

what he earned?—It cost about 2s. 8d. a day for each consumptive employed for the expenses of the camp.

19. Was the amount of their keep deducted from what they earned?—Yes. The manager used to work it out and then it was deducted from their earnings.

20. Did your Department not get anything back?—Just the working-expenses of the camp. We paid the wages and the men found themselves.

21. *Mr. Murdoch.*] As Taupo is a very suitable place for tree-planting and where consumptives could be employed with advantage, in the event of operations being started there would your Department erect the camp?—I think there is every possibility that the Government would erect the camp.

22. If these men were employed for a couple of years could they afterwards return to their ordinary labour?—Some should be able to return long before two years had elapsed.

23. *Dr. Cockayne.*] Are you forced to find employment for convalescent consumptives?—No; but it is the best form of employment for them.

24. Would Central Otago, where there might be considerable planting in the future, be a suitable place for them?—Certain parts of it would be.

25. Possibly better than anywhere else?—I would not say that; but there are certain districts in Central Otago that would be extremely good places, such as the high land about Cromwell.

26. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] Would not the dust there be too much for them?—I do not think so.

27. It is very bad there?—Then the dust would be bad. Is it dusty on the high land there? I would not propose to establish a camp on the plains where it is dusty; but between Cromwell and Queenstown you would not get much dust on the hills. I was thinking of the high lands, and not that there would be any planting on the plains.

AUGUSTUS HAMILTON sworn and examined. (No. 76.)

1. *The Chairman.*] I understand you are the Director of the Dominion Museum?—Yes.

2. Do you wish to tender any evidence?—Yes, on the effects of the removal of forests, on denudation generally, and kindred matters. On behalf of the Philosophical Society I wish to express our sympathy with any steps that can be taken in the way of restraining the effects of denudation, and for preserving the climatic reserves on the high ranges. The society presented a petition to the Prime Minister, and I believe it was passed on to the Commission, on the subject of the National Park. Professor Easterfield, the president of the society, was appointed, with myself, to wait on the Minister on the question, and the professor would have been here this morning but was unable to get away. He would have supported the prayer of that petition. I now wish to support the recommendations of the society, and also of other societies throughout New Zealand, in favour of the extension of the areas of the National Park.

3. Are the deer, as far as your knowledge goes, damaging the climatic reserves in this district?—I think not. They may damage the undergrowth, but I have no special evidence to offer to that effect.

4. In the event of the deer eating out the undergrowth and preventing natural regeneration would it not tend in time to the destruction of those reserves?—Certainly it impairs the usefulness of the forests and retards the growth.

5. With consequent greater liability to fire?—That is so.

6. Are you aware if the deer are barking the trees here at all?—No. I have no doubt that deer, like all ruminants, would chew the bark of the native trees, the same as they chew the willows.

7. Are you of opinion that the deer, instead of being allowed to roam all through our national parks, should be restricted to certain deer-preserves, and destroyed if they come outside those preserves?—That is a matter that requires some consideration, because I have not any evidence to indicate that the deer are harmful in their habits.

8. Here are some photos showing trees at Hanmer which have been badly damaged by deer. After seeing these photos do you think the deer should have the full run of our forests?—If it is a birch bush where these photos were taken, then no doubt the deer appear to be very destructive to some trees, and it becomes a question of whether we are going to have deer or trees.

9. And we shall have the country ruined by the denudation of the hills?—Certainly; much more damage will be done by floods due to the denudation of the forests than good will be done by the presence of the deer.

10. *Dr. Cockayne.*] Do you know the Tongariro National Park?—Yes.

11. Are you aware that within the area of the present boundaries there is virtually not a single tree?—There are no trees within certain limits.

12. You wish to see the upland forest on Ruapehu brought into the park?—Certainly.

13. Do you think the area of this park should be extended as far as the railway-line and Hauhungatahi?—I certainly think it should extend as far as the railway-line, but I am not quite certain about the lay of the country there.

14. What other societies have supported yours in endeavouring to get the National Park extended?—As far as I am aware most of the societies replied favourably to our circular asking their support.

15. The proposal is a necessary one because of the source of the Wanganui River being there?—Yes, its principal source is in that park, and certainly the preservation of the forest would tend to maintain high water in that river, thereby benefiting the river traffic.

16. In addition to the area forming a splendid national park, it is also of the greatest importance as a climatic reserve?—Certainly.