

15. And what would you like to see done with regard to that?—Our land certainly taken out of this Drainage Board. It is of no benefit to us. In fact, we are paying rates to keep this embankment in repair.

16. What would be the effect without any embankment at all?—Previously I had about 150 acres of my land dry—the floods did not come over it. In 1868 the river did not overflow on the east side. The natural embankments were very much lower on the west side, but since the embankment my farm is really the river-bed in flood-time.

17. *Mr. Hogg.*] It is only since the embankments have been made on the west side that the east side has suffered?—Yes.

18. *Mr. Guthrie.*] Is silt deposited on your land?—No, not so much now. The current is so strong that it carries it away to sea. As a matter of fact, the river-bed is scoured out after every flood, and it is much better after floods.

19. The current remains in the old bed alongside the embankment?—For a time. Of course, it goes right over the place, and we have 10 ft. of water on the place for a time, and when it gets back into its old bed again the river has been all scoured out. There is very little silt left on my place now, as the current is so strong.

20. In 1868 you say the water did not go over this place?—Well, partly. I got the flood from the hills really. I am alongside the hills to a certain extent, and there were at least 150 acres on the river-bank that were not flooded.

21. And now you say there is 10 ft. of water on that?—Yes.

22. The banks are not 10 ft. high, are they?—Yes, more than that.

23. And they bank the whole water back on to you?—Yes. When I say “10 ft. high,” there is 10 ft. of water on the lowest part of my land. There is not 10 ft. of water on the natural banks on my side, but on the centre of the farm there would be 10 ft. The railway-line is covered to an extent of 4 ft. or 5 ft.

24. It was stated yesterday that in some cases the silt had deposited to a great height—in fact, as high as three ordinary fences?—Yes, it has.

25. That is a fact?—Yes, but not on my land. There is a place lower down where it is very bad, but there is very little silt on my place, because there is too great a current. Of course, when these embankments break on the other side, that is the great danger, as we have great washouts. In the 1887 floods I had large holes cut in my property, and a barn and stable washed away. The river drops suddenly and produces a scour. Of course those embankments always break in a big flood, and the people on the other side suffer. They do not benefit much by the embankments.

26. *Mr. Lang.*] What are you petitioning for, to be cut out of the area or for compensation?—We want to be cut out of the area as well.

27. Do you in any way attribute these big floods to the silting-up of the bed of the river lower down?—No, I do not think so—no, certainly not. The river has widened since forty-five years ago to my knowledge, but I do not think it has silted up to any extent.

28. There has been a cut made through it?—That is on the East Taieri side—the Silverstream. That is not the Taieri River.

29. Do you think that the scour through there has to any appreciable extent filled up the bed of the creek, and so impeded the flow or escape of the water of the Taieri River?—It is gravel in the Silverstream River. There is no gravel in the Taieri River—it is only silt.

30. And you say that does not affect it?—It does not affect it.

31. *Mr. Witty.*] I understood you to say that in the 1868 flood you had 150 acres practically dry?—Yes.

32. Then you would imply that there was 10 ft. of water on that dry land, is that so?—Well, not on the 150 acres. There would be 6 ft. on the 150 acres.

33. How long have you been paying rates—just since the formation of the new Board?—Yes. We had never been in any Board prior to that.

34. You have never paid rates before?—No.

35. *Mr. Forbes.*] Has this Drainage Board completed its works in connection with the river?—No, I could not tell you. I do not know anything about it.

36. You do not know whether they have a programme of work to be done?—I do not think it is possible to do anything to help my property from being flooded.

37. But have they mentioned any works that they intend to do in the future?—No.

38. There are no other works that they have mentioned doing other than what is already there?—No.

39. There are none indicated that would be likely to give you any benefit at all?—No.

*Mr. MacGregor:* I am authorised by the President of the Board, who is present, to state that the Board has come to the conclusion that in all probability no works will be carried out by the Board that will benefit Mr. Palmer, and the Board intends at the next classification to put all the land belonging to Mr. Palmer, Mr. Christie, and somebody else—that is, the flooded land—in Class “D,” which is non-rateable.

*Witness:* But why should we be in Class “D”? Why should we be in the Board at all, as we should be under Class “D”?]

40. *Mr. Allen.*] Supposing you accepted that, do you know that the Board has power to re-classify at any time?—Yes, I understand so.

41. And a fresh Board may take a different view from the Chairman of the present Board, and possibly classify you higher?—Yes. I am really paying rates to injure my property.

42. *Mr. Witty.*] Whilst Class “D” is not rated at present, if it is classed at all, they have power to rate it?—No, I do not think so.

43. *Mr. MacGregor.*] What is the distance from North Taieri or Mosgiel to your place?—I suppose sixteen or eighteen miles.

44. Down the river?—To Otokia in a straight line, yes.