

66. This blue patch was not put on the map until the end of 1884 or beginning of 1885; why had not this population attacked the development of this enormous wealth?—I think if the railway was constructed the population would have increased; but the place was isolated.

67. You say a great deal of the loss is due to the locking up of this land?—To a great extent.

68. Independently of the railway?—It must be so.

69. The locking-up of the land prior to 1884?—Yes.

70. You suggested that it was owing to the absence of the railway that it was locked up?—There were a great many reasons why that land had not been developed. We found subsequently that the wealth on the West Coast was beyond computation. So it must be considered on a different basis altogether.

71. You would not suggest, as has been suggested by a previous witness, that the fluctuations in the population on the West Coast are due to the want of land for settlement?—I think that where there is land for settlement it makes the population permanent.

72. This is essentially a gold-mining district?—Gold-mining and forests.

73. That would make a more fluctuating population?—As far as gold-mining is concerned it would; but if those engaged in that industry had the means of settling down permanently they would do so.

74. Supposing this blue patch went away altogether, do you suggest that the fluctuation of the population would not have happened?—I think not.

75. Wholly prevent it?—I am not to be tempted into making mistakes. I want to speak exactly of what appears by the facts.

76. What I want to meet is this charge that the loss of population is due to the existence of the blue patch, and to show that it is not necessarily due to that, but to the nature of the population which is attracted elsewhere?—You might contend in that way.

77. You do not think it enters into the question very strongly?—I think it enters into it very strongly while the land is shut up. I do think that a gold-mining population where there is no chance of taking up land is a very unsettled population.

78. Are you aware that very considerable areas have been reserved for gold-mining purposes on the West Coast?—Yes.

79. About 600,000 acres in all along the Grey Valley. Do you know that under the Mines Act agricultural leases for seven years can be given away?—I believe so.

80. Do you know if the land which might so have been given is suitable for agricultural or pastoral purposes?—I do not know that there is very much agricultural land on the West Coast. I do not know that any one has suggested that the West Coast should be used as an agricultural district. Our contention is that the complement to the West Coast is the Canterbury agricultural district.

*Mr. Bell*: Is it not fair to point out that the Government did not reserve agricultural lands for mining purposes, and if they had it would have been a breach of the contract?

81. *Dr. Findlay*.] Quite so, but that is not my assertion. I only say the Governor might reserve 600,000 acres for mining purposes, and some of it might be agricultural, and, as I understand, a certain portion is agricultural, and is marked yellow on the map: (To witness): Do you know anything of the nature of that land?—No.

*Mr. Bell*: I ask the Committee whether it would not be right for me to put in here the remarks of Mr. Maxwell, on page 182 of the Appendix, on the matter on which Dr. Findlay says he gave his evidence; otherwise Mr. Roper's evidence will be misunderstood. I ask, further, whether it should not appear at the end of Mr. Roper's evidence?

[The Chairman read the evidence.]

*Dr. Findlay*: May I ask that the estimate, on page 180, of Mr. Gordon, from No. 7 to the end, be also put in?

*The Chairman*: I think if one goes in the other should also.

Agreed to by the Committee.

COMPARISON of ESTIMATES of the TRAFFIC and WORKING EXPENSES of Midland Railway Company's Line, East and West Coast Railway.

	Traffic Receipts.	Cost of Working and Maintenance.	Cr. or Dr.	Profit or Loss on Working.
	£	£		£
Midland Railway Company .. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .
Mr. McKerrow, Chief Commissioner of Railways .. .. .	58,850	43,990	Cr.	14,860
Mr. Maxwell, Commissioner of Railways .. .. .	85,000	65,000	Cr.	20,000
Mr. Gordon, Inspecting Engineer, Mines Department .. .. .	59,877	64,158	Dr.	4,281

*Extract from I.—7A, 1892, p. 182, put in by Mr. Bell.*

REMARKS by Mr. J. P. MAXWELL upon the Statement of Tables of Mr. H. A. Gordon's Statement (Number 2) embodied in the Hon. Mr. Seddon's Address.

*Remarks on Paper marked B 3, submitted to me in Mr. Kane's Memorandum of the 5th October, 1892.*

6th October, 1892.—Sir,—The nature of my evidence appears to be misrepresented. I explained particularly that I considered my estimate of profit to be for the first year's working, and that there would be a gradual increase with the growth of population. I estimated the profits of the Christchurch line at £20,000, and those of the Reefton line, if assumed similar to, say, Nelson, at about £4,000, allowing for the relative length of line: total, £24,000 a year. I made no mention of "an average" as the heading to the table wrongly alleges. I consider that it would be misleading and improper to introduce a table based on statements attributed to me which I did not make. I think the results of the table are misleading.—I have, &c., J. P. MAXWELL.

The Chairman, Public Accounts Committee.