

46. How do you find your road for taking your stock to the market?—There is such a lot of motor traffic on the road that it is impossible to get the stock through in the busy season. I have had several losses of the stock through their being run down by motor-cars.

47. Could you give an estimate of the number of cars passing through?—One day six weeks ago there were twenty-seven motor-lorries on the road, carrying posts from the bush.

48. Do you think that from the farmer's point of view it would be facilitated, or would it be made more difficult, if a bitumen road were put down?—That would make it worse. The motors would travel faster on bitumen.

49. Are noxious weeds getting greater, or worse?—They are gradually getting away, through want of settlement. There are a lot of areas in which the blackberry and ragwort are getting away.

50. Can you suggest any other means of dealing with this pest than closer settlement?—No.

51. If the country remains unsettled for twenty years, do you think the blackberry will be in possession?—I do.

52. What freight are you paying on your goods brought by road from Rotorua?—£1 per ton for manures, and £1 10s. for any other class of goods. The carrying-capacity of the road has been reduced to vehicles of $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons, and I understand that the motor people are going to put up the rates.

53. Do you consider that the stock are damaged in appearance and condition by being driven into Rotorua?—Certainly.

54. Can you estimate the loss on fat cattle beasts?—I reckon it will work out at 10s. a day for every day on the road, and they would be three days *en route*.

55. So you reckon that the deterioration per fat beast at the present time will be £1 10s. for the journey?—Yes, in addition to the cost of driving.

56. Will not lambs melt at the rate of anything up to 4 lb. in weight on the trip to Rotorua?—Yes.

57. Do you think it would be practicable to convey hay or oaten chaff at a profit to Rotorua to be marketed?—Not by road.

58. Do you think that on the whole question this area can be developed by means of a road?—Certainly not, to develop it properly.

59. Have you any confidence that with a railway provided this country could be closely settled?—Yes.

60. *Mr. Kyle.*] As an old Canterbury man, what part of Canterbury would you say would make a comparison with this area?—The country near Culverden. This is better country for development than that part of Canterbury, but you have the scrub to contend with just the same.

61. Have you not a bigger rainfall to contend with than we have in Canterbury?—Yes, considerably more.

62. Is that why you think manure has more effect than in Canterbury?—Yes. You are almost sure of a strike with anything you sow on the area.

63. You say that the first crop of turnips grown there is equal to practically any crop in Canterbury?—Yes.

64. What would be the price of land in Canterbury for the class of land you speak of, brought into cultivation within twenty-five miles of Christchurch?—I should say it would run from £12 10s. to £13 an acre.

65. *Mr. Semple.*] What is the area of the farm you broke in?—I have broken in 1,250 acres.

66. Was it your own land when you broke it in?—No. It was a Maori lease, and the owner purchased it.

67. And you were his manager?—Yes.

68. Had you had any previous experience with pumice land?—None whatever. I had been farming in Canterbury.

69. Did you find any difficulty in adapting yourself to the work?—No. It was considerably easier than farming in Canterbury. I have greater confidence in the land now than I had when I started. I had my doubts at the start.

70. From your experience you thought it was quite possible to bring the land into cultivation?—Yes.

71. And that without a burden of costs that would make it impossible?—Yes.

72. About how much manure did you use per acre?—I was using $1\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. to the acre.

73. That is the amount a person farming in the area should use?—Yes.

74. How does that compare with the other land you have handled?—We did not use manure in Canterbury at all in my time.

75. Have you had anything to do with other land where you used manure?—No; this is my first experience with manure country.

76. What sort of sheep-land would it make?—I think it will be all right eventually, but it is new country. I reckon there is always a certain amount of stock-sickness till you get the sourness out of the ground.

77. Do you attribute a lot of the sickness to the fact that the land is not cultivated?—Yes. I think that when land of this kind is cultivated it will lose the sickness, as has happened in every other area.

78. A certain amount is due to the uncultivated land?—That is my impression.

79. And that will disappear as the land is well cultivated?—Yes.

80. What difficulty is there, if any, in finding water there?—None whatever. It is the finest watered country I have been in.

81. You have heard the statement made that water is going to be a difficulty in some parts of the pumice country?—Well, I am just taking the area from Waiotapu through to the Waikato River, and there is beautiful water wherever you go.