

74. *Mr. Payton.*] The whole of the two hundred?—The chairman of the Rod and Gun Club, Mr. Iles, representing those interested.

75. *Mr. Lewis.*] Have you any recollection of a letter in those terms?—Yes. [Referring to the attached letter from Mr. A. J. Iles, chairman of the Rod and Gun Club, Rotorua: “As far as I can see, nothing will be gained by creating a separate acclimatisation district at Rotorua. The Auckland association has done all the work of stocking this district, and in my opinion it is giving every possible attention to the matter, and I do not think the establishment of a local society would in any way improve the present conditions.”]

76. Which involves separating the district from the Auckland Society?—As far as the society could—

77. That was your opinion?—The position has changed. A local society would be in the same position as regards ranging as the Auckland Society, and in regard to the divided control of the Rotorua district.

78. You say it is impossible for a society run by enthusiasts to give the same attention as paid Government officers, who probably have no interest in sport at all—simply executive officers?—That is so.

79. *Mr. Symes.*] You think, then, that some people who are not enthusiasts, but paid machines to do the work, would carry it out better than enthusiasts?—I certainly think that a paid man would carry out the work better than an enthusiast who is not paid.

80. I am sorry that your and my opinions differ very considerably?—The position is that a man who is paid to do certain work does it. The man who is not paid considers all his friends in the matter when it comes to a question of prosecution, and so forth.

81. Do you think, then, that the conditions have so materially altered since December, 1904, to the present time that this work ought to be undertaken by a Government Department created for the purpose?—I thought in 1904 that it should be done by a Government Department. I think the whole acclimatisation-work of the colony should be carried out by a Government Department and centralised. The funds now received by the acclimatisation societies total over £10,000 a year, and I hardly think it is claimed that the colony is getting ten thousand pounds' worth of work.

82. Who created this sport—did the Department create it?—Not the Department, but the Government very largely, though.

83. In this district?—I cannot say what was done in that particular district.

84. We have had it in evidence that the Government has never contributed anything?—Not to trout-fishing? In cash, do you mean?

85. In anything, to the Auckland Acclimatisation Society?—I do not know how far the district extends; but I would like to mention that the Government recently sent deer to Tongariro Park and to the Taupo side—the Hawke's Bay side—of the Kaimanawa Range—three lots of deer.

*Mr. Payton:* These are all outside the Auckland district.

86. *Mr. Symes.*] You say this is quite recently?—Yes. I do not know who liberated fallow deer in the Waikato. Probably that is outside their district.

87. You think that, notwithstanding the fact that this sport has been created by the people themselves, the people who have gone to the expense and trouble to create it are not better calculated to administer it than paid officers?—I certainly think that the position is ripe, now that the question of sport is so complicated, for change of control. It has gone past the time when boards managed by commercial men or those engaged in other pursuits could give sufficient time to do the work satisfactorily. I would like to point out in regard to the reference made to the hatcheries that if you call the Inspector of Fisheries he will tell you that hatcheries are not required at all, and that they are huge white elephants of extravagance. You can get all the young fish that you require through stripping fish from streams—fish living in the natural way. That is the opinion of Mr. Ayson, the Chief Inspector.

88. That would do, I take it, for spawn; but what about when you want to restock?—It is quite sufficient for all purposes. Eyeing-stations are quite sufficient; hatcheries are not required. If you want hatcheries at all, one in each Island would be quite sufficient, instead of having a number of huge and expensive concerns.

89. Still, these hatcheries have not been built by the Government—it is a case of individual local labour?—They have been built out of license fees, which are in every sense public moneys. It is a tax on sportsmen, and the only difference is that these fees are paid to the societies instead of to the General Government. I would further state that in the Masterton hatcheries a little while ago nearly the whole of the fish were suffering from cancerous diseases.

90. *Mr. Payton.*] I was going to ask the witness if, when the last regulations were framed, the Government had any intention of taking over the fishing at Rotorua from the Auckland Society?—I could not express an opinion. I am not in a position to declare what the Government's intentions were.

91. Did you say that they had no intention?—I could not possibly make such a statement, because I could not know.

E. W. PAYTON re-examined. (No. 4.)

*Witness:* I am rather sorry that the Acting-Superintendent of the Tourist Department has not thought it well to be here this morning, because you will remember that when we left off last week the last business was an attack by Mr. Robieson on the Auckland Acclimatisation Society, and it is against that attack I wish to protest and say a few words. I should therefore like Mr. Robieson to be here, but he does not choose to be here. It appears that he would rather hit the society and then run away. He mentioned the Tarawera Lake, and said he had written to the Auckland Society about the death of trout in the channel which flows into Tarawera Lake, but he had received no