

38. Have you known people to come there to recover from tuberculosis?—Taupo is supposed to be the best place in New Zealand for that.

39. Have you frequently passed the work already done on the railway?—Yes.

40. Will you tell us what modern machinery was used there?—The shovel.

41. All the earth shifted in the cuttings was shifted with the shovel?—Yes.

42. Do you think a saving could have been made by using a horse-scoop?—Certainly, and a lot of saving.

43. With regard to the Reporoa settlers, do you find now that the same people are still hanging on to the same areas, or do they prefer the pumice areas?—When they first went there they growled if they had pumice areas; but now they find that they have not enough of it.

44. Some land has recently been balloted for: were there many applicants?—For the last three or four sections balloted for there were any amount of applicants. The soldier settlers there are asking for more.

45. Have some of those who were asking for a reduction in value put in for new areas?—Yes.

46. Have you any knowledge of how the Reporoa settlers are getting on?—Well, a good many of them have motor-cars and wireless, and that sort of thing. That looks as if they have got money from somewhere.

47. *Mr. Makitanara.*] You live at Reporoa?—Next to Reporoa. We used to have Reporoa.

48. You did all right there?—I did a lot of work.

49. But you made a lot of money?—I spent twenty years of the best part of my life there before we got interest on our money.

50. You are well provided with roads?—They are not bad now. You could not call them good roads, but they are not bad.

51. Are not all the farmers in Reporoa doing well?—They do not say so; they say very much the other way.

52. Why do they not get off.—They say the Government put them there, and they have got to stay; but, as I have said, a few of them have motor-cars, wireless, and so forth.

53. What is your distance from Rotorua?—Thirty miles.

54. *Mr. Kyle.*] You say that many of those who have sections have put in for others that have been abandoned?—Yes.

55. Is that attributable to the fact that their holdings were too small?—I do not think so. Most of them have plenty.

56. What sized areas have they?—I do not think there is anything as low as 50 acres. About 80 acres is the usual thing.

57. *Mr. Semple.*] Do you confirm the statement made by another witness that 50 acres of this land, well cultivated, would be a sufficient holding?—I would not put a man on 50 acres. I would put him on 150 acres to start with. Perhaps 200 acres would be better. As his family grew up he would probably cut it down, and put some of his family on part.

58. You have also made a statement that this land is capable of settling thousands of people: do you confirm that?—I go a good deal further: I say that it would settle all the unemployed if properly handled.

59. You heard my question to other witnesses about the unemployed being put on the land to get it in order?—That is the only sensible way of doing the thing.

60. You think it is a good idea?—A very good idea.

61. How about water on the plain?—There is water on the plain, but in some parts there is no water.

62. In the parts where there is no water, would there be difficulty in getting it?—No. On the highest point of the plain there is a spring which you could run each way by irrigation. The Forestry Department sank and did not get water, but I do not know whether they tried in the right place, or how deep they sank.

63. Had you any previous experience with pumice land before you settled on the area?—I have been there twenty-five years.

64. You are satisfied now, with your experience of the pumice country, that it can be utilized in the interests of the community?—Certainly. It is the easiest country to break in in New Zealand, and the best country to settle.

65. And it is useful for fruitgrowing purposes?—Yes, for everything.

66. What do you grow?—All kinds of fruits. I have taken the first prize in the Waikato Show twice for apples.

67. How about small fruits?—They do well. Currants do especially well.

68. You are satisfied, then, that it would be a good thing for the State to continue that railway, with a view to closer settlement, for the purpose of settling the unemployed?—That is what I consider a railway is for—to settle the country.

69. Do you suggest that it would be better for the State to settle this land rather than pay big prices for other land?—There is no comparison, in my opinion, between the two. You can settle the land more cheaply, and put a man on it and give him a better chance than he would have on improved land.

70. You mean that there would not be a repetition of our soldier-settlement trouble?—Certainly, if it is properly supervised.

71. You heard my question about lectures: would it be wise to carry on study circles, and teach the men the scientific side of the business?—Yes; the more they learn the better.

72. You think it was a great mistake for this railway to be stopped?—I do.

73. Your confidence in the pumice land is based upon your actual experience?—Yes; I have settled dairying-people on it myself.