

to put up a bridge to get on to my country, and I had to make drains. I submit that to plough it twice and to put into pasture 1,700 acres is no mean achievement. But one has to be guided by one's finances. I have not done as much as I desired to do, but when I ride along through my country I consider that I have done something.

74. This Te Whaiti forest to which you referred—that is some distance from this proposed railway-line?—Yes, about thirty miles.

75. Is it not near the Rangitaiki district?—It is across the Rangitaiki—between eight and ten miles past the Rangitaiki River.

76. Could not that timber be rafted down the Rangitaiki, or floated down, like they do with timber in America?—Most of our native timbers do not float—I do not know about kahikatea. I make reference to that because there are large quantities of kahikatea there. No doubt the dairy company has considered that. But when you get your timber to Whakatane you have got it nowhere. I am not an expert on that matter, though.

77. It could be taken down that river without any charge?—But there are falls on the Rangitaiki River, though I do not know whether they are above the company's mill or below it.

78. You were advocating the planting of pine-trees, and stated how pine-trees improved the country; you mention that in one case there was as much as 9 in. of soil—that is, the ground covered with pine-needles?—Yes, sir.

79. My experience has taught me that wherever pine-trees grow you cannot grow grass or fruit-trees, because of turpentine from the pines. What is your experience?—Where there are pine-trees it is useless to grow anything in competition with them because they are too strong; but the leaves make good soil—I use them for manuring my own garden.

80. You stated that it cost something like £7 per acre to bring that ground in?—Yes, including fencing, but not buildings.

81. Your turnip crop cost you £3 11s. 3d. per acre?—That was on a first furrow. My last year's crop cost me £2 15s.: that I ploughed out of the grass.

82. That turnip crop would be worth how much?—In any other district it would be worth £7 or £8, but up there it is worth what you can get out of it, because there are no neighbours to buy it.

83. But it should be worth the cost you put into it—£3 11s. 3d.?—Oh, yes. I had 80 acres of swedes this year, and I have already sold over 115 head of beef off that. I have another thirty-five ready, and another forty nearly ready. They were in pretty good order when I put them on the swedes, but they must have something besides swedes.

84. In referring to the Reporoa Settlement, did you state that the production of butterfat was 20,299 lb.?—Yes.

85. Are there thirty-three settlers there, and is all they do dairy-farming?—No, some of them keep pigs, and some go in for cropping.

86. How many were dairy-farmers?—Well, there were thirty-three suppliers. I think there were four who were not returned soldiers.

87. Their farms are small subdivisions, up to 150 acres?—Yes, though some of them have of late been able to get two or three sections apiece.

88. With 20,000 lb. of butterfat between them it would mean only £46 per head: do you really suggest that is a good income?—I think there is something wrong with the figures. It is over £600 a head.

89. Oh, I am sorry, I took it at pounds of butterfat instead of so many pounds sterling. Now, you made reference to topping the market for your beef?—Yes.

90. I would suggest that that largely depends upon the amount of capital that a farmer has, and his desire to top off and show good stock. Then you instanced another farm of Friedlander's getting top stock from Surrey Hills farm. That is poor country?—No, I instanced his Karaka purchase; that is different country altogether.

91. Reference was made to frosts at Hamilton, and you gave us the figures of the records: seeing that Taupo is 1,000 ft. higher than Hamilton, the frosts there would be correspondingly more severe?—The records there have been kept, and can be got; they were put in by the Forestry Department.

92. I take it that as a natural conclusion the frosts would be higher at Taupo owing to its higher elevation?—I would say that our climate is colder than the Waikato climate, but it is a calmer climate, and I do not think there is any material difference.

93. You were defending the construction of this railway and suggesting that it would increase the tourist traffic. You suggested an itinerary to continue on to the Main Trunk line and down the Wanganui River?—They will have to break their journey to see the sights and to join the Main Trunk line.

94. But this railway runs on the opposite side of the river to most of the sights?—No.

95. It is on the opposite side of the river to Wairakei?—Yes, but the distance to Wairakei is quite small. It goes through all the principal sights.

96. How can you suggest that the railway would serve the tourist traffic better than the motor-car? With the car the tourist can start from Rotorua and stop at Waiotapu, Huka Falls, Aratiatia Rapids, and finish up at Taupo in the evening. Would you suggest that a railway-train would stop for the convenience of tourists in order that they could go off and see the sights at these places and come back to the train again?—No; I did not want to minimize the advantages of the motor, but the railway, on the other hand, has advantages. In bad weather it is a better means of travelling, and for the very wealthy class of tourist who carry a ton of luggage—some carry their wardrobes with them—and a railway suits that class of person. Motor charges are about as dear as first-class railway fares, but not so cheap as second class, and invalids would much prefer to go by train. Taupo is a most