

unknown." It was known and used among certain mining companies, but it was not known among the general community of the district.

68. Were not the Crown Mine and the Martha working the cyanide just at that time?—They were working it, but the rights they had were purchased from the Cassels Company privately.

69. But it had by that time been proved a success?—They were working it under a different system. They were dry-crushing. They were not putting through the quantities they are now under the wet-crushing system.

70. I think the cyanide was working a good bit before that—it was thoroughly well established by 1895?—I say it was not known to the general community in the district.

71. You have put in a list showing the number of people who owned farms at that time, and who would have claimed if they had known about it or had wished to claim?—I put in the number who were entitled to claim.

72. Did any of them claim, do you know?—None of them did to my knowledge.

73. Were you in the district then?—I did not go to the district till the year after, and my knowledge on this point is only based on what I have been told.

74. Tell us the reasons why they did not claim?—I could, from the same source.

75. What were they?—That they did not want to interfere with the mining industry.

76. They considered that the mines would be a good market for them, and did not wish to interfere with them?—Not altogether. They did not know that the deposit of tailings in the river was going to do them any damage.

77. Supposing the Proclamation had not been issued, and was issued now, have you any idea what claims would be made: I mean to say, could you give a rough estimate of how much would be claimed?—They would claim the full value of their lands, so that they could get out of it.

78. Have you any idea what amount the total claims would reach to?—No. They would reach a very considerable sum, though. There would be pretty well the whole of that 24,000 acres, and you can average it at about £10 an acre.

79. They would claim that, but it does not follow they would get it?—No.

80. I suppose this land that is affected has changed hands many times?—Not since January.

81. But before January?—Yes.

82. I mean to say, after the people began to know that silt was coming down the river?—Yes. For some years after the Proclamation no effects were felt.

83. Is it a fact that any people have bought land at a depreciated price in consequence of the silt coming down and their taking a risk?—No; but the appreciated price is in consequence of the increase of dairying in the district.

84. Then, has the land increased in value?—From that cause, dairying.

85. Notwithstanding the silt coming down?—I do not think it has increased in value to the extent it would have increased if there had been no silt.

86. Still, it has increased?—Yes.

87. The 100 acres that you say are absolutely destroyed: would no one buy them?—I doubt very much whether they would. I would not.

88. In case any report was made by a Commission or this Committee that compensation should be paid, do you think that those people who came in afterwards and bought land with the knowledge that the river was a sludge-channel should be compensated?—I think so. They suffered through no fault of their own.

89. But you say that the land did not increase in value so much as it would have if the silt had not come down?—Yes.

90. Are not those purchasers getting the benefit of that practical depreciation: they are not paying so much as they would for similar land in other places?—In that case they would not get so much compensation.

91. Still, you think they are entitled to some?—Yes. They are suffering through no fault of their own.

92. *Hon. Mr. McGowan.*] You say that the flood-waters affect a large area?—Yes.

93. Which do you consider the heavier of the tailings or slimes—the material that may be brought down out of drains, the material that comes with any flood, or the mining *débris*?—The mining *débris*.

94. If the mining *débris* is the heavier, would you expect to get that over the whole flood-area?—No.

95. So that the *débris* left after a big flood would not be mining *débris*, but would be the flood-slimes that come with all floods—in fact, whenever there is a flood the water gets turbid and white?—Yes, there would be a proportion of other *débris* in it, but there is a slime in this mining *débris* which is carried a very considerable distance—carried over everything.

96. You cannot have it both light and heavy; it is either heavier or lighter. You have stated that you consider it is heavier. If you want to say it is lighter, all right. I only want your statement?—You used the word "tailings," I think.

97. I used the words "slimes or tailings"—call it what you like: are the mining slimes heavier than the ordinary slimes that are carried down in any flood?—No. Experiments that we have made show that they take about three days to deposit in some instances.

98. Do you consider that this 100 acres that you referred to is destroyed, or simply affected?—I consider it is destroyed.

99. Absolutely destroyed?—Yes.

100. What was that 100 acres valued at before the Proclamation took place in 1895?—I do not know.

101. Do you know what the value of the land was when you went to Ohinemuri?—About £6 an acre.

102. That would be the general value of dairying land?—Yes.