

8. Varying in depth to what extent?—From a thin deposit up to 2 ft.
9. *The Chairman.*] Where is the 2 ft.?—About 5 or 10 chains from the river.
10. *Mr. Mueller.*] What effect has this on the grass?—It destroys the grass.
11. Did you notice the deposit that has been referred to as slimcs?—Yes, latterly.
12. Since when?—About six months ago, more particularly since the last big flood about two months ago.
13. And does that deposit adhere very closely to the grass?—It does.
14. Is it difficult to remove?—Yes; it takes a considerable amount of rain to remove it.
15. Do you find that the cattle will not eat that stuff if they can help it?—Unless they are compelled to do so.
16. Have you had some of your cattle that were compelled to eat this stuff?—Yes.
17. What effect did it have upon their condition?—It did not improve them.
18. Did it have the opposite effect?—Yes.
19. Did you try to plough in some of this stuff on your land?—Not exactly on ours, but I have observed the man next door, Mr. Lowrie, who has a lease from Cassrels, do it. That land is directly on the river-bank—Pukateawainui No. 1, I think.
20. What thickness was this deposit that he ploughed in?—From 3 in. to 6 in., that was deposited by the 1907 flood, and he has been cropping the ground ever since, and it has an effect on the crops.
21. *The Chairman.*] What are the effects?—In 1908 he put in oats where the silt had been ploughed in—very little matured 6 in. or 8 in. At the other end of the paddock, where there was no silt, there was a heavy crop. I noticed it more particularly the following season. Maize was sown, and they matured 2 ft. where the silt was mixed with the soil, and they attained a height of from 8 ft. to 9 ft. where there was no silt. It was the same crop.
22. Do you mean to tell me that there was some portion of Pukateawainui where there was no silt?—Yes; the water did not flow along the bank all the way, and part of this block was not covered with silt.
23. How it is that yours was covered with silt up to 2 ft.?—It was carried in in the outfall drain.
24. *Mr. Mueller.*] How long have you been in that part?—About thirty years.
25. And you have known this Pukateawainui Block practically the whole time?—Yes.
26. Have you seen good crops taken off the part of the block where the silt has now been ploughed in?—Yes, it is the best of the land. It was not the quality of the land that caused the failure of the crops.
27. Does the big outfall drain go through part of your land?—Yes, the boundary between Bertelsen's and our place.
28. And it flows into the Ohinemuri?—Yes, and out of it too when there is a flood.
29. Has that drain become silted up?—I would not say it has been silted up with silt, because the bulk of the water flowing in and out choked it; but the side drains flowing into the main outlet drains are choked up.
30. Have you had to clean your drain out from time to time?—Not lately—the place has been leased; but they should have been.
31. Opposite your land you have been constantly on the river during the last thirty years?—Yes.
32. What can you say about the navigation of the river in your experience?—I say it has silted up from the Junction to Paeroa. It is almost impossible to get a small boat up; in fact, I have given up trying to get to Paeroa in the launch. I live about two miles below Paeroa.
33. What does your launch draw?—Two feet.
34. And in that river the steamers from Auckland used to regularly come up?—Yes.
35. Where you cannot bring your launch now?—Yes.
36. You consider that your property has depreciated in value?—Considerably.
37. Could you state how many head of stock you think that place would carry under natural conditions?—It has had from 100 to 150 head on it at different times, and in good condition—stock reared on the place and living there.
38. *The Chairman.*] For more than six months at a time?—I could not exactly say, as I was not in charge of them.
39. What is the carrying-capacity of that land?—It is practically nil. We had a sale of cattle there—about thirty-five—a few weeks ago. We did not think they would winter. There are eleven left—as many as could live there.
40. Before the flood or afterwards?—Just after the last big flood. I have now from eleven to thirteen cattle.
41. You do not know how they are going to pull through the winter?—I am not certain.
42. *Mr. Mueller.*] The land at present could not carry any more?—No, I do not think so. It is directly after the floods when the grass is destroyed. In a few weeks' time it picks up. To enable them to live in the meantime is the difficulty.
43. Does the grass get back into its old condition, or do you notice any difference in the grass?—No, I have not taken any particular notice. I do not notice any difference, but it is destroyed in the meantime.
44. You are not in a position to put into figures the loss you or your mother have suffered?—No.
45. *Mr. McVeagh.*] How far from your property is the railway-line?—It is further off from one place than another. One end touches. Where the road crosses the railway is our back boundary.
46. That part of the line was swept away in the flood of 1910—the ballast was swept across the country?—Yes.