

114. *Hon. Mr. R. McKenzie.*] How do you mean by "loaded"?—Paying a rental.

115. Not by paid-up shares?—No. I have heard it said there was another company here already in Wellington, and I heard that the Minister was one of the promoters; but I do not take any notice of these things. I do not attach any importance to it.

116. Have you any good reason for thinking no other company would go on with it?—Only the uncertainty of mining.

117. You said you heard I was promoting a company?—I said it was a thing that was being talked about, as something the Minister had up his sleeve.

118. Can you tell me of any one you heard talking about that?—Yes.

119. Let us have their names?—I am in this position, that I do not feel disposed to answer the question.

120. As a matter of fact, you never heard any one say so?—As a matter of fact, I did.

121. You wrote some letters in the *West Coast Times* about this matter?—Yes.

122. Did you start that rumour out of your own imagination?—I said before that I heard it rumoured, but attached no importance to it because I put it down as a rumour. The question was asked me, supposing another company was to take up this proposition, would not the district be equally benefited. That suggestion brought back to my mind the rumour I heard circulated.

123. I asked you whether you wrote some letters, and whether you started the rumour out of your own imagination?—I answered that before.

124. These rumours were not started by the *West Coast Times*?—I must tell you that Mr. Michel and I have not had any conversation about the matter.

125. Can you tell the Committee what you came here for?—I think my evidence so far before the Committee has given point to my object.

FRIDAY, 5TH NOVEMBER, 1909.

E. I. LORD examined. (No. 3.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your name?—My name is Edward Iveagh Lord.

2. What are you?—Town Clerk and Borough Engineer at Greymouth.

3. You are one of those who signed the petition?—No.

4. You wish to give evidence before this Committee in connection with the petition?—I have been asked to give evidence.

5. You know what the petition is about?—Yes.

6. Have you read it?—Yes.

7. Will you make a statement with regard to it?—All I have to say is that I have been a mining engineer for over forty years on the Coast, and during that time have laid down a great many water-races and schemes for bringing water on the ground to develop areas suitable for sluicing. Gravitation supplies at the present day are very difficult to bring in at a high-enough level to work the higher auriferous country, and I take it that electric power and by means of pumping is the only thing left to develop that high ground. I know, myself, of many places besides Rimu—places up the Grey Valley, for instance, in the vicinity of the Ahaura. Water-power from Lake Hochstetter, for instance, would work these areas by electric motor and a pumping scheme. Besides those at Barrytown and elsewhere, I know of other areas where a sufficient power is available to work auriferous grounds that cannot be reached in any other way. As the West Coast—I might say, primarily—is to be helped more by mining than by any other industry, I think the Government should do all in their power to aid any method by which water can be brought in to work these high-level fields; and, with that end in view, I think, for the good of the West Coast—and, in fact, the Dominion—the Government should make their regulations and their initial charges as elastic as possible. I mean that gold-mining is very precarious. You never know where the gold is, although you get good prospects. I have myself got good prospects in many places for companies that it was thought would be successes, and in many cases they have turned out failures. I think, therefore, there should be no hampering whatever in the initial charges. It is hard enough to float companies already, without burdening them with an additional cost. At the same time, I think, for the good of the individual miner as against powerful syndicates, he should have some protection from very large fields being taken up and having in the end to pay a toll. I do not know from my own knowledge that I can say much more on the subject. These are my opinions, gained by over forty years' experience as a mining surveyor and engineer.

8. *Mr. Scott.*] Do you think this scheme that is proposed at the present time for working the Rimu Flats will be of benefit to the individual miner?—Of course, all depends on how the field is allowed to be taken up.

9. What is your present view of the situation as it appeals to you? There is a company which has something like 800 acres, I understand: what chance will the individual miner have there?—If one company holds an area of 800 acres there will not be much left outside, as far as I know. But I have never looked into the question. What I say is on the spur of the moment, from knowledge gained many years ago.

10. Do you think, as a man who has a good deal of knowledge of goldfields and mining, that it is not right for the Government to impose a charge on these electric water-power schemes?—I do not go so far as to say they should not impose a charge, but I said they should make it as reasonable as possible—not an excessive charge, because it would block the ground from being worked at all.

11. Do you consider the charge the Government proposes to make under the regulations too high?—I have heard it is £1,300