

it. I respectfully ask you to dismiss from your minds the evidence of Michael Joseph Galvin and Mr. Cockayne. The claim for this railway, I respectfully submit, can be defeated only by misrepresentation and ignorance—by the misrepresentation of Mr. Galvin and by the ignorance of Mr. Cockayne. They seek to compare country which has been developed for three-quarters of a century, and upon which an average of from 3 to 5 tons of manure to the acre has been used, with country which is undeveloped, and upon which no manure has been put. The comparison is by no means a fair one. We want to get before us one of the old Waikato farmers who knew Matamata and similar country before it was settled and developed. I want to instance the opinion formerly held of the Waikato, Matamata, and Karaka land. I have sold Karaka land at 1s. an acre, and Horsham Downs land for 2s. 6d., and again for 10s. an acre—land which to-day is worth a great deal more, simply through the application of manure and skilful farming.

6. *Mr. Samuel.*] It is worth from £40 to £60 an acre to-day?—Yes; and I say that if we have faith and foresight the same expenditure and treatment will give the same results in the pumice area. In Emerson's great essay on "Power" he remarks: "A feeble man can see the farms that are fenced and tilled, the houses that are built. The strong man sees the possible houses and farms; his eye makes estates." Now, sir, these Government witnesses are the feeble men; they cannot see any possibilities in this country. The early pioneers are the strong men who have seen the farms and made the estates. They are there to be seen if you will come to look at them. Then we have the evidence of Mr. Campbell. I have told you of the views of the Tokoroa people, that if this large area of country comes on to the market it will interfere with the sale of their land. Mr. Campbell's company does not farm, it is purely a company to break in that country and sell it to actual settlers at a profit, and his business will be interfered with, naturally, if a million acres comes on to the market at a cheap rate. I submit that the viewpoint of people in already settled areas has something of this implication in it. The owners of those lands would sooner give up portions of them for close settlement, and thereby increase the value of the rest of their land, than see people going into entirely new territory. Now we come to forestry: We have the evidence of Mr. Goudie, late Conservator of Forests, who knows more about these forests than any other person on earth. He has shown you the immense quantities of timber available; he has shown you that these forests will yield 540 million feet per annum, equal to about twice the cutting of all the mills in New Zealand to-day. Mr. Knutzen has shown you by unshaken evidence that in the Mokai Valley there are 580 million feet of timber in addition to the Taupo Totara Timber Co.'s holding. He has also shown you that there are other bushes—Tumanui, Paeroa, Runanga, Opawa, and others. The Government's estimate of the Paeroa bush was 10 million feet. I have produced letters from Mr. Langguth, who has been milling in this bush, but whose mill was shut down. He has shown that his actual cutting was 11,000 ft. to the acre, and that there are 22½ million feet of timber in his portion of the timber.

*The Chairman:* The letters referred to are not evidence before the Committee.

*Mr. Samuel:* Which letters.

*The Chairman:* The letters which this Committee permitted Mr. Vaile to hand in for its own information when deliberating on the evidence.

*Mr. Vaile:* But he can comment on them.

*The Chairman:* That is so.

*Mr. Vaile:* I am quite an amateur at this, as I said. I seem somewhat in the position of the witness in the Supreme Court at Auckland: under cross-examination he became bewildered and turned to the Judge saying (referring to the lawyers), "These men are experts, but I am only trying to tell the truth." I am somewhat in the same position—trying in my amateur way to bring out the truth of this matter. May I say that Mr. Langguth estimates the timber in that property at 22½ million feet; and it is portion of this same bush which the Forestry Department says contains only 10 million feet. Further, a portion of Langguth's bush was assessed by the Forestry Department itself for payment to the Natives for the timber at 9,000 ft. to the acre: there is about 10,000 acres in the bush, and it is easy to work that out. Now, the Government witnesses from the Forestry Department have admitted that immense quantities of thinnings are immediately available for transport, but they say that they are unsaleable. Under cross-examination they admit they have not made any effort to sell them; they have not advertised them or offered them to anybody: they are waiting for people to rush them for these thinnings. But that is not the way to do business. Any business firm would see that they are put on the market. They have not even taken the trouble to go to places in the district where these thinnings have been used and have proved of great value, and to see the result of the use of this timber. I submit that their evidence to the effect that these thinnings are unsaleable is valueless. But the most remarkable thing about the evidence of the Forestry Department is that it is not only different but absolutely contradictory to the evidence that officers of the same Department have always previously given. Captain Ellis, who was the Director of Forestry, the head of the Department, in giving evidence on oath before the 1921 Commission, said, "Felling is now available"; and he added that by 1930 or 1932 from 12½ million to 30 million feet of timber per annum will be available.

7. *Mr. Jenkins.*] Was that thinnings or timber?—Timber: he said, "Felling is now available." Now this junior officer of the Department comes forward, and when I asked him the question he said that Captain Ellis did not know what he was talking about. Before the 1922 Commission Mr. Goudie gave evidence for the Forestry Department, and he produced a plan marked into squares upon which the timber in each square was estimated, the total being 4,000 million feet. Now the Forestry Department says there is not more than 113 million feet within reach of the railway. Which evidence are you going to believe? One or the other is glaringly false: there can be no compromise possible between 113 million and 4,000 million feet. Again, the Forestry Department stressed the necessity for this railway, when 27,500 acres were planted with exotics. How much more necessary is it now that 153,000 acres have been planted. I ask you to regard the evidence given before this Committee as valueless on that point. Now we come to the tourist traffic. We have a letter from the Wairakei Company showing the very large number of tourists that stay at the hotel in each year: that is one