

settlement and larger settlement. I maintain that it is far more profitable and better for the district to have closer settlement, because the farmer has a better opportunity of making a success than the large farmer who has to employ labour. The farmer who employs labour has to pay practically £2 10s. 6d. an acre, while the small farmer can bring the same land into cultivation for £1 15s. Another important factor in regard to closer settlement is the milk. It is not fair to the land now to base its value on sheep. Sheep-running is a thing of the past, because the cow is far more profitable. There is no reason why a man cannot make a very good living out of 300 acres. Last year thirty-odd cows produced an average of £13 per cow.

10. How many cows exactly?—Thirty-four or thirty-six.

11. What is the area?—I think 321 acres—I am not quite sure, but, of course, there are horses and other stock, and then there was a good deal in cultivation. The same farmer has turnips growing so well that he had practically double what he could use himself, and therefore he let the grazing, and I saw about a hundred head of bullocks going off that same farm. I think I have explained that the land there is really far better than people thought. You know, if you give a dog a bad name you might just as well hang it, and that applies to the Putaruru land. It has got a very bad name for some reason, but if a person went there to-day to buy land which was valued by the Government at £3 he could not get it at £7 an acre. That, I think, is sufficient to prove that the idea of the country being no good should be abandoned.

12. *Mr Buchanan.*] The farm you still have is fifteen miles from Putaruru?—That is one farm, but where I am living now is Putaruru.

13. What would be the freight per ton for cartage?—There is no regular cartage out there. It means that you have to send in teams and cart it yourself.

14. What would two horses carry?—Two horses would be practically of no use; they could only haul an empty wagon, it is so rough. It took from four to five horses to drag 4 cwt.

15. Are there any bullocks there?—Only for the timber; not in connection with farming.

16. Do you mean to say a bullock-dray could not negotiate the road or track used?—I dare say it could, but it would not be profitable to use bullocks for carting manure.

17. You cannot give us an idea of how much per ton the cartage could be done for?—About £2 10s.

18. For fifteen miles?—Yes.

19. You said that a small farmer could do such-and-such work for so-much less than a large farmer: does that mean that you are allowing the small farmer the same remuneration for his work as the large farmer would have to pay?—A small farmer never counts his time. If he did he would never farm.

20. You told us about harrowing at 1s. an acre?—Yes.

21. With what team?—Two or three horses—it just depends.

22. You put that down at 1s. an acre?—Yes.

23. How much would you do in a day?—About 15 to 20 acres easily.

24. *Mr MacDonald.*] Harrowing is like the land—there are different classes of land to harrow. Your land is very easy to harrow?—That is so.

25. You can do it so much cheaper because the land is easily handled and easily worked?—Yes.

26. What is the name of the Crown settlement?—The Selwyn.

27. You are a Crown tenant?—Yes.

28. On what estate?—The Selwyn Estate.

29. You said about 15s. to £1 was the original price?—A portion of it was 15s. That was the original valuation of it some seven or eight years ago.

30. *Mr Young*] You are farming on several places in the Selwyn district?—Yes.

31. At Putaruru, and where is the other place?—Waotu.

32. Is your land at Waotu of the same character as that at Putaruru?—Yes.

33. It is open country?—Yes. It had been bush country some hundreds of years ago, as totara, matai, and maire can be found in the swamps throughout the district.

34. Is it dry country?—Yes, generally speaking.

35. There is no evidence of swamps at Putaruru?—None to speak of.

36. What was the condition of this land at Putaruru when you took it up?—Young tea-tree, and it was very poor land to look at.

37. What was the height of the tea-tree?—From 18 in. to 5 ft., according to the fires that ran through it.

38. What would be the young scrub on that country in its natural state—how high?—About 4 ft. high, barring the gullies.

39. How did you break it in first?—I just ploughed it up.

40. How did you use your scrub?—On a portion of it I simply ploughed the scrub in.

41. What would be the height of the scrub you ploughed in?—About 2 ft. to 3 ft.—of course, with drags on—special drags made for the purpose, somewhat similar to a bullock-yoke.

42. After getting that ploughed what treatment did you give it?—I have stock on it already. In the first week of April I completed the sowing, and put my stock on it in the first week of August.

43. *Hon. Sir J. Findlay*] What did you do to bring that about?—I went through the process I have already read out—harrowing, ploughing, rolling, and discing; but I gave it an extra rolling, which put it down in a good solid foundation.

44. A lot of this country it is proposed to open up, you are fully aware, does not grow any scrub at all?—Yes, right down in the flats.

45. Have you had any experience in treating that class of country?—No, but it is a similar class of country to Putaruru.