

65. Do you know of many sales that have been effected since the 31st March, 1914?—I do not think I can remember any.

66. Have no sales taken place in this borough since that date?—There have been one or two exchanges, but I do not know of any *bona fide* straight-out sales.

67. What do you mean by *bona fide* sales?—A man sometimes exchanges a farm for another property—

68. Leaving out exchanges altogether, you do not know of any sales that have taken place in the borough?—I think I know of one, but I am not quite sure whether it is within that period or not. That was a piece of land Mr. F. Lippiatt bought.

69. Go back to December, 1913, perhaps you can recollect some sales that have taken place between that date and now?—The sale of Mr. Sturge's property is the only one I can think of at the moment.

70. I suppose you know the definition of "value" under the Government Valuation of Land Act?—I cannot say that I do.

71. You know what the Government valuer is called upon to do when sent out to make a valuation, and how he must arrive at his values?—No.

72. I presume that, not knowing that, the dissatisfaction which you refer to as being in existence with regard to valuations will be directed more to the system of valuation than to the officers who made it?—I do not think it is a personal matter at all.

*The Valuer-General* (after reading the definition of "unimproved value" in the Valuation of Land Act, 1912): The guide of the Government valuer is sales, not what the man is using his property for. A man might be using his property for forest purposes, but the average valuer is guided by sales.

*Mr. McVeagh*: That is not the definition.

*The Valuer-General*: If it is not the definition or meaning of it, there is no other manner by which the valuer can arrive at his valuation.

*Witness*: You consider it reasonable to assume if a man has 20 acres and sells a quarter acre at £100 that the remainder is worth £400 an acre.

*The Valuer-General*: No, you cannot point out a case where the residue is equally valued with the portion sold?

*Witness*: I think Mr. Shepherd's is very near to it.

73. *The Valuer-General* (to witness).] You made reference to the properties of Dawson, Shepherd, Mrs. Wingate, Mitchell, Murphy, and Thoms; did they object to their valuations?—Mrs. Wingate is a very old lady, and I do not think she objected, and I do not know about Mitchell. All the rest objected.

74. You did not know, I suppose, that Mr. Shepherd's was reduced by agreement?—No, I did not.

75. Or that Mr. Mitchell's was reduced by agreement?—No.

76. Or that Mr. Murphy's was reduced in Court by consent, and that Thoms's was reduced by agreement?—I know that Thoms's was reduced by £75.

77. You said there was no demand for these lands for suburban residences?—Not in these cases, being some distance from the station.

78. But generally speaking?—The demand is very poor, and has been for the last twelve months.

79. That covers a period anterior to the time of the valuation?—Yes.

80. Do you say the competition for suburban sites was less keen in 1913 than it is to-day?—I say it has fallen off in the last twelve months.

81. That includes the period when the last valuation was made?—I do not say that the valuations have stopped the demand, but I say the valuations are in many cases excessive.

82. That is from your point of view?—It is a very difficult matter to realize these valuations.

83. You know that valuations at best are hypothetical?—Yes, I acknowledge that. It is a very difficult thing to arrive at.

84. One man may hold one opinion with regard to a block of land and another man hold a different opinion, but you would not say that that other man was wrong?—No, I would say it was a matter of opinion. A good many people told me that the valuer says: "I will be in a certain place on a certain day to listen to objections," and the people who have objected have had reductions made, and they have often told me, "Oh, yes, Mr. Mackenzie said if I did not go to the Court he would reduce me"—making a sort of bargain.

85. Do you know that of your own personal knowledge: was it told to you by Mr. Mackenzie?—It was told me by the owner of the land.

86. Not by the valuer?—That is so.

87. Then it is hearsay?—I do not know about that; it may be.

88. *Mr. McVeagh*.] Who was the owner?—I do not know that I could recollect his name, but some person present may know, no doubt.

89. *The Valuer-General*.] What time did the dissatisfaction with the valuation in Otahuhu arise?—It was brought to their mind probably when the rating on unimproved value was introduced.

90. The inference is that if no change had taken place in the system of taxation there would have been no dissatisfaction?—I think there would, because they would have had to pay more; but it hit fewer people. It hit the large man rather than the owner of a quarter-acre section.

91. Is it your experience of Otahuhu that the change in the system of rating accentuated the dissatisfaction with the values?—Yes, I think so. I do not say amongst the majority, but amongst those who own more than an acre of land.

92. You are of opinion there would have been dissatisfaction supposing the system of rating had not been changed?—Yes.

93. How does dissatisfaction generally express itself?—By ratepayers' meetings, and so on.