

107. Where is that water to go?—I consider that it would work away off the tailings and leave them dry.

108. Where would it go to?—Back to the river, or into any drain or any place that you might provide for it.

109. Do you think it would go away in a state of ordinary clear water?—Yes, I consider it would go away very clean, because if you give tailings time they will settle down and the water become clear.

110. That is so with tailings, but did you ever see that take place with slimes?—I have not had a great amount of experience with finely ground slimes.

111. Have you ever been in any of the boats coming up the river from Auckland without calling at the Thames?—Only once. They generally come *via* the Thames.

112. Are you aware of the fact that the slimes can be seen some miles out in the Thames Harbour?—No.

113. With regard to your own property, you say that the water comes into the front from the Waihou or Thames River and at the back comes into the back of your premises. Now, where does the water that comes into the back come from?—From the Waihou River.

114. What part of the Waihou?—At a place called Te Awaiti, where there are the flax-mills.

115. How far is that from Te Aroha?—A long way—about three or four miles past the Junction.

116. Is it above the Junction?—Yes.

HAORA TARERANUI made a statement and was examined. (No. 3.)

*Witness:* I live at Ohinemuri. My tribe is Ngatitamatera. The petition of my tribe and my fellow-sufferers, the Europeans, is before this Committee. I should like first of all to submit to you a report by Judge Edgar, of the Native Land Court, upon this matter, which I think the Committee should see. I am here for the purpose of supporting the petitions from my Maori friends and my European friends. I may say that I was here in the year 1900 in connection with a grievance that the Ngatitamatera Tribe were then labouring under—that the water of the Ohinemuri was all spoiled. The then Premier, the late Mr. Seddon, redressed the grievance. He supplied clear water for the Maoris. I may point out that our trouble commenced from the time of which I speak. We, the Maoris, did not at that time anticipate that the trouble would attain such gigantic proportions as it now has; but during recent years we have found that the whole of the river is, practically speaking, filled up.

*Mr. Herries:* What river do you refer to?

*Witness:* The Ohinemuri River. I may, perhaps, have something to say about the Waihou River by-and-by. I have described the commencement of the trouble. Now, I think I am quite safe in saying that at least 500 acres of our land have been destroyed. The Ohinemuri Goldfield was, in the first place, ceded by my tribe, and we who are outside of the goldfield area should be protected and have our wrongs redressed by the Government. I am sure that members of this Committee can see for themselves that in the deed handing over the goldfields all that is carefully provided for; but we are not protected under the deed as we should be, although it provides that we should be so protected. I believe we lost quite 150 acres of our land this year. All the potatoes and other crops were destroyed. That is irrespective entirely of grass lands, which would come to a very much greater area. I think I may say that I myself have lost about 50 acres of potatoes this year. I have seen it stated in some newspaper that the dirt has come down the Waihou from Matamata to Ohinemuri. I say that if the country is looked at from just below the Karangahake batteries down to the mouth of the Waihou, there will be found this sand, this deposit, all along the whole of that area of country. I say there is no sand like this along the Waihou or any of the streams coming down from Matamata. It never came down the drains from Matamata and Waihou. I know all the principal streams running from the Matamata district, and have known them for years. There is no sense in attempting to distort it and make it appear that this trouble comes from there. I say definitely that the water that is causing the trouble at Ohinemuri is from the mines. And here the sand has come down further and smothered up all the land about my kainga and all round there, and it is from the mines and nowhere else. I have for seven consecutive years now been refencing and refencing our burial-places, and they keep on getting smothered up with this deposit. If the Minister would like to go with me there I could show him the tips of a lot of fence-posts just showing above this deposit. That is the fourth fence that I have put up. I have put up a new fence this year for this same burial-place, simply because each fence successively has been covered up by this sand.

117. *Hon. Mr. McGowan.*] What height is the fence?—It is of eight wires. I put up another fence this year, and the tips of the posts of the last one can be still seen.

118. What would the height of the fence be?—The new fence just put up is 6 ft. high.

119. Were the others as high?—The same height.

120. That is to say, 18 ft. of tailings?—I think, at any rate, there is a deeper deposit than the height of this room.

121. It is not even 18 ft.?—The deposit is higher than that. Now, in the year 1903 the fence I then put up was 6 ft. high, and there are just the tips of the posts showing now. If the Minister would like to go, I can show him for his own satisfaction on the ground. I am describing the troubles first. I can describe the Ohinemuri River by-and-by. I have said that an area of over 400 acres of our land has been destroyed. The trouble commenced just down below the goldfield, and extended right down to the mouth of the river. I am not speaking now about the injury the pakehas have suffered, but merely what we ourselves, the Maoris, have suffered. I think I was born at Ohinemuri myself, and all my people lived there. From my childhood up I have known all the good points about the Ohinemuri River, and the benefit derived by us from the neighbour-