

to whether any particular area or particular locality was within the area of the block or not?—We had a prismatic compass with us. We were able to take the bearings more or less accurately. We judged our chainages, and we were fairly expert in judging distances.

244. You mean you decided them by your rate of progress on foot?—Yes, and by the eye.

245. By guessing with the eye?—And by taking the bearings with the prismatic compass. That is about all we could do. We had not a theodolite, and we did not chain the ground. In the first place, we were supplied from the office with maps, showing more or less certain information, and we knew when we came to a point that the boundary might be a mile or half a mile beyond it. We had not a theodolite on these surveys.

246. You had a distance on the maps, and some of them you could pick up?—Yes.

247. That would only apply in some cases?—Yes.

248. That is the information you had to enable you to decide whether particular workings were inside or outside the boundaries of particular blocks?—Yes.

249. Anything more?—We are fairly satisfied that the information on the maps are correct, and in accordance with the detailed survey of the country in the block areas.

250. I suppose it was not a detailed survey of the country, enabling the Government to lay off the kind of blocks you have suggested?—No; because we have taken only "features" chiefly. This work could be run at very little expense.

251. How long do you estimate it would have taken to run off all these boundaries which you have laid down as being sufficient?—I cannot answer that question. It is more one for a surveyor to answer.

252. The reason I ask is, that you had no difficulty in offering a positive opinion that there would be no difficulty in the Government doing what you have done?—Not the least.

253. As I understand your evidence, the principle upon which you have selected these reservations is, that you have made no reservations excepting where there was an existing area containing workings, or, at any rate, past workings, on the ground in some part of the reservation?—No, that is not so.

254. Will you give me a single instance—I have followed you pretty closely—of any reservation having been made which has not within its boundaries workings of more or less extent? Is there one?—I do not understand the question.

255. I ask, whether in the portions you have selected as proper reservations for the Government you have marked off one of those reserves that has within its boundaries workings, old or new?—We have in this way: there is not one mine that is omitted in our boundaries of the blocks.

256. Will you indicate one of your reserves, if I might call it so, which does not contain within its boundaries workings, past or present?—No, the blocks are there, and the patches of gold are more or less confined to narrow leads. In some cases we have allowed about 5,000 acres, and there may be two or three narrow leads in that 5,000. As I stated before, there may be 4,000 acres out of that 5,000 that are not required for mining purposes—that is, between the blocks.

257. That is to say you professed to allow a liberal margin. The principle upon which you located your reserves is that there are within the area workings either past or present?—Yes.

258. Would you like to say that there is no block reserved by the Government on the West Coast in which there is no working that is certain not to pay in the future?—I say that these are blocks that have been reserved by the Government, which, from the prospects and what I have seen of them, and my knowledge of likely land, will not, I am prepared to say, pay for working.

259. It comes to this: you say that there is no prospect, at least, any reasonable prospect of paying?—There is no indication of it.

260. You say no indication. There were no indications and no prospect of future payable workings?—Yes.

261. I will give you an example so as to make it quite clear. You considered wherever there had been old workings. There have been in the past, and still are, near the Township of Kumara, gold-workings, and there are some blocks reserved near to that township. Do you say you saw no indication, or practically no indication, of auriferous gold? Would you like to say that none of those blocks near Kumara will never afford a payable goldfield?—There is not the slightest indication to myself or to anybody that I have spoken to in Kumara at the present time, and the blocks have been thoroughly prospected.

262. I understand you to say that in no case where you have hatched portions of the sections is there any reasonable possibility of future workings?—What I said was, on the hatched portions there are no mining rights existing at the present time—that no payable gold is being taken from them, and that there are no men working there.

263. You entirely give your evidence on the basis of what is existing; now, I ask you to consider as to the future. Do you say that on the portions which have been hatched by you throughout there is no possibility—or no reasonable possibility—of future working?—If you put in the words "reasonable possibility" I will agree with you.

264. Are any of the blocks likely to be affected in the future for water-supply, so as to make these blocks which are not payable now payable in the future?—I will answer that question generally, that, so far as the hatched portions are concerned, there is no water to be obtained that would command them except at such an expense that they would not pay to work.

265. It is not practicable, then, in the future to make any of the hatched portions of these blocks payable even with an additional water-supply?—As far as I know, no.

266. Of course, the water-supply is the very life of the alluvial mining industry?—Yes.

267. Again, I put an illustration near Kumara: Taking the blocks of the company on the eastern side of Kumara, do you say if water-races were extended further towards the sea they would or would not open up any further auriferous country?—It is possible, but allowance has been made in the reserves for that. Towards the foot of Sandy's Hill, if they bring up water there, they may get payable gold; but ample allowance has been made for that.