

104. Well, supposing for argument's sake that £10 an acre had to be written off £30, that would leave the land, after an expenditure of £30, at a value of approximately £20 an acre : whatever the amount is would be really the true value of the land ?—It would be difficult to estimate the average. Some of the country will be payable, some will be only partly payable, and no doubt, if the scheme goes on, an attempt will be made to break in a very considerable area, on which heavy loss will be shown.

105. From all the figures you have given I have come to this conclusion — I may be wrong, and if so I want you to correct me : that you see no justification from the present outlook for the Government to decide to reverse its action in stopping this railway, and to go on with its construction. You know no reason why that should be done ?—I do not think the construction of the railway is likely to improve the position very appreciably from the settlement standpoint at the present time.

106. Do you see anything likely in the near future to alter that ?—A good deal will depend on the success or otherwise of features that I understand are in the air at the present time, which will take some years.

107. For the next six to ten years the matter should be in abeyance ?—From the farming standpoint.

108. *Mr. Makitanara.*] Would I be correct in saying that the proposed railway would be of no use whatever as an outlet for the produce of the Hautu land ?—One is viewing that the conveyance of goods to the prison farm will come from the National Park, particularly as I understand that in the near future, with the opening-up of the forest country, not far from Ketetahi, there will be back loading.

109. *Mr. Vaile.*] Are you a practical farmer, or have you been one ?—I know nothing about farming.

110. You are only a scientist ?—I have been for twenty-five years in the Department of Agriculture. I have probably been on more farms than any other person in New Zealand, and I have a good bowing acquaintance with farm practice over the whole of New Zealand.

111. With regard to the cost of bringing this land in : you put it at £30 an acre. That is the essence of the whole question. I take it that in the case of £15 the chances are vastly improved ?—They would naturally be improved.

112. What is the fencing required for a 6-acre paddock—how many chains ?—You laid it down that it ran to about £4. I have not gone into it actually. I have got estimates.

113. Would it not be 32 chains ?—Yes.

114. And that fence is useful equally with the next 6 acres ?—You are taking only half the fencing—yes.

115. What is the cost of fencing-in the country ?—I do not know the actual cost.

116. But you know it approximately ? Is it less in that country than any other ? Totara posts can be delivered to me at £7 15s. the hundred ?—The cost for fencing varies from about £1 8s. a chain to about £2 5s. a chain in New Zealand.

117. If I undertook to put up all the fencing you wanted, eight-wire fencing, for £1 5s. a chain, would you accept that offer ?—One would consider that that was reasonable.

118. All your figures are very extravagant ?—I do not think they are particularly extravagant.

119. New buildings you put down at £750 ?—Yes.

120. Why £750 ?—That is what I want to know, too.

121. Do you think that some of the unemployed, who have been sleeping in the parks and in shelters, would be content to live in the houses which they themselves could put up ?—In our opinion they should be content, if they are going to have a chance of a permanent livelihood. The amount for buildings could, in my opinion, be considerably reduced, but in discussing the matter with numerous people they are apparently extremely averse to that.

122. I think those men would be delighted to live in the houses they could put up themselves, for £150, and that £100 would provide them with a good cow-shed ?—You are stating that to me, but I really do not know. I can foresee considerable discontent if we are endeavouring to settle these people on what a pioneer is prepared for.

123. You think these men would expect the State to provide them with much better living-accommodation than a free and independent citizen is content with ?—I do not know what a free and independent citizen is content with.

124. Do you consider that your knowledge of New Zealand is equal to that of a man like Mr. H. M. Martin ?—No. Mr. Martin gave, or attempted to give, the per-acre cost, and in very few instances do per-acre costs work out on the farm basis, or anywhere near it.

125. I am trying to ascertain how your figures are made up. Why should not your figures for fencing be £50, or £5 ?—Various estimates have been made by me recently. I must admit that they are mere estimates, and I may be overestimating or underestimating.

126. If practical men like Mr. Martin, Mr. Butcher, Mr. Parsons, or myself, who have actually done this work, say that the work could be done, with fencing complete, for £7 ?—But you mean in 100-acre paddocks ?

127. In 50-acre paddocks ?—That is not enough.

128. Well, say 20-acre paddocks. What is enough ?—If that country is to do decent butterfat production it will have to be subdivided far more than that ?—My estimate may be a very long way off the mark. The only reason why I consider that they are nearer the mark on a farm basis than some of the other estimates, is that if your estimates for fully-developed country are reasonable, why has not the place been rushed ?

129. We have got to the point of £7 an acre. The buildings have to be added. On a 200-acre farm what do you reckon is necessary as a per-acre cost ? I do not mean either living in a palace or living in a hut ?—I do not really know.