

22. Do you know if this syndicate have framed any regulations, or are bound by any conditions under which they would sell their water to individual miners?—Yes. An understanding was come to between the mining community and the syndicate that they would charge the present rate of 10d. per head per hour. They practically pledged themselves to that, and on that pledge we are giving them our assistance.

23. That is, water landed at a certain altitude?—Yes.

24. *Mr. Seddon.*] What is the Government charge for water at Kumara?—Tenpence per head per hour when I worked there.

25. When was it 10d. per head per hour? How many years ago is it that you got that water?—I lived there twelve years ago.

26. And the charge proposed to be levied on the miners at Rimu is 10d. per head per hour, or what the Government used to charge some years ago at Kumara?—Yes.

27. How long have you worked at Rimu?—I did not work at Rimu, but at Back Creek, which is about a mile and a half away.

28. You have been working in the district to be affected?—Yes.

29. For how long?—About ten years.

30. At Back Creek and Rimu how many men do you think are working at the present time at alluvial mining—would fifty about comprise the number?—About forty-eight, as nearly as I can get it.

31. What number would be working there if this water scheme were complete?—If the plans I have seen were carried out, the place would employ more than a hundred and fifty men.

32. Do you think three hundred an exaggeration?—No, not if the plans were all carried out; but these plans are always subject to modification. I always go by half for safety's sake.

33. Without a scheme of water-supply the whole of those terraces could not be worked by private miners?—It would be out of the question.

34. And they could not possibly look at a scheme such as this at To Aroha?—No.

35. Have you any idea of what the charge for water will be to this company per annum under these regulations for the amount they have applied for?—I understand it amounts to nearly £2,000 a year. The last I heard under the amended regulations, it was only £1,300-odd. I am not on sure ground here.

36. If it was a little over £1,300, do you think that charge a little bit excessive?—I do not like the idea of a charge being made, when you might say it is a charge on purely law without logic. For mining purposes it would go free, but under the present circumstances it would be taxed.

37. You have noticed the company doing prospecting: have they done much?—I know they have sunk some shafts, but to what extent they have been prospecting I could not tell you. I have not been in touch with them, although I have seen them sinking on Seddon Terrace above the level commanded by the present supply of water.

38. They had a few parties out?—Yes.

39. That would cost something?—Yes.

40. They have done some prospecting about the area they propose to take up?—Yes.

41. You know that surveys have been made on behalf of the company?—Yes.

42. They would also cost a certain amount?—Yes.

43. What have you heard would be the cost of installing machinery to pump water from the Hokitika River on to the terraces?—I have heard it estimated at £110,000 for the whole thing complete.

44. *Mr. Anderson.*] Has the ground on Rimu Flats been proved to be payably auriferous all over?—Not all over—that is a very unusual thing; but it has been mostly driven out. It is from the surface down that they propose to work. The bottom layer has been worked out. The flat is practically abandoned except for any other purpose than the present one.

45. *Mr. Seddon.*] The terraces at the back have not been worked?—No.

46. *Mr. Anderson.*] And those terraces, you think, are payable?—Unless I saw a shaft sunk or knew the ground, I would not say it was payable. I have been disappointed so often.

47. *Mr. Seddon.*] The indications about those terraces are good?—They are in a good line of country, but are so far away for discharging the tailings by gravitation. They are too far away from the river-flat, and therefore all the material has to be elevated. I am speaking of the terraces to the southward. All the other terraces have been driven out.

48. *Mr. Anderson.*] You said the Rimu Sluicing Company was opposed to this company?—I have heard members of the company say they wished this company far enough. In arguing the point it came out that they had their eye on the Rimu Company's dam.

49. Where do they get their water from now?—They have their own dams, and get some from the Rimu Miners' Water-race Company.

50. *Mr. Colvin.*] You are a farmer yourself?—Yes, but was secretary to the Rimu Miners' Association.

51. How many members belong to the association?—At the present time I think there are forty-six or forty-eight.

52. If this scheme proposed by the syndicate were carried out, how many men would be employed on the Rimu Flats and terraces altogether?—It is very difficult to answer that question. I look upon it in this way: so far as the Rimu Flats are concerned no parties will go in there. It will be a question of wages paid by the company which opens up the ground. Although it has been said that there could be three hundred men employed there, I put it down at a hundred and fifty; and if that number could be employed they would be benefiting the country, because a prosperous district always brings advantages through the Customs revenue.