114. How often?—About twice a week; and then the "Ruby," and after that the "Paeroa" and "Ohinemuri," and after that the "Taniwha" and "Waimarie."

115. Until you had the railway-line a few years ago the whole of your goods were brought up by steamer?—Yes.

116. And the steamers still continue to run six times a week?—To Te Puke, necessitating extra carriage of all goods from Te Puke to Paeroa Township.

117. Is it not a fact that between Te Puke and the Paeroa Township the river is of an extremely tortuous character?—Yes.

118. It is about six or seven miles long, while the distance by road between Paeroa and Te Puke is about three-quarters of a mile?—Absolutely ridiculous.

119. What do you call the township?—Paeroa Township. I should say it is about two miles to Te Puke.

120. It is very much longer by the river?—Yes.

121. What is it?—About six or seven miles, I should think.

122. I think you have a very luxurious growth of willows along that stream?—More so since the tailings came.

123. They have fed on the tailings?—No.

124. When you came here eighteen years ago, what did you pay for your land?—My land was bought when I was a child. I do not know what was paid for it.

125. What was it worth when you came up?—I could not tell. The county records will tell you.

126. Could you give us any information at all?—No; I was a boy then.

127. I suggest that it was worth about £2 or £3 an acre?—The flat land was worth considerably more than that—very much more.

128. Before you had the railway-line up?—Yes.

129. Can you give us any idea what it was worth?—When I came here first the house on the flats was let at £60 a year. The whole 40 acres was let as a farm.

130. *The Chairman.*] What is the house let for now?—The house is let as a dwellinghouse now at £40 a year, not as a farmhouse. It is high and dry, above the flood-level.

131. *Mr. Mitchelson.*] What extent of land goes with it?—About 5 acres.

132. *Mr. McVeagh.*] You remember the time the sludge-channel was proclaimed?—Yes.

133. That was about 1895—fifteen years ago. The increase of population has added very much to the value of your land during that time?—Yes.

134. The mining industry has brought the population here?—Yes, to a certain extent.

135. Nine-tenths of it, I should say?—Perhaps so.

136. Might I say that it has more than trebled or quadrupled the value of your land?—No, I think not.

137. To what extent do you say it has enhanced the value of your land?—We did let our place at the rate of £2 an acre, for grazing purposes, to a man who was supplying the creamery—merely as grass land. I reckon that land would be worth £40 an acre, taken on a 5-per-cent. basis.

138. At the present time?—Not since the last fresh. It would be worth £40 an acre for dairying purposes. That would be £2 an acre all the year round.

139. What would it be worth if there was no silt trouble, with the present population?—It would be worth £40 an acre if there was no silt trouble. If we had no more floods it would be worth about £1 5s. an acre renting-value.

140. You say £40 an acre for dairying purposes?—Yes.

141. Can you point to any land in this province for which £40 an acre is paid for dairying purposes?—We got paid £2 an acre rent for part of that property for dairying purposes.

142. Take the Waikato land?—I have had nothing to do with Waikato land.

143. They get £20 an acre?—I submit that we have received £2 an acre for this land.

144. When the sludge-channel was proclaimed, did you make any claim for compensation?—We were not aware of the extent of the evil of the cyanide process—as to how much these lands would suffer. If we had had that information we would have objected as one man.

145. Had you known, you would have objected by putting in your claims for compensation?—Certainly.

146. Your complaint is now of not being able to foresee the mischief that cyanide would do. Can you suggest a remedy?—No. We submit that the party that has caused the trouble is able to provide a remedy. The Government proclaimed the river a sludge-channel, and we take it that they can cancel the proclamation of the river as a sludge-channel.

147. Had you known, you would have made a claim at the time?—Yes.

148. The claim would have been made on the basis of the then value of your land?—We would have made no claim. We would have objected to the proclamation of the river as a sludge-channel.

149. But if you had made a claim then, you would have made it on the basis of the then value of your land?—I cannot say what we would have done.

150. What do you want now? Would you base your claim on the present value of the land, enhanced as it has been by the increased population, or would you make it on the then basis of its value?

The Chairman: I understand that this gentleman has not made a claim for compensation.

Mr. McVeagh: I submit that it is relative. The witness has already told us that if he could have foreseen the evils that would have resulted from the deposit of silt there would have been, first of all, an objection raised to the proclamation of the river as a sludge-channel. Assuming that a claim for compensation had been made, the point is, on what basis that claim would have been rested.