

50. Do you know a little creek at the south-eastern corner, close to Section 7, marked with a dotted line on the map? I think they call it Chinaman's Creek?—Yes; there was a small creek there where one Chinaman was prospecting, but he got no gold, and abandoned it. He prospected it for about three weeks, I think.

51. Now, take the next block, Landing Creek. There is a hatched portion of 1,560 acres. The other portion of 51 you say is an ample reserve for all mining requirements in the future. On the eastern portion of this block the county track is shown, and to the west of the county track, between that and the Inangahua River, there is not a single European working. I think there are about ten Chinamen prospecting and fossicking in what I think are called the Tim's and the St. Helena Creeks. That place has been thoroughly prospected by Europeans, and completely abandoned by them.

52. Is there anything characteristic about the land in Block 51?—It is valley land of good soil. There are several clearings about the river-beds where the land has been sold. There are large pakihis in the centre of the bush, where there are cattle grazing. I do not know who they belong to, but I think there must have been a hundred head of cattle thriving on the land when I was there.

53. Do you think the land fit for settlement, and that it would be readily taken up?—Yes; even in its present state the land supplies natural grass to fatten cattle.

54. Do you think the Government could have marked off these blocks in the same manner you have done? I am taking now the whole of the blocks from Arnold to Landing Creek?—I do not see the slightest difficulty in it. The nature of the country is easily seen, and the auriferous portions clearly defined, and I found no difficulty in making these hatchings.

55. The next block, I think, is the Westport Block [plan of block, Exhibit 95, put in]. Now Mr. Daniels, will you say what you think?—To the south of Fox's River there are no mining operations at all, and there are no rights existing. There are four men working on the beach, black-sanding. That is the whole population, and they are outside the block, on the beach reservation. North of Fox's River I think there is some working, but it is confined to old workings.

56. Would you kindly describe the nature of the old workings?—The old workings consist of beach lead.

57. At an elevation of?—Varying from 200ft. to 400ft. going up country from the level of the sea. By the general upheaval of the land the whole beach has been raised.

58. Is that where the men are at work—on that beach in Block 6?—The majority of the men are working on the present beach itself. Four or five men are working on the old beach; but the whole ground has been worked, and a considerable amount of gold has been taken from the land. That small stretch of country had a population of some thousands of miners, but in a very few months the ground was worked out.

59. Now we come to Block 5. We will deal with the hatched portion in one lump. Please describe the workings on the southern boundary of Block 5 on the Nile River?—The whole consists of old beach formation, and the back portion of the block—that is, the eastern portion of the old beach—is in the form of cement. The sand has been cemented together, and they are called "cement-workings." At present there are a number of light stampers at work crushing it. All the workings are within the western portion of the portion left unhatched. I might explain that, with the exception of the Argyle Water-race, which is taken from the 4-mile, there is no mining race inside the hatched portion. The Argyle Race is shown running through to the Government dam, now the County Council dam.

60. Hon. E. BLAKE.] Did you make any reservation of it?—There is no special reservation but it is shown as running through the hatched portion. The ordinary reserve is about 10ft. on each side. With the exception of that right, there are no mining rights in the hatched portion. There are 3,000 acres there not required for mining purposes.

61. Mr. Jones.] How many men would you say are mining on Block 5?—Between sixty and seventy.

62. You reserved in one long strip a piece of ground, 3,000 acres in Block 5 and 4,900 in 6?—Yes. The whole of that land is limestone, high-terraced land, but level on the top.

63. Is it higher or lower than the land which you have allowed as properly reserved for mining purposes?—Considerably higher.

64. Are there any portions of it cleared and in cultivation—I do not mean where it is marked down at the bottom of the map?—Within the hatched I do not know of any. At the back or left portion, at Fox's River, there are cleared areas.

65. Do you know of any clearings before you get to the White Horse Terrace?—I think that is in the ground admitted for gold-mining purposes, and I do not think it comes in the hatched portion. There are clearings all along there from Brighton—gardens and paddocks. I think this land is on the outside of the hatched or western portion.

66. You do not know of anything to the east of that line [indicated on map]?—No; it is cleared land.

67. Have you examined Block 4 carefully [Exhibit 96]?—Yes, very carefully.

68. Running up the coast-line where you have made reserves, will you give reasons for making them?—On the Shetland beach, a mile above the River Nile, there is a large settlement of Shetlanders, and I am glad to say that they appear to be doing very well. They work on the beach.

Hon. E. BLAKE: We do not want any evidence from you concerning the accuracy of the reservations. It is where you dispute the Government claim that we want to hear from you.

Witness: In the portion marked "hatched" I can state positively that there are no mining operations. There is one claim on the Virgin Flat, marked "John Collins." They have never got any gold, and it was abandoned years ago. That is the only mining right existing in the hatched portion in Block 4. A reservation has been allowed by me for the Shamrock lead, but I am not quite certain that the Shamrock lead is in this block. I think it is outside. On the plan it is shown on the block.