

70. Tell us how many dozen prizes you have won?—I have had a great many prizes and trophies.
71. Fully equal to the display I have here?—I have shown in Auckland and Waikato, but not in Palmerston North, and I have had a great many first prizes. As a matter of fact, I made thirty-two entries in the Rotorua Winter Show and got twenty-nine prizes.
72. With regard to home produce, does the land grow vegetables?—Yes, it is very well adapted to the growing of vegetables.
73. How do you find the quality and flavour of the products—the meats, potatoes, other vegetables, fruits, and so forth?—I consider it is equal to that of products in other parts: quite good.
74. About the provision of shelter in the area: how long does it take to provide shelter?—About six years. *Pinus insignis* makes very good shelter in those areas.
75. You represent the Reporoa area on the board of the dairy company, for example, and are frequently out there?—Yes.
76. And you have a fair acquaintance with that area?—Yes.
77. What proportion of the area do you think is ploughable: I do not mean the hillsides?—You mean parts on which you could work a drill?
78. Yes?—About two-thirds.
79. Speaking of cattle-sickness in the Waiotapu district: have you known of any of this iron-hunger?—In my work in connection with the Soldiers Revaluation Board we visited one farm at Reporoa, a farm in the swamp, and we were shown a beast which gave indications of the sickness—one beast only. I have since seen the owner of that property on a good many occasions, and he has told me that since he has broken in his land and fertilized it he has not had any trouble. That was the only isolated case I have seen.
80. Do you think that case might have been due to the feed?—Yes, and the beast was constitutionally delicate, a Jersey.
81. *Mr. Kyle.*] It might have had tubercular disease?—Yes.
82. *Mr. Vaile.*] In a large mob you might find an odd animal sick in any district?—Yes, even in Hawke's Bay, on the best land, you will find in clumps of tea-tree the bones of cattle.
83. In what market do you buy your supplies of manures, for instance?—In Auckland.
84. You do not use Rotorua for such purposes?—No.
85. With regard to getting produce away from Waiotapu: what do you think would be the deterioration of fat lambs or fat cattle through droving on the road?—Quite a considerable amount. There are three or four days' droving, also a day on the train, before the animals reach the market.
86. In connection with the droving, you need, I understand, a considerable mob: you cannot send eight or nine bullocks by themselves?—No, it would not pay.
87. The consequence of that is that you have to keep those bullocks fat while others come forward to make up a suitable mob. How much a week do you consider it would cost in winter to keep those bullocks going?—I should say, not less than 5s. per head per week.
88. That, of course, is loss?—Yes.
89. And in the summer-time what would it cost?—If you had a good pasture, I should say, a couple of shillings.
90. Do you consider that, as a farming proposition, the district would be improved if it had increased population? Do you think the facility of sale-yards, public halls, amusements, and so forth would tend to the development of the country?—Undoubtedly it would.
91. Do you think that country can be successfully settled without a railway?—I think that settlement would be very slow without a railway. The cost of transport by motor-lorry would be not less than 1s. per mile per ton. It would cost £1 a ton to take material out to Reporoa. I do not think settlement would take place to any great extent without a railway.
92. And are you quite confident that, with a railway, the district can be settled?—Yes, I have no doubt about it. I feel quite sure about it, and I can conscientiously say that I would have no fear of that country not being settled successfully if it had railway access.
93. *The Chairman.*] If the country can be settled, say, along the east coast of the Wairarapa with a railway one hundred miles or more away, and never having had a railway nearer, is there any reason why the same should not apply to the Rotorua-Taupo district?—The conditions are not the same.
94. In what way are they different?—The country you speak of is pretty well first-class land. In the old days it would be grazing and probably a little cropping that was done. Dairying on small farms could not have been carried out.
95. There is a good deal of closer settlement away out in the backblocks of the Wairarapa district, and dairying is being carried on extensively. Why could not the same be done in the Rotorua-Taupo district?—Of course, you have better roads in that district.
95. Supposing you had better roads in your district?—We would always be handicapped by the cost of conveyance by motor-lorry as against the ordinary train freight. The country, I admit, is not as good country as the country of which you are speaking. Of course, when you get first-class country it tides the farmer over a lot of difficulties, such as transport, and that kind of thing.
96. If it knocks the stock about so much owing to the droving in the absence of a railway up Rotorua-Taupo way, how is it that the same does not apply to the district of which I have been speaking?—It must to a certain extent. Of course, on the particular road I have in mind—the Waiotapu Road—there are tremendous difficulties. There is considerably traffic, and the stock cannot get along; they get into the side cuttings and the breast cuttings. The stock is knocked about. I admit that there are other districts that are just as much handicapped.
97. And have carried on for years?—Yes.
98. *Mr. Massey.*] I think Mr. Martin will admit that there is a big difference between the quality of the land in the Wairarapa and the quality of the land in the pumice area?—Yes.