

6. What are you carrying on your farm?—I am grazing cattle, and growing cocksfoot-seed for sale.
7. Do you know the land on the eastern route?—Only in the distance. The parts I have seen are not to be compared with the west.
8. *Mr. Evans.*] How many bushels to the acre of cocksfoot can you grow?—I have never saved it all, but have sold perhaps 100 bushels off 20 acres.
9. How long did it take you to clear 20 acres?—I have 120 acres cleared, and it took me five years to get it into grass.
10. Have you tried any other crop?—*Paspalum* for grass-seed, but I have not saved it.
11. *Mr. Coom.*] What area do you hold?—186 acres; 120 acres are cleared, the rest in timber.
12. How long after felling the bush does it take you to get the land in grass?—About the second year. It is dry country, and we have no difficulty in getting burns.
13. What will it carry under grass?—One dairy cow to 3 acres; two sheep and a quarter to the acre.
14. Have you any experience of land in other parts of the Dominion?—I farmed at Aramoho, at Wanganui, for twelve years, and some of this land is equal to the Wanganui land, with a much better climate. I know the Province of Wellington well. The best land is in Wanganui, and we have not got the same mixture of soil here. Comparing the two districts, I should say the land here would compare with Wanganui in this way: 3 acres of Wanganui land would be equal to 4 acres here.
15. *Mr. Stallworthy.*] Do you think it would pay the Government to rail this country?—Certainly, because dairy and bacon factories would be established in such places as the Opokeno; while fruit and maize growing would be largely developed, if there were a market.
16. Would the population increase?—I think this valley, without any trouble, would carry ten thousand people; but the Natives have got the best portion, where the towns and places for factories should be.
17. Are any of the Maoris here industrious?—Yes; they are starting milking, and some have ten and fifteen cows. One Native has twenty-eight cows, and is going to increase it to a hundred next season.
18. Do you remember the country north of Wanganui when it had no railway?—Yes.
19. Was that country then any more likely to pay for a railway than this district?—No. Settlement there has increased with the railway, and the prospects are just as good here.
20. *Mr. Becroft.*] Have you observed the effect of climate on the agricultural industry here?—I have experimented in the growing of wheat, oats, and barley, and the results have been very satisfactory. If the land here could have a ton of lime per acre it would grow all kinds of cereals. It would have to be manured; but, of course, other parts are rich enough to grow anything.
21. Can you say why so many tons of foodstuff or vegetables are imported into this valley?—People have neglected to plant them because there is no market.
22. Is it not because there has been other work more profitable for the working-men to follow?—Men will go where work is plentiful and wages good, and some do not realize what the land will produce.
23. *Mr. Steadman.*] If the Natives are working their lands, what is to prevent other men doing the same?—They have not the inducement, and the land is not theirs.
24. You are referring to Native land?—Yes. Perhaps a hundred people own this block, and if some of them put up a stockyard, their relatives would claim it. If another man sowed an acre of grass, some of his relatives might turn five or six horses into it, and so nothing is done.
25. Do you know what it would cost to individualize the title to this land?—No.
26. Do you think it would run into over £2 per head for costs?—I think it would; but it would pay where the land is worth £10 per acre.
27. Do you know what some of that land you refer to is sold for?—£2 5s. an acre; and when the railway comes along it will put £8 an acre on to it.
28. Do you not think it would be a good thing for the Government to acquire that land?—Yes.
29. Would you be surprised to hear that a Native who is interested in this land, sooner than go to the trouble of putting it through the Native Land Court, would rather take his chance at the ballot for Crown land?—I have heard that.
30. How far have you gone over the routes?—Not a great distance, only to the settlements below Titoki.
31. Do you know there is very little difference between the eastern and western routes in this valley?—Where the western route should go there is a great outlet for the railway to deep water on the Kaipara Bay. Starting from a point on the west side of the Tangihua Range it would run in nearly a straight line—with some large curves—to Kaikohe. There are possible sites for large towns over the whole route, and where good roads could be run to tap the railway system.
32. Where would the trade go to?—Auckland or Wellington. Early fruit and potatoes would be sent through. At present I have to go thirty-five miles to Dargaville or Whangarei to get my horses shod.
33. *Mr. Evans.*] How many settlers have made their homes in this district?—Thirty thousand acres have been cut up and sold in sections, and the people are on them.
34. If maize could be sent by rail from here to Auckland for 10s. per ton, would that induce the settlers or Maoris to grow it?—Yes, I would grow some myself.
35. Taking into consideration the milder climate, would you not say that the land here is as productive as the land in Wanganui?—Very nearly; there is a slight margin in favour of Wanganui.
36. What is the extent of the good land here?—It is where the line will enter the main valley, and there are 2,000,000 acres of it at the very least.
37. *Mr. Becroft.*] Are there any indications of coal in this valley?—I have seen several indications of it.