

67. Have you formed any opinion on it yourself?—No.

68. With regard to the gold duty, at the time you were in the Council, did they assist prospectors?—Yes.

69. Out of what money were they assisted?—The gold duty according to statute is county revenue. They were helped out of county revenue.

70. Are you able to give us to what extent that help was afforded?—No, I could not do so now; but it was done.

71. Did the County Council assist prospecting by making roads and tracks to the different mines out of county revenue?—Yes.

72. I think you know of your own knowledge that the roads in this county were expensive to keep up—most of the main roads?—They used to be.

73. Upon the roads leading to the mines, over which machinery had to be carried—had money to be expended on those roads?—That was in the old times. I do not know how far the railway has relieved that now.

74. But where there is no railway?—Yes, that is so.

75. Are you able to tell us the number of miles of roads?—No.

76. *Mr. Tunks.*] A good deal of reference has been made to this island opposite your place—this new island: can you tell us what it is composed of?—I know that it is mining tailings.

77. Why are you sure?—Because I went into the question very particularly when I was a witness before the Mines Committee. I took samples of mining tailings opposite my place and right up to Mackaytown, and at different places on the river as far down as Netherton, and also samples of the sand up the Waihou, because the question was raised that it was sand from the Waihou that came down.

78. Did you take any sand from this particular island, and test it?—No: the island as it was then is feet below the present island.

79. You are judging by the similarity of appearance?—Yes.

80. It was similar to the substance that you tested at that time, but you did not make any actual experiments?—That is so.

81. Now you tell us that from that island across the river it has shallowed a good deal?—Yes.

82. Can you tell us what that shallowing has been caused by—whether it is sand from the Waihou or tailings?—No. I have not been examining this question. I have had nothing whatever to do with it. I speak only as a person living on the bank of the river. I was formerly employed by the Council, but I have not since been employed by any one to make observations or experiments.

83. Had you experimented formerly for the section across the river at that time?—No.

84. So that you cannot say what the condition of the river-bed was?—No. The thing was to consider what the river was bringing down, and that is what I directed my attention to. I presume you are speaking of the condition of the River Waihou opposite my place. I am speaking generally of the Waihou and Ohinemuri up as far as Mackaytown.

85. Did not your investigations show that a considerable amount of river-silt had been brought down by the Waihou River?—Yes, and that is evident now when the water is low. At the island at the mouth of the river it is visible to the naked eye. The Waihou sand is visible to the naked eye—it is always on the roll.

86. Would you not expect to find a considerable amount of Waihou sand on that island?—Yes, at the base of it.

87. So that if there is any shallowing of the river from the base outwards that would probably be Waihou sand?—Not necessarily.

88. But probably?—Not, even probably.

89. Why not?—The Waihou sand, in my opinion, is always going down the river, and then the silt comes and deposits as it goes: it is much heavier. My own theory is that if you could get a section of the river now you would find a deposit of Waihou sand, and above that a bed of tailings, and then probably another layer of Waihou sand. But in the old times this was always on the move. If a steamer stuck in the river for a quarter of an hour, the working of the screw would make a change then. It will not do that now. You get on one of the banks and you cannot clear it with the screw.

90. You attribute that to mining tailings?—Yes. The test is easy. You can test it in a test-tube. Leave them for a day or two, and then turn them over. The Waihou sand will roll back, and the other will not roll back.

91. You suggest that the mining tailings will cohere, but the river-sand will not?—Yes, especially the finer stuff.

92. *The Chairman.*] The present tailings—what has been coming down in the last few years?—Yes, in the last few months I should say the tailings have become more adherent.

93. *Mr. Tunks.*] Can you tell us whether prior to 1895 there was any flood on the property now known as McKee's?—I know there has been a flood there, but I could not state the date: but the whole place was covered.

94. Was there not a big flood in 1886?—Yes, but I was not living down there then.

95. You have had a flood up to your verandah-steps?—That was the highest flood except the January one and this one in March. These two were higher than the one before 1895. The latter was not as high. The boat was tied to the verandah-post, but it was prior to 1895.

96. The following are questions 154 and 155, and your replies, in your evidence before the Mines Committee: "Then, again, I think you made a statement that you have had floods in the Upper and Lower Waihou when there was no flood in the Ohinemuri River?—Scarcely that. I think I said Waihou floods and Ohinemuri floods. The Waihou floods are when the Waihou is