

81. The tendency will be to keep the Silverstream clearer than it would otherwise be?—Yes.

82. You referred to the gravel, and said that certain works would be destroyed unless something was done to prevent the gravel coming down the Silverstream?—Yes.

83. If the gravel comes from beyond the district, has the Board any power to stop it?—We have power to go outside our district to do works.

84. Do you know as a fact that the gravel is coming from above the district?—I do not know. All the information I can give you is that the fall and the quality of the ground there is sufficient to cause the gravel to travel down.

JAMES CARRAELL RENTON examined. (No. 15.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—A farmer. I produce a photograph of the Silverstream in the Owhiro Subdivision. Seventeen years and a half ago I took up my present property on the east side near the Silverstream—within $4\frac{1}{2}$ chains of the Silverstream.

2. At what distance from where it junctions with the Taieri?—About a mile and a half. When I took up my holding it was dry, and I paid £25 an acre for it. Twelve years later all my troubles began with the water overflowing its banks from the Silverstream at the point shown on the photograph.

3. *Mr. MacGregor.*] How much of the river has been filled up with gravel?—There is about a mile of gravel and about half a mile of willows. That is during my time.

4. How much has been filled up with gravel during the last twelve months?—Eight to ten chains has been filled up further up the river since the Board came into existence.

5. Within thirteen months?—Yes.

6. Do you know where it comes from?—I could not say the exact spot, but I have been told it comes from a canal that exists there.

7. But you have no knowledge of your own?—No.

8. What is the state of your land now through that?—About thirty acres of land belonging to me is practically useless. When I say “useless,” I have not been able to make any use of it for the last five years.

9. Is there anything else you wish to state to the Committee?—There has been a great deal said about Mr. Shand and his swamp land.

10. In your opinion, is it necessary to have a Board of some kind?—It will be necessary to have a Board of some kind to keep it open. A stream of that kind will always get filled up with gravel and timber.

11. And, in your opinion, is it better for that part of the district that it should remain within the present Board?—Yes.

12. Or have a separate Board of your own?—It would not be fair to make a separate Board with such a few, unless the whole district were kept in.

13. *The Chairman.*] Are there not enough, in your opinion?—There are not enough on the low land to maintain a Board. If that gravel did not come down there we should not require a Board at all. That is the only trouble.

14. But is there not gravel down further, where the water comes up on to the other people?—That is only in times of flood, and it is not gravel, but silt.

15. You are alluding to what is constantly with you?—Yes. It is lying there over a good number of acres to the extent of about 3 ft.

16. Then, is there no outlet to the lower end to dry the land by draining it?—They are draining it now, but, of course, it is in such small dimensions that it does not take the water away quick enough.

17. That is in flood-times?—No, under ordinary conditions.

18. I have seen the Silverstream when it was not very large, and an ordinary drain would take the whole lot?—It is the normal conditions under which we live that we complain about. It is not exactly the floods.

19. *Mr. Guthrie.*] Do you think the east side should be included in the rating-area?—Yes.

20. *Mr. Anderson.*] Where is your land situated?—My sections are 64, 65, 67, and 82.

21. Your land is naturally lower than the surrounding country?—It is now.

22. But has it not always been?—No, it was one of the highest portions in that district. It was one of the original sections held by Brown forty years before my time. It was one of the best sections in the district.

23. The explanation we had some time ago was that this was a lagoon?—That is so, but the lagoon is some distance from my property. During my time there have been millions of loads of gravel carted out of that stream. I have taken out a thousand loads myself, and still the gravel comes down. The stream has been cut and sent down there.

24. *Mr. Witty.*] Who looked after the Silverstream before the present Board?—Nobody.

25. I understood you to say that since this Board existed the stuff had come down worse?—At a certain point.

26. Within the last twelve months?—Yes.

27. And I understood you to say there were also a lot of willows?—Yes, that is correct. They are to be seen in the photograph.

28. Do not those willows tend to stop the shingle?—Certainly.

29. Surely the County Council ought to compel you to clear the willows?—That is what the County Council should have done before, and we should have had no willows to-day.

30. You say your troubles began twelve years after you got the land?—Yes.

31. Whom had it troubled before then?—I do not know. I am only speaking for myself.