

applications for the position, and the Bishop of Nelson, who is a trustee, is making inquiries at Home, and it is probable that a Director will be appointed in a very short time. I do not think the criticism of the trustees is quite fair. The trustees have acted on the advice of a Board of Scientists.

*Mr. Veitch:* Do you know of any circumstances to warrant any one making a statement to the Committee that the trustees are gaining pecuniary advantage?—Absolutely no.

A. McKEE further examined.

I desire to make a brief statement in regard to the marble-deposits at Takaka. I am sorry the Committee were not able to visit the place. At the present time and for some time past we have been quarrying marble over there; huge blocks are to be seen of 5 or 6 tons; the size of the blocks depends on the lifting-power of our crane. The stone is fine-grained marble. It is different from the stone from which Parliament Buildings is being built: that is coarse-grained marble. This is fine-grained marble. I believe this to be not a local matter but a matter of national interest, for that stone is going to be wanted all over New Zealand. Masons and experts say it is undoubtedly the best stone we have.

*To Mr. Hornsby:* I hope the Cawthron Institute will be built of marble, because the cost of the material is low. I think there is going to be a great development in this respect in New Zealand. We have found all the capital, have done all the development, and we have had absolutely no assistance from the Government, and do not want any, except this: that over there you have the Takaka Valley. It is a rich, prosperous, beautiful district with a population of about two thousand people, and it is absolutely isolated. There are no railways, no direct boats; there is plenty of water; there is a small wharf that will accommodate small boats. There are cement-works there. The whole of the Takaka district is handicapped by having to pay double freights. We want a continuation of the road from Tarakohe to enable us to load at the Cement Company's wharf. There is an area of 150 acres at the mouth of the Motupipi River. It has been reported upon by various scientific men from as far back as Hochstetter, and including Dr. Bell and others. There is no doubt there is a valuable coalfield there. It is a brown coal. Coal is now being obtained from that deposit. It is probably the oldest coalfield known in New Zealand. I believe it was the property in the old days of the late William Ewart Gladstone, formerly Prime Minister of England, but I cannot vouch for that. On that property there is a whole series of coals. Mr. Peter Hutson, of Wellington, has reported that there is an enormous area of limestone there. There are also many samples of good clay—china clay, pottery clay, and other kinds. Will the Mines Department and the Geological Department help industry by proving that country? The question is, Is it worth while the State undertaking these investigations?

C. E. LOWE examined.

I have brought for examination by the Committee some samples of tobacco-leaf grown on my property at Harakeke; also samples of pipe and cigarette tobacco manufactured from the leaf. In 1907 I visited the St. Louis Exhibition, and subsequently visited the tobacco plantations in North Carolina and saw the tobacco-plant growing on the most poverty-stricken land. Two years ago it occurred to me that tobacco might be grown with advantage as a side line to our fruitgrowing in this district. Last year the Hon. Mr. Wilford was in this district and visited my tobacco patch, and was very much struck with it. He sent me Kellebrew and Myrick's book on North Carolina, in which the following statement appears in reference to tobacco-growing: "The lands which grow the finest tobacco had light cream-coloured soils, 90 per cent. of which was siliceous matter. It is porous, spongy, sandy, arid, destitute of humus, incapable of growing any crop without the most abundant applications of manures, became the cornerstone of new agriculture. Tobacco planted upon it, with the addition of a very small quantity of manure, from which the plant could derive sustenance until it approached maturity; when the manure became exhausted the plant began to lose its vitality and take on a very dry and deeper yellowish tinge. Just before they were harvested the plants turned a beautiful colour, like hickory-leaves in autumn. Fields of tobacco looked more like small grain ready for harvest than tobacco-fields. Sterilized spots, worn out and abandoned, grown up in briers and scrubby pines, that in 1860 could with difficulty be sold for 50 cents an acre, were soon in demand at from 30 to 80 dollars per acre." The members of the Committee have seen the tobacco growing on my land. To-day I am going to raise a loan to build a barn for use in connection with the tobacco-production. I have the plans and specifications from Australia. Immediately my barn has been proved, no doubt many other similar barns will be erected.

*To Mr. Sidey:* It would be impracticable for more than one grower to use a barn; the barns are only 20 by 20 in size. I deserve no special credit for what I have done in this connection. The Hon. Mr. Wilford produced the book for our information, and we followed on. I think the soil and climate inside the Tasman range of mountains is suitable for the growth of tobacco. I would not suggest that any man with fruit land should grow more than 5 acres of tobacco—as a side line to work in with his fruit. My own experience shows me that poor land is what is wanted.