

8. *The Chairman.*] At what time of the tide do you come in?—Getting towards high tide. It still had to rise when I arrived.

9. *Mr. Tunks.*] Prior to your being in the "Taniwha," were you on other steamers trading up the river?—Yes, on the "Waimarie" and on the "Ohinemuri" about fifteen years ago. I was also on the "Paeroa."

10. What was the tonnage of the "Ohinemuri"?—I cannot remember. Her draught was about the same as that of the "Taniwha" when loaded, and when light I think she would draw a little more. She might draw up to 8 ft. loaded, but she would not exceed that.

11. Do you find any greater difficulty in navigating since the river has been declared a sludge-channel than before?—No, not from where I am running to Te Puke. It is just the same as I have always remembered it.

12. Have you had any instances in the way of sticking lately?—No; but that is not owing to the bottom, but to fogs and being late on the tide.

13. Then, if you do stick it is not due to the silting of the river, but to lateness on the tide or to fogs?—Yes.

14. I think you have some twelve stopping-places between Kopu and Te Puke?—Quite that, and we sometimes call at more.

15. Have you had occasion to give up any of your places of call below Te Puke since the river became a sludge-channel?—No.

16. As a matter of fact, has not the number of places increased greatly?—Yes, they are increasing all the time.

17. What sort of a river has it always been—always more or less shallow?—Yes; the effect of a fresh is sometimes to make a shoal, but it always sweeps away again.

18. That is to say, the river is able to manage whatever is brought down?—Yes.

19. Have you any reason to think it will not be so in the future?—I should not like to say that. I think it must be shoaly in the future.

20. Why do you think so?—Because there is such an amount of sand up here that I think it is filling up all these places, and eventually it must come down.

21. What sand are you referring to as coming down which you think will shoal the river?—It is the sand up here, which was not here years ago.

22. Have you found anything in the way of shallows at the entrance to the Gulf?—No, none.

23. Have you found any alteration in the width of the channel?—No.

24. When you are making these calls at these various places, have you ever to turn round or to swing out into the river?—It depends. We always swing.

25. I mean, you have an opportunity of judging whether the channel is closing in?—I have never noticed it. It has never interfered with me in turning. I have plenty of room. I have noticed no difference in that respect.

26. Do you know whether the fishing industry has been affected by the sludge-channel? Do you carry less fish now than you used to carry?—I do not think so. We have carried very little fish of late. I think it is according to the tide or weather. I do not think it is owing to any effects of the sand. I have never heard or noticed that the sand had any effect on the fishing.

27. Have you carried less fish within the last twelve months than during the previous twelve months?—We may have carried less, but it is so rarely we get fish. The "Whakatere" always carries the fish.

28. *Mr. Moresby.*] You used to go up to Paeroa in the old days: what boat were you in then?—The "Ohinemuri." I was in the "Kotuku" before that.

29. So you knew the Ohinemuri well in the early days?—Yes.

30. It was a good deep river then, was it not?—Yes.

31. And before these sands came it was easily navigable up to Paeroa, was it not?—Yes.

32. Can you tell us when you first noticed these sands coming down the river?—I cannot remember the year. It would be more than ten or twelve years ago.

33. It would be a few years after the river was declared a sludge-channel?—Yes.

34. I think you had to go down from one wharf to the other—from Wharf Street Wharf and then to the Railway Wharf?—Yes.

35. I think then to Pereniki's Bend?—Yes.

36. What did the river get affected with first of all?—This sand.

37. Do you know where this sand came from?—I could make a shrewd guess. There is plenty there now.

38. Then you were driven to the Junction, and that is where the "Waimarie" came to first of all?—Yes; but it was not owing to the silt first of all.

39. After you had been at the Junction a year or two it began to get pretty bad there?—Yes.

40. You examined the Junction at one time yourself, and did some engineering works there?—Yes; I put in a groin to confine the water. We did it gradually ourselves.

41. Can you give the Commission any idea whereabouts in the Junction you put it in?—I do not think it is to be seen now. I have not been there for years. The groin was put in on the opposite side to this, to give the water a scour. It has either gone or been silted up.

42. Can you remember what length this groin was?—I should think 200 ft.

43. Did it have the desired effect at the time you put it in?—Yes.

44. I think that groin was afterwards added to?—Yes.

45. But that was not owing to any recommendation by you?—No.

46. Were you using the Junction when it was lengthened?—Yes.

47. Can you recognise the photo which Mr. Kenny put in this morning?—Yes.

48. I think, between 1901 and 1902 the Junction itself began to get very bad?—It was about that. I cannot remember the year.