

80. *The Chairman.*] Unless you happen to stick for a whole tide?—Yes.

81. How often do you stick for a whole tide?—It is not often, and it is only caused by the fog.

82. *Mr. Mueller.*] So when you stick over a tide you only see that part of the river where you stick?—Yes.

83. *The Chairman.*] Where you have stuck, have you seen any serious change in the river at low tide—are the banks gradually pinching in?—No. Any changes that have taken place over a period of years are not serious for navigation purposes.

84. *Mr. Mueller.*] The dairy-farmers have a number of oil-launches, and they work the river at all stages of the tide?—Yes.

85. And they would have a very intimate knowledge of the river at low tide?—Yes.

86. And if they stated they consider the sides are pinching in, and that the deep-water channel is narrowing, you would not say they were telling falsehoods?—No.

87. You think they ought to know?—Yes.

88. At what time did you get up to Te Puke Wharf to-day?—10.20 a.m.

89. What was the state of the tide then?—It would be just on the ebb.

90. What was the state of the tide when you were at Netherton this morning?—It was coming in.

91. You know Fisher's landing?—Yes, I was there this morning.

92. Just 5 chains off Fisher's landing did not your boat take the ground this morning?—Yes: but she would not have done so if I had been there. I was at breakfast, and the mate does not know the channel very well.

93. How long was the boat stationary?—About ten minutes.

94. How long has the mate been with you?—About nine months. He had never been on the river before that.

95. *Mr. Mitchelson.*] We were told that the river had shoaled in two places—one above and another below Netherton—and that sometimes the steamer swept over to these banks?—Yes, that would be at low tide.

96. Is that bank increasing, or is the water as it has been in the last twelve years?—It is shallower, but very little. I know the place well. We stuck there years ago—eighteen years ago, in the "Kotuku."

97. We were also told about the bar outside the entrance: has that shoaled perceptibly in the last twelve years?—I have not noticed it.

98. Do you ever take soundings going out?—No.

99. We were also told the steamers sometimes scraped up the mud after getting across the bar?—Yes.

100. Is there any change in the bottom there? Has the water decreased in depth there in the last ten or twelve years?—I have not noticed it. Years ago I have seen the "Paeroa" stuck there at low tide.

101. The "Paeroa's" day was long before the operations had commenced at Waihi?—Oh, no! they had begun then.

102. *The Chairman.*] Do you see any difference in the nature of this bar at Opani Point—is it harder in any way?—No.

103. Is the bottom any harder outside the Thames?—There is no difference due to silting.

104. Do you stir up the mud at all going across at low water?—Yes; it is very thick.

105. Do you find any difference in that mud?—No.

106. It is of the same character as it used to be?—Yes. We take soundings with a pole, and you can press the pole down feet.

107. We were told that there is a crust on the top of the mud now, and they have to press the pole to go through it: that is not your experience?—No. The river is hard on the Thames side and soft on the Piako side.

108. We are told it is possible for the sand or silt from the Thames to get washed up into the river in a north-west gale: what is your experience of that?—It may be washed on to the flats, but I do not think it would be washed into the river.

109. What does the flat consist of?—Mud and sand.

110. Soft mud?—Slushy mud on the surface, but not of great depth.

111. Is there much animal life on it?—I have never noticed any. I suppose there are some pipis.

112. Is there much sea-grass growing on it?—Nothing of that kind.

113. Are there any pipis there now?—I believe so. I think I saw some Maoris below Kopu getting shellfish a little while ago.

114. Have you ever done any poling in the river itself?—No.

115. Do you think you settle more, or less, in the bottom now?—I do not see any difference in the bottom.

116. *Mr. Myers.*] You said that sand accumulates on the banks in the floods?—Yes.

117. And do you find any special conditions on the banks with regard, for instance, to willows where this accumulates?—No. It may be, but I would not notice the sand so plain where there are willows.

118. Do you find these accumulations are generally in the neighbourhood of willows, or is that not your experience?—No. Where I notice it is in the clear spots.

119. You are speaking, of course, of the lower Waihou?—Yes.

120. You have spoken of the shallow at the Junction near Mr. Kenny's place?—Yes.

121. Are you able to say whether twenty years ago there were shoals in that neighbourhood?—Yes, it was always a shoaly place.