

18. What amount of benefit, if any, has the east side received under the Board?—The eastern side has received practically no benefit except the cleaning of drains and the cutting of a drain from Gladfield Road down.

19. It is really a prospective benefit?—Yes. It has taken us a considerable time to get the facts of the case in hand. We have taken all the levels. I think the Board was requested three or four months ago to suspend operations by the Government.

20. *Mr. Lang.*] On what grounds?—I do not know.

21. *Mr. Anderson.*] Is there a proposal in the minds of the Board to make a dam to regulate the flow of the river in flood-time?—There is a proposal of that kind under consideration, and there is a favourable site for such a dam.

22. Where would you make it?—It is a considerable distance up, near Kokonga.

23. How far up?—I do not know, but I should think about ninety miles.

24. Have you been there?—Yes.

25. Is it suitable?—It is a very suitable site, but the unfortunate fact is that part of the Central Otago Railway runs through it. It is below the old Taieri Lake, and will include that.

26. *Mr. Forbes.*] You would drown the railway if you put it there?—Yes, undoubtedly it would drown the railway, but it would save the Invercargill line.

27. *Mr. Guthrie.*] Can you tell us, when the Silverstream was cut through, if the course of the stream was changed?—That I could not tell you. I can give you this information: that the fall of the stream from Mr. Gow's land to the Wingatui Racecourse is about 20 ft. for a distance of a mile.

28. Have you no knowledge of where the original course was?—No. I have examined plans, and on the plans in the Lands Department there was no stream shown past Gow's property.

29. *The Chairman.*] Perhaps it may be a dry stream except in wet weather?—No, I have not seen it dry, and I think it very seldom gets dry.

30. *Mr. Forbes.*] Is there much water running into it in the ordinary season?—No, not much. There would be about 1,000 cubic feet per minute in the ordinary season, but in flood-time it comes down heavy.

31. You have been only six months in the district, but have you seen the district in flood?—Not in heavy flood.

32. You can hardly say from your experience what will be the value of those proposed works?—Some works have been carried out for some considerable time.

33. But you can hardly give an opinion yet upon their value in flood-time?—No.

34. *Mr. Guthrie.*] Then, the Silverstream is the main stream which carries the water from the eastern side into the Taieri?—It is the largest stream, but it is not by any means the main stream—there is the Mill Creek and others. My idea was to collect as much water as possible and carry it into the Taieri by a main channel.

35. If the silting has been carried on to that extent, do you not think some stops could be put in the bed to try and stop it?—Undoubtedly we should stop it. It has not been under control in the past.

36. Somebody must have controlled it when constructed?—As far as I can understand, the settlers cut a ditch 12 ft. wide and 3 ft. deep, and nature has done the rest.

37. *Mr. Forbes.*] The money that has been spent on the eastern side has been kept in a separate account?—Yes.

38. And the expenses of the western side are kept in a separate account also?—Yes.

39. Are the rates spent according to the way they are raised—can you spend the eastern money on the western side?—No, certainly not; we are prevented by the Act.

40. The money raised on the eastern side must be spent on the eastern side?—Yes.

41. Can it be spent on the wall on the western side?—No, certainly not.

42. It can only be spent on works for the benefit of the eastern portion?—Yes.

43. And if they separated, would they need a Drainage Board to look after their streams?—I should say so.

44. And they would have to strike a rate spread over the whole district, so there would not be much gain in their being separated; and in your opinion as an engineer it would be necessary to have an engineer looking after the streams and watercourses?—Undoubtedly. The lower section is injured by the higher section.

45. *Mr. Guthrie.*] You say that an expenditure of £800 has been made on the eastern side?—Yes.

46. Is it a fact that you have only received £800 from the eastern side?—No, we have not received £800 from the eastern side: the expenditure is chiefly from capital.

47. *Mr. Allan.*] With regard to the question of money between the east and west sides, you refer, of course, to loan-money?—And rates also.

48. And those moneys are special moneys that are earmarked for special purposes. For example, you do not refer to the general rate for maintenance and general purposes?—I take it that the rate we raise on the east for maintenance is spent on the east, and the rate we raise on the west is spent on the west.

49. But all general charges, such as office charges—some £1,500 a year—are required and borne by the whole district?—Yes, proportionately. We keep a record of our time that we are engaged on either side, and put in a card, and we allocate our time each month.

50. *The Chairman.*] And do you keep separate accounts?—Yes, separate accounts for each side.

51. And you have done that for how long?—So far as I know, since the Board commenced operations.