

delivered in town, somewhere about £9 4s. per horse-power per year. That is the estimated cost at present. No factory running only eight hours a day could afford to pay that amount for it. It would be only the factories that could use the power for sixteen or twenty-four hours that could pay that. Then it would pay very well. The power from the Taieri is estimated at about the same amount, £9 4s. per horse-power delivered in Dunedin. The present cost of power from steam in Dunedin is about £7 10s. per horse-power per year. Fuel is cheap there. That is what limits us to certain manufactures. At the present moment we are not able to estimate what power we shall be able to sell on this account.

117. Unless you can bring the power that you have available below a certain price per horse-power it is of no advantage whatever?—That is the sum and substance of the whole thing.

118. *Mr. Bennet.*] I think you said you would put in a weir 36 ft. high. To what height would that raise the water in time of flood?—I have not gone into that calculation, but I have had it calculated to what height it would raise the water on the Taieri Plain if the weir burst—1 in. If there were a flood on the Taieri Plain and the weir gave way, that body of water would raise the water on the plain 1 in.

119. All over the plain?—It would not affect it so very much. It would be lower down where it would flood.

120. Probably where the water would get on to the plain it would be 30 ft. high?—Yes; but you see the Taieri River has a considerable amount of clay and other stuff in suspension coming down from the mining districts, and it is estimated that the stuff coming down and precipitating there would fill up solid in five years, and the risk would be nil.

121. What effect would it have on the railway above that? That is what I want to get at. Would it not raise the water in time of flood up to the railway?—No, nothing near it.

122. I have some doubt about that. You might suppose that you would have the water rise 60 ft. in time of high flood?—No. At the top of the weir, as I think, it would only be as high as in the bed of the river. You would be at least, I should say, fully 100 ft. below the railway-line at Taioana, and it would not back the water past that at all.

123. Any obstruction in a creek raises it far more in proportion than when it has a free run at the bottom?—Take the level back from the top of the weir, and you do not come near the railway-line. We give an indemnity, I think, in the Bill in regard to that. We hold ourselves responsible for any damage.

124. An indemnity would not be of much use if the train were put into the river?—The clauses in the Bill making us responsible for any accident to the railway were put in by the solicitor acting for the Minister for Public Works in Dunedin. He was satisfied with that.

125. It is the risk of human life in the event of anything happening that I am thinking about. If water gets in under a line it is not safe?—There is another side to that. Without lifting the Taieri River by a weir you get no power out of it at all. Unless you get the extra fall it is valueless.

THOMAS REID CHRISTIE examined. (No. 2.)

126. *The Chairman.*] What is your name?—Thomas Reid Christie.

127. What are you?—I am a member of the City Council of Dunedin. I am Chairman of the Tramways Committee.

128. You have come up to give evidence on this Bill?—I am prepared to answer any questions that may be put to me.

129. *Mr. Mellar.*] You were not in the room when Mr. Scott's evidence in chief was given, were you?—No.

130. I think he has been asked pretty well all the questions in connection with the Bill. I would, however, like to ask you one question that I think Mr. Scott was not asked. If the Government brought in an urgent Bill protecting the Taieri rights from being applied for and granted to any private persons, would the Corporation be prepared to drop those clauses which refer to the Taieri?—Yes; I think they would.

131. That would leave you the Lee Stream, your present powers and your dam-sites being validated?—Yes.

132. *Mr. Herries.*] Do you consider it important that you should pay no fees or rents to the Crown?—It is of minor importance. I suppose the City Corporation can pay the same as other people; but in this case it is a large body of people, and they think they might get the rights under different conditions from other people.

133. I suppose you are not fully acquainted with the Mining Act?—No; I am not particularly well acquainted with it.

134. Would you be satisfied if the rights conferred by section 6 were only to endure for a certain time, say for the term that has been suggested—five years? You see, you are given very great rights that are not given to any one else, in that you are not liable to cancellation or forfeiture?—Yes; I think that would meet the case.

135. You do not want to hold these rights for ever and do nothing with them?—By no means. We simply wish to stop those who may wish to exploit the city.

136. You do not want to hold rights for future extension and yet do nothing with them?—No. We will carry the thing through as far as we can. We do not want to act the dog-in-the-manger if we cannot do the work ourselves. I do not think that question will arise.

137. *Mr. Reid.*] Do you consider it would be right that the boroughs on the road should have a fair share of the power—a right to the surplus power? Mr. Scott said he thought that any surplus beyond what was required for the tramways and for lighting the tramways the other boroughs should have a right to on some kind of fair basis—either a population or a valuation basis?—I do not agree to that. I would agree that they should get any surplus power that could be generated after our own requirements were fully satisfied.