

in the future?—For this reason: I do not know of any hatched portion in existence where the ground contains payable wash. No miner can point me out a single acre on the portions we have hatched; and, if there was any, it would be so much above the general run of the creek-beds that it would cost thousands of pounds to bring the water to it.

297. Hon. E. BLAKE.] First you say there is nothing to sluice, and secondly, there is nothing to sluice it with?—Yes.

298. *Mr. Gully.*] There is no necessity to make any provision at all?—As far as I know, no; and as far as anybody I have spoken to about it on the Coast, no.

299. What is the largest area of land covered by tailings on any particular line?—I think the largest area would be down about Ross.

300. Could you give us any estimate of the area of the largest tailing-deposit there?—It is fairly large; but, of course, 50 or 60 or 100 acres look like an enormous amount of tailings. It depends upon the height of the wash.

301. You do not know what amount you want?—Yes, if you know the height of the wash. When you work an acre, the next acre fills the place you have worked out.

302. What do you consider is the lowest percentage of gold which would make the alluvial workings on the Coast payable?—It may depend upon the conditions. I am connected as a shareholder with two of the largest alluvial workings on the Coast at the present time.

303. Do you depend upon this?—Yes; and working on free water being given, and under generally favourable circumstances, you will find that 4d. a yard, or about two grains to the yard, pays ordinary working-expenses. That is, a cubic yard, or a little more than a ton, pays working-expenses, but allows nothing for interest or for the depreciation of plant—simply pays wages.

304. Now, is that less by proportion than would have been payable some years ago?—Three-halfpence a yard would pay under these conditions if you had a bank of about 150ft. or 200ft. in front, and if you had a clear fall and rapid clearance for tailings and an unlimited supply of water for which you had to pay nothing.

305. You mean under special circumstances?—Yes, you might make it pay working-expenses.

306. But what I am asking is as to the present moment. Is it not at present a fact there is a further percentage than was payable five years ago?—No, I do not think there is any alteration.

307. Ten years ago?—No, I do not think there is any alteration.

308. I am speaking of this: Is there any process, I do not say on the West Coast, known as to reefing as well as alluvial mining?—There is really no improvement, but there is a better application of processes.

309. I am speaking of alluvial mining?—In the principle there is not the slightest difference.

310. Then you say that the scientific improvements that apply to quartz-mining do not apply to alluvial mining?—No; of course the separation of the gold from the sand is purely a mechanical process. Of course they have in the larger claims to put more stuff through; but the process is the same as twenty years ago.

311. Has the cyanide process been applied here on the West Coast?—Not to the alluvial workings.

312. Not to sand?—Yes, so far as the quartz-mines, it has been applied.

313. To sand on the beach?—Not to my knowledge.

314. Then you do not make any allowance for alluvial deposits being payable which are not payable now, by reason of any improvement in the process?—The alluvial product is so very small that I do not think any possible improvement can take place to affect the question. For instance, under certain circumstances a grain of gold may, in some particular case, pay working-expenses, but I know no land at present not taken up, or that we have not allowed for, that shows more than—that shows 2d. a yard.

315. Do you say you have specially prospected the hatched area so that you are able to say that it does not show, say, 2d. a ton? Do you say that you have sufficiently prospected it to give that information decisively?—Yes. I want to explain.

316. *Mr. Gully.*] You want to explain to modify. You will be re-examined, and can explain at great length. Did you prospect over all that block?—It depends again on what you mean by prospecting.

317. Did you prospect every block?—I examined every block.

318. Did you prospect every block?—Well, will you allow me to ask a question? If I saw a piece of limestone I should not try it.

319. I ask you. You say you examined every block; that is begging the question. You might have walked over it. Do you not understand what prospecting is?—I want to know your sense.

320. It is the ordinary sense, and I have no doubt you see it in that sense?—No; some do not require it.

321. How many of them did you prospect: more than one?—Yes; more than one.

322. Perhaps two?—More than two.

323. Or even three?

Hon. E. BLAKE: As near as you can.

Witness: I know, probably, from twenty to twenty-five blocks. I am interested in them—know them thoroughly.

324. *Mr. Gully.*] I have been asking information as to the Midland Railway?—I did not require to prospect because I knew the returns, and that it was not necessary.

325. To be more positive: how many of these hatched areas did you prospect, and make your examination for the Midland Railway?—You would have to let me go over the maps to give the answer, there are so many hatched areas. We are only trying to get at the value.

Hon. E. BLAKE: It is not necessary for you to give the values of the hatched areas—only how much you prospected.