

152. You have been thirty years in the Grey district?—Going on for thirty-two now.

153. Do you recollect the No Town district, Nelson Creek, O'Callaghan's, Orwell Creek, Half-ounce, Duffer's, Napoleon's, and Waituna?—I cannot say I have been to Waituna; I know about the others.

154. Moonlight?—A little; and Blackball.

155. Do you recollect all those places in the palmy days?—Yes. At that time they were lively places; now they are dead and buried, and the houses are monuments, in a manner.

156. Hon. E. BLAKE.] Are you living there?—I am living in Greymouth.

157. *Mr. Jones.*] The population in those days was very large, was it not?—Very large in the Grey Valley in those days.

158. As a practical miner, you know the unworked portion of the Grey Valley district?—I have a fair knowledge of it; for instance, the Arnold Flat has been prospected several times and nothing got out of it, in fact, the conclusion I have come to is that there is really nothing in the valley to make it payable for gold-mining purposes. In the past the storekeepers have been standing by the men until they have become bankrupt or nearly so, and the whole place is cleared out in a manner. If the capital spent in the mining had been spent in agricultural pursuits the people would have been in a far better position than they are at the present time.

159. I suppose these remarks pretty well apply to the Grey Valley?—Yes; to those portions of it.

160. Do you think it necessary, in order to give an opinion as to the payable nature of the country in the Grey Valley, that you should prospect over every few yards of the country?—Not at all.

161. Why not?—We generally look for gold in leads, and when we get to a lead it generally runs parallel with another, and if we work that and see that there is no gold, what is the use of prospecting it?

162. What do you think of the leads in the Grey Valley?—They have run out, and men have been trying to pick them up again, but have not succeeded.

163. And they have done that for years?—Yes; for years and years.

164. Have you known any new ground outside old workings which has been discovered in the Grey Valley during the last ten or fifteen years?—I really do not know of any except Ahaura Flat, somewhere near Riverview. There has been a bit of a rush there I have heard, and that is the only piece of new ground that I know of.

165. Do you know that part of the country well?—Yes; I know a little about it.

166. In company with Mr. Fraser you made a detailed statement, as accurate as you could, of the dams and water-races, with the owners' names?—As far as we could get them.

167. Yes; in Block 89?—Yes.

168. And portions of Block 88?—Yes.

168a. Have you compared that printed tabulated form with your note-book with Mr. Fraser?—So far as Block 88, yes. There are printers' errors in it. In one place they have 30 chains in place of 30ft.

169. Have you not been through them?—Yes, up to the North Beach, which I have not completed.

[By permission of the Court, it was arranged that this part of the witness's evidence should be postponed, in order to allow errors in the printed form to be corrected and compared.]

170. *Mr. Stringer.*] You have been living in Greymouth, have you not?—Yes.

171. For how long?—Since July, 1865, round and about. My home is in Greymouth.

172. You spoke of being a miner on and off for the last thirty years?—Yes.

173. What have you been doing in the way of mining of recent years?—I have not been mining within about six or seven years.

174. For the last six or seven years you have not done any mining?—No.

175. What has been your occupation during the last few years?—Whatever came in my way. I was open for anything that came along.

176. And the Midland Railway came along, and you were engaged on their behalf?—Well, quite naturally I should work for them if they offered me a situation. If the Government had come along I should have done the same thing. I have no interest in the Midland Railway Company—none whatever.

177. You were put on on the same terms as the others—£1 a day—while engaged working for the company?—Yes.

178. What is the usual current rate of wages in Greymouth?—I really could not tell you the current rate of wages. I work at various things.

179. You are Jack of all trades and master of none?—I am a perfect master of some.

180. Well, what is the current rate of wages for ordinary labouring men employed at mining? I really could not tell you.

181. If I said 8s. a day, would that be fair remuneration?—We have always been trying for 10s. We have carpenters contracting for less, but that is a matter of cut-throat work.

182. You knew, of course, in starting work for the company that they wished to prove that the reservations made by the Crown were all lands which were not auriferous, or likely to be so?—My instructions were only to look after the dams and races. I had nothing to do with the claims.

183. Your instructions were simply and solely to look after water-races and dams?—Yes; and anything we might see. But that was verbal.

184. Your main purpose was to take note of all races and dams, and the other matter you observed was merely incidental?—Incidental; that is to say, in Blocks 88 and 89.

185. Hon. E. BLAKE.] And in the other block?—The instructions for 85 were to look to the dams and water-races, and also to claims.

186. *Mr. Stringer.*] That is, existing claims?—Yes; existing claims.