

good as it used to be I feel certain the Department would go back to its use rather than use imported oxide. The trouble with hæmatite at the present time is that you cannot get the good solid body with it.

7. *To Mr. Craigie.*] I do not think there is any objection to the colour. It was used chiefly for roofs of goods-sheds, engine-sheds, and also for tanks. Nelson hæmatite has not got the same bright-red colour as English oxide. I believe Steelite is made from New Zealand products, but I cannot say. If we could get Nelson hæmatite as good as it was formerly I feel sure it would be extensively used.

8. *To the Chairman.*] Hæmatite is a long way cheaper than imported oxide. As far as I know, English oxide is £1 6s. a hundredweight in oil, whereas Nelson hæmatite is quoted at about 14s. dry. The article ground in oil is preferable from many painters' point of view because it is ground finer. I am not prejudiced against ready-made paint as long as it is of good quality.

9. *To Mr. Sidey.*] I could tell in from six to twelve months' time whether a paint is going to stand or not, but one could not give an opinion very well under six months. If you painted the outside of a house you could not give an opinion under six months as to how it is going to last. After six months I would be able to decide whether I could recommend it.

10. *To the Chairman.*] In regard to the Restar test, I am prepared to furnish the Committee with a written report on the test.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER COOPER, Manager of the Wellington Farmers' Meat Company, Masterton, examined. (No. 27.)

I represent the Masterton Chamber of Commerce. I wish to make representations to the Committee in regard to hydro-electric energy in the Masterton district. I may say that our proposition entirely depends on the intentions of the Government in connection with their larger scheme. I know from Mr. Parry's report that the larger scheme is a long way cheaper than any local scheme, but if the big scheme is to take ten years, which may mean twenty years, we have a local scheme which may be put in hand at a much earlier date. It is a scheme that will give us hydro-electric power at a headworks cost of about £30 per horse-power. This is putting 33 per cent. on our engineer's estimate of cost. The engineer shows that the headworks will cost £70, and I am allowing the headworks costing £100. The scheme will give 3,500 horse-power, which is the minimum. There is one matter that is likely to stop us—namely, that it will cost a lot of money; and where are we to get it? There is power under legislation of last session to raise the money, but it is another thing to get it. We want this Committee to further our interests, particularly with regard to getting the necessary cash, if we require it. If the Government are not going to carry out their big scheme we want it to help us and others who are in a similar position to us. I wish also to mention this: In regard to my own company, our coal to-day at the works is costing us £2 2s. 6d. delivered on the site. If we can get it we have to keep a big reserve supply, and every ton of coal is costing us anything from £2 5s. to £2 10s. per ton by the time it reaches the bunker, and the cost is going up. In the face of the present coal outlook, we hesitate before organizing any further departments.

1. *To Mr. Hornsby.*] We burn 8,000 tons of coal per annum, costing us £17,000, in round figures. Quite 5,000 tons are required for power purposes. The total cost of the scheme to give power to all the users—farmers and others—would be about £200,000. When I speak of £30 per horse-power I mean the headworks cost. My estimate of £200,000 covers the headworks, power-house, main lines, transmission, and reticulation throughout the whole of the Wairarapa Valley, not including the hill country. If we could get the money through the Government, under the Loans to Local Bodies Act, the work might be done, but it would be a serious matter to raise the money in the Wairarapa. We can organize the district and make preparations, but if we have to raise £200,000 for this purpose we are up against a very serious stumbling-block. Assuming the money difficulty can be got over, I believe I could manage to get the thing going in about eighteen months. I would cut the whole thing up into a number of contracts, and let them all terminate on a given date. It may be that this work will help us to find work for a large number of the returned soldiers. As far as the power-users are concerned, let me say this: Assuming that it may take twenty years for the Government to give us the power in the district by its scheme the smaller scheme will have more than paid for itself by that time. My own company would be saving thousands a year in the cost of power, and the people would be saving more than the company would. In my remarks I am referring to the Waiohine scheme. In the Tauherenikau scheme there is 1,400 horse-power. It could be cheaply harnessed. When we have developed the 3,500 horse-power from Waiohine we could extend it, if necessary, up to 5,000 by putting in a steam stand-by plant. The cost of the stand-by plant is included in the £200,000. The engineer has provided for it in his scheme in case of a breakdown in the line through perhaps a tree falling on it. It is the present intention of my own board of directors to establish several other contingent industries if we get the power.

2. *To Mr. Poland.*] About 1,500 or 1,600 horse-power would be required in the district, including my own company's demands. A distance of twenty-two miles would be served from the headworks. The engineer estimates the whole cost of the works at £120,000, plus £50,000 for reticulation. I am placing the total at £200,000.

3. *To Dr. A. K. Newman.*] We can get a minimum of 3,500 horse-power at Waiohine, taking an exceptionally dry season, but it is safe to count on 5,000. During the present season we might have got 10,000. I do not know anything about the Makuri power. The figures of our engineer have been checked by Mr. Parry, who has accepted the engineer's report as good. Mr. Parry makes the reservation that the Government can give us cheaper power.

4. *To Mr. Sidey.*] This scheme will fit in with Mr. Parry's scheme as a stand-by. It is too small to be linked up afterwards. That is Mr. Parry's statement.