

107. You did not object to his taking up land so long as he did not take it away from you?—No.

108. Yet you have no claim to the land excepting a yearly tenancy: is that not so?—That is so, except that I was told that it would not be taken from me unless it was required for the development of the landing-service.

109. If this section were let on renewable lease there would be another resident in the district, would there not?—It would depend on who got it.

110. If it were let on renewable lease the tenant would be bound to reside: at any rate, there would be a tenant on the land?—I do not think Mr. Ashworth would. He has got a two-storied house that cost about £700 to build.

111. You said, in answer to the Prime Minister, that all you wanted was access to your land?—No.

112. Pardon me. You said you wanted it so as to have access to your land?—I wanted to retain access.

113. You wanted it because you could get access?—Yes; it was granted to me for that purpose—to give me access to my land.

114. They had already provided that if this section was taken away you should have access to your land, had they not?—Yes; but it is the worst possible road they could get on the section. I said that because they told me I would not be allowed to apply for a renewable lease. "Well," I thought, "I had better try and get access." The question of access arose, and they said they would give me a half-chain road across.

115. It was access you required?—Yes, but I wanted to retain the section more than have access.

116. In the first place you did not say that you would be satisfied with road access. Could not your son have gone to the ballot?—No doubt he could.

117. Is Mrs. Gee, the wife of Mr. Gee, the member of the Land Board?—Yes.

118. And Mrs. Gee is your daughter?—Yes.

119. I think you are still in occupation of the land?—Yes.

120. Then the contention that you were badly treated in not getting notice does not hold good?—Although I am using the land and the fences have never been altered, the land is taken away from me.

121. But you are still using it?—Yes.

122. Are you a bee expert? Do you know anything about bee-farming?—No.

123. Why did you say that this 8½ acres would only carry about two hives of bees?—Because the bees must get food of some sort or other.

124. Do you know if they always remain on the land of their owner, or do they go elsewhere?—They go all round about, I suppose. But this section is swept by the north-wester, and I should think it would blow bees out to sea.

125. I think you stated that if this land is taken away from you you will be the loser by about £20 a year?—Yes, it will make quite that difference to me.

126. Taking the other land you hold on the same basis, you must be making about £800 a year?—Oh, no.

THOMAS GEE examined. (No. 6.)

1. *Mr. Guthrie* (Acting-Chairman).] Are you a farmer?—Yes.

2. At Cheviot?—Yes.

3. Have you any statement to make in connection with the matter that is before the Committee?—No, I have no statement to make.

4. *Hon. Mr. Massey*.] You are a member of the Canterbury Land Board?—Yes.

5. Do you know the section that is the subject of this inquiry?—Yes.

6. You know the transactions that have taken place up to the present with regard to it—that is to say, the different discussions when the matter has been before the Land Board, either in your time or before?—Yes.

7. There has been a discussion, I think, with regard to the section since you have been a member of the Board?—Yes.

8. I am speaking of an official discussion, and not informal talks outside?—Yes.

9. Was that on the occasion when the head of the Lands Department in Wellington, Mr. Strauchon, communicated with the Land Board intimating that it would be better to dispose of the section by auction than under renewable lease?—Yes.

10. Was there any objection on the part of the Board?—None worth speaking of during my time on the Board.

11. They acquiesced?—Yes.

12. I want you to say, either as a farmer or as a member of the Land Board, whether you know of any communication being addressed to myself or to the permanent head of the Lands Department in Wellington with the object of influencing us as to whether this land should be disposed of by public auction, or in favour of any particular individual?—Absolutely none.

13. You know of no communications, direct or indirect?—I never approached anybody that had any authority to deal with this section in any way whatever.

14. *Hon. Mr. Buddo*.] How long have you been a settler at Cheviot?—Since the commencement. I was an original settler.

15. Have you taken an active interest in the settlement of the land there?—Yes.

16. Have you been associated with any society that had for its object the improvement of the surroundings?—I have been associated with practically all of them.