

over what area the cows were milked to get those returns. You must think not of the number of settlers, but the area of land they are utilizing to get those returns.

257. These are the returns for last year?—That is all right. The land was available last year.

258. Are all the sections at Reporoa now occupied?—Practically all now. There are four sections on the east side of Reporoa that are not occupied—sections of 621 acres, 849 acres, 779 acres, and 701 acres—and that land is valued at 5s. an acre.

259. Are they available for application at 5s. an acre?—Some of them. We gave some of them out the other day. It has been considered whether we would not be able to give the land to the settlers on the pumice country.

260. As a matter of fact, that land has not been available for some time past?—It was available for a long time.

261. But not lately?—Well, we have had only one application for one particular section, and we have granted that application.

262. You spoke of unseasonable frosts: Have you ever seen one?—Once, particularly when on your property, I think you expressed your regret that the frost was so severe that it accounted for the condition of the pastures.

263. What time of the year was that?—About January of either 1927 or 1928. You particularly emphasized your regret that the unexpected frost accounted for the poor look of the pastures. There were also five members of the Land Board there.

264. Have you ever yourself seen one of these unseasonable frosts?—Yes, quite frequently. I can remember quite a lot.

265. Have you ever seen summer frosts affect pasture?—I have that.

266. What was the occasion of Mr. Alexander's visit to Auckland?—I have explained that he came up as a delegate from the Reporoa settlers who were applying for revaluation. As a matter of fact, the Board had already decided to give him a revaluation.

267. Anyhow, he was there as a suppliant for a reduction in the price of his land?—Exactly.

268. You have told us something about farms not paying: Do you know any farm in New Zealand which, if debited with all charges, and interest on capital, can be said to pay?—I know many farmers who have made good, and I know farmers to-day who have been making good with their own capital and borrowed money.

269. What proportion of farm accounts would stand that test, of interest and all expenses, including the farmer's wages for himself and his family?—You could take interest on the cost of the land, interest on the stock, and top-dressing, and cost of general maintenance, repairs, replacement of stock, labour if any, and a living for the farmer and his wife and family. Of course, they may use some of the produce of the farm in their living.

270. Well, what proportion of farms would pay?—If they are well farmed the majority of farms will pay. I am not speaking, of course, about farms bought in the boom, at high prices.

271. Do you know Mr. F. R. Bould, who was a Stock Inspector?—Yes.

272. Do you think he has any knowledge of the area?—He has not the same opportunities of getting into the financial position of settlers as I have. His duties did not give him any opportunity of prying into the financial position of the farmers.

273. Was he not a practical farmer before he became an Inspector?—He may have been—I do not know.

274. Mr. Bould says it is the best clover country he has seen. Do you think he knows what he was talking about?—Tokoroa is good clover country, but clover can be a disease.

275. Asked whether he thought it could be put in cheaply, he said "Exceedingly cheaply." Do you think he knew what he was talking about?—Had he had practical experience in putting it in? You can put the first pasture in cheaply, but the land will not hold the pasture.

276. Do you know Mr. H. M. Martin?—Yes, and I have great respect for him.

277. He gave evidence that he started with £150 capital, and he has made a great success. Are you aware that he represented Rotorua on the dairy company's directorate?—Yes. He has not the opportunity of getting at farmers' private affairs that I have.

278. When he was Chairman of the Revaluation Board do you think he inquired into the settlers' affairs?—Remember how quickly the Revaluation Boards had to go over the sections. They made cursory inspections, and had to take a man's statements for granted. They had not the opportunity of studying a man's position and personal ability from year to year, therefore they were at a disadvantage. I do not attach any importance to revaluations of that kind. I say that Mr. Martin would not have the information at his disposal that he would have if he had made a study of each farm for two or three years.

279. What would you consider to be a fair quantity of beef to fatten in winter on swedes per acre?—It depends upon how many acres of swedes.

280. Suppose there are 100 acres of swedes?—It depends upon the land. I have heard you state that you feed 115.

281. The number is 150, on 81 acres, and forty-five more nearly ready. I think that is pretty good going. Can you suggest any other area in New Zealand superior to the pumice country for settlement on a large scale?—I would answer you in another way, and say that the only land I know that I consider inferior to the pumice area is the steep area in North Taranaki.

282. What about North Auckland?—I would say that the gum lands of North Auckland are superior to Taupo, when you consider their climate. I am certain there are better opportunities there.

283. Make a comparison with the Waikato. Could you give an approximate estimate of the quantity of manure that has been put on the Waikato pastures from the commencement?—I suppose