edge of the road is flat country—river flat—on an average about 5 chains wide from the road. Then there is a small terrace about 30 ft. high, and another flat averaging, I suppose, 20 chains wide.

15. How would you describe it if asked?—It is all open country.

16. Is the sale that has taken place to the Crown of any advantage to the balance of the Runanga Block that belonged to Mr. Ballan?—I do not think so.

17. Where would the advantage be in holding that block of land—is it any advantage to the Crown?—It is of advantage to the Crown on account of the frontage to the road for homestead and yarding sites and working of sections.

18. Have you had a long experience of cutting up areas of land?—I have been on the surveying since 1904.

19. If you had been asked to cut up that block to the best advantage without this purchase of land, would you have found suitable homestead-sites along the foot of the mountain?—No.

20. *Mr. Statham.*] At the present time the Government have erected, I understand, ten miles of fencing along the Runanga boundary?—I believe so.

21. And the owner of the Runanga Estate will have to pay the cost of maintaining that fence in the future?—I think so.

22. Well, if the Government had taken the road under the Public Works Act, and had either erected or paid the cost in the way of compensation for erecting ten miles of fencing, would not the owner of the Runanga Estate be in exactly the same position?—He would be in a worse position, because he would have double the fencing.

JOHN STRAUCHON further examined. (No. 8.)

1. *Mr. R. W. Smith.*] What I want to know, Mr. Strauchon, is this: Will the sale of this land or the transaction as a whole add to the amount of fencing that the owner of the Runanga Estate will have to maintain, and, if so, how much?—Only partially, because he had the five miles. He has now the whole of the ten miles to maintain, and he has still half the other with the Crown tenants,