

251. Consequently, there is not the same necessity for mining reserves as in the earlier time?—Far more ground could be worked now than could have been by the men in the early days.

252. Do you think the former conditions will obtain as when the men were earning £5?—No; but I think the people will be satisfied if they can get a claim which will pay small wages, and with plenty of water they will manage to make a livelihood.

253. You say that with plenty of water they will be able to earn £1 a week?—Men will work for that in anticipation of getting something better.

254. How many acres are worked for gold to-day in B1, Block 220?—I could not tell how many.

255. Are you aware that that block is 32,000 acres in extent?—I do not remember how many acres there are.

256. Are the claims granted in such a peculiar way that there is no record kept?—There is no record except under distinct titles. The miners take up their claims under their miners' rights.

257. Do you think that within a reasonable time the block will be worked for gold-mining?—I could not tell. I know it is one of the reserves that are auriferous, that is, on the evidence of the Warden and the Inspector of Mines, who visited the place lately.

258. That is merely opinion?—No.

259. Has the ground been proved?—That has been what we have got from the Warden. He knows, and states that there are actual workings there.

260. On certain parts only?—He does not refer to certain portions, but as to the whole.

261. It is a block that has hardly ever been explored?—Certainly not. I know that there are people working in different places on it.

262. Have you any telegram or report from the Warden as to this block?—I know that the telegram we have got refers to the piece between Blackball and the river. [Telegram from Warden Keddell already in evidence. See page 13 of Evidence.]

263. When the company applied for Block 220, was their application referred to you to report upon?—It is very likely.

264. Was it referred to you?—It is very likely I have seen it, but I do not recollect the particular block.

265. How long ago is that?—It is a good while ago.

266. Are most of these questions referred to you before they are refused?—Well, I think I have had to go through the most of them.

267. Have you to produce evidence to satisfy the Minister as to whether they have been rightly or wrongfully refused?—Yes.

268. Can you produce the report on this particular block?—I cannot recollect the report. I may have seen it.

269. Could you look it up?—I could look it up, of course.

270. Is it a fact that, as soon as ever the news came out from Home that the Black Ball Company was floated, and it had got the money, many applications were made for business-licenses between the coal-leases and the river, on land which would have been the most suitable place for a township?—I do not know anything about that.

271. Well, for residence-areas?—I cannot speak from my own knowledge of anything of the sort. I know there are some residence-areas there.

272. Is it a fact that a great many people applied for residence-areas, and got them, who are not actually engaged in mining?—They are not actually engaged in mining perhaps, but they get their livelihood from the mines in some shape or form.

273. From gold-mining or coal-mining?—Partly from both.

274. But principally from the coal-mines?—I would not say that. They have hitherto got their livelihood from gold-mining.

275. Under the contract, was not the company supposed to have all the benefit from the increased value of township land?—I do not know whether that is so or not.

276. At Arnold Flat a shaft was sunk by a man called Livingstone. You said a hundred shafts would have to be sunk to prove that ground. Do you think that the shaft sunk by Livingstone would prove it?—It would be no proof whatever the sinking of one shaft; he might have got on payable ground—within ten yards of it.

277. Why did you think he would not sink a second shaft, or half a dozen shafts, to prove it?—I do not know.

278. You said that the timber could be put down at £1 per acre, and that was the whole value of the land. Is that so?—The land must have some value; but it is very little.

279. Then, if the timber is taken off, the land has no value at all?—It must have some value.

280. No appreciable value?—The timber is the more valuable portion of it.

281. Do you know that the evidence sent to London by the Railway League stated that the land valued to us at 10s. an acre in that area would bring at least £1 an acre if it was cleared, and irrespective of the timber, which was put down at from £3 to £5 an acre?—There are small patches that may be referred to; but, if you take the whole of the blocks, I do not think you would get £1 an acre.

282. You said there was a certain amount of flat lands up there suitable for settlement?—If you gave that away you would stop the mining. You want a place for tailings.

283. You want to destroy good agricultural land with mining operations?—There is very little agricultural land there.

284. Good grazing land would be destroyed with mining operations, and grazing land that would otherwise go to the company?—I do not know that. It certainly ought to be included, because mining could not be carried on without it.

285. If you say it is valued at nothing, are we to infer that the evidence sent to London was