

136. What royalty is allowed upon mining-timber?—The local bodies obtain a revenue upon certain timber.

137. Will you state the amount of royalty?—It varies according to the class of timber—kauri about 1s. 6d. per 100 ft., and rimu, I think, 6d.

138. *Mr. Moss.*] Do you receive any revenue from the Crown lands timber?—No.

139. Do you know if much of that timber carried to Waihi is taken from the Thames County and carted from the railway-station at Paeroa?—I believe some timber from the Thames County is brought by rail and carried to Waihi on the county roads.

140. Do you know the road to the Luck at Last Mine and the Mananu?—I know the site.

141. And the Muratoto?—Yes.

142. Do these roads run partly through the Thames and partly through Ohinemuri?—I not know about the Luck at Last.

143. Do they go through both counties?—Yes.

144. Do you know if the Thames County has been consulted in this matter?—I am not aware.

145. Neither you nor Mr. Kenny represent the Thames County?—No; there is no one here.

146. *The Chairman.*] What is the amount of revenue from rates in the Ohinemuri County?—I think it would be better to leave that to the Clerk.

147. You get a subsidy from the Government for rates?—Yes.

148. If you get a share of the Waihi gold duty will this stop the subsidy from the General Government?—It will reduce our claims.

149. If you get a larger revenue from gold duty from the Waihi Borough, will it have the effect of stopping the subsidy from the Government?—I hope not, but it will reduce our claim.

150. *Mr. Herries.*] If this Bill goes through and you do get a proportion of the Waihi gold duty, will you still insist upon the award of £4,300 being paid?—That has nothing to do with the gold duty. It was made under the Public Works Act. The Commission was set up under that Act, and they made the award.

151. Do you not consider the gold duty in lieu of rates?—To a certain extent.

152. And when a mining township has an award like that it is paid out of gold duty?—Yes.

153. At the present time you get £4,300 out of gold duty?—That is the maximum limit we may get paid.

154. How much had they paid you on adjustment of accounts?—When the borough was formed the county overdraft was £12,000. Of that the Waihi Borough paid £1,594 as their share, but the adjustment of accounts did not take place till about fifteen months after the formation of the borough, and they had to pay us the two-thirds of the cost of maintaining the main road, and that amounted to another £4,000. This year they are now paying us monthly two-thirds of what we expend upon the road.

155. You are getting that out of the gold duty?—Everything comes out of gold duty in Waihi.

156. Supposing this Act comes into force and the award is still in force, if the railway is not finished would you consider you ought to get a share of the Waihi gold duty in addition to the award?—We get nothing at present. We are claiming a share of the gold duty for the purpose of maintaining the Waikino Township, keeping the river open for navigation, and maintaining the roads used by the Waihi Company.

157. Whether leading to the township or not?—The roads are used largely for the benefit of Waihi. All the roads to Waikino are used largely for the benefit of Waihi. The main Paeroa-to-Waihi Road was the principal road, and on that the Commission sat. Since then we have been endeavouring to obtain the allocation of the gold duty, and we have written to Ministers of the Crown asking them that allocation of the gold duty be made.

158. No roads were put in the claim before the Commissioners?—Only the one road.

159. *Mr. Reid.*] Are you a farmer?—No; a journalist.

160. How long has the River Board been in existence?—I think, ten years. They have been holding regular meetings. The County Clerk will be able to tell you all about it. I would like to say this with regard to the gold duty: that we are opposed to its abolition. We consider it is the fairest tax upon the mining companies. If the gold duty were abolished a number of mines carried on in Ohinemuri would have to close down. The duty is a great inducement to continued efforts to carry on.

161. *Hon. Mr. McGowan.*] How long will the award exist?—It is terminable by a fresh Order in Council or by a fresh Commission.

162. As the railway approaches Waihi the amount of the award will be reduced?—With regard to that, as the railway to Waihi progresses the amount Waihi will have to pay of the award will decrease. When the railway is open to Karangahake there will be only a small portion of the road between Karangahake and Waikino where there will be heavy traffic.

163. Do you consider the present arrangement a satisfactory one to all concerned—that is, the award?—I think it was a fair award. It was agreed to by both bodies. I think the arrangement was satisfactory to all concerned. We are satisfied that they should contribute two-thirds as a fair proportion.

164. If you think it a fair proportion now what are you down here for?—We are not objecting to the award, but it deals only with the one main road.

165. You said you were anxious to get a larger share of the gold duty?—We get none at all now. We are here to get a fair share of the Waihi gold duty for the roads and other purposes I have mentioned. The award only dealt with one road. We have made applications to the Government to so allocate the gold duty that we shall get a fair share.

166. What distance is Waikino from Waihi?—It is six miles from Waihi. It is a town created to carry out reduction, where there is a sufficient flow of water. There are over six hundred people at Waikino dependent on the Waihi Company.