17. And the West expenditure?—£6,111 13s.

18. So far as they have gone have the works realised your expectations?—We have done no works of a permanent nature. As I pointed out, a reasonable time must elapse before the Board commits itself to any scheme that will be effective. The Taieri River is a factor, and also the Mill Creek and the Owhiro Creek.

19. Do you think the scheme is of such a comprehensive character that it will benefit the whole of the properties that are contributing?—Yes, it must of necessity do that, in my opinion, but whether or not to the same extent that they are now classified is an open question; but provision is made under the Act that the Board "shall" classify, and not "may." If we find after the scheme is completed that there are some parts deriving more benefit than others, then the contributions will be differentiated.

20. *Mr. Guthrie.*] You said it has been contended that the gravel has been washed out of the cut, and that it has come down and spoiled the other lands below it?—Yes.

21. And in your statement it struck me that you want to establish that the middle has come out of those two cuts?—No. There is another point I wish to bring before you; but, while touching upon that, the fact remains that had that cut not been made—that is, assuming that some gravel comes from the higher reaches—there was no possible way of that gravel reaching the lower channel. Immediately above that cut Mr. Gow has stated that the gravel has been protected by willows and groins, thereby obviating any fear of that portion of the gravel coming down, but the upper gravel comes down from that bend, extending up to the Blackbridge. There is about a mile and a half of the river-channel not protected, and it is not straight. At my brother's place he is a great sufferer from the floods; they not only take the gravel away, but wash the ground away too. The formation is 10 ft. or 12 ft. of alluvial deposit, and below that it is simply a gravel-bed. It strikes the wall 12 ft. high, and the gravel tumbles down. That is the way the bulk of the gravel comes down, and the Board will have to stop that; and the cut that is leading that to the lower reaches is causing the damage. If the cut had not been made it would never have reached the lower ground. The point I make is that some provision is absolutely necessary for the lower ground if you give effect to the request for severance. Those landowners will be faced with the problem of not only dealing with their own drainage difficulties, but with coping with this gravel which comes down the stream, and keeping open permanently the way for the higher people. It is an engineering point, but it will be admitted that if this silting process is not stopped, then it is only a question of time before it affects the higher lands. At present it is only reaching the low-lying lands, but, given a few years, and it must affect what are now the safe lands.

22. If that scour is cutting it out of the upper reaches, why is it not carried out?—The fall is not heavy enough. When you go to the lower reaches in flood-time, when both the Silverstream and the Taieri River are in flood, you are practically in dead water.

23. Then the water comes not only from the Taieri, but from the upper reaches as well?—Yes.

24. The scour goes on to the upper reaches?—Yes.

25. There is some portion where it is dead water apparently?—Yes.

26. Caused by the downflow of the water and the outflow from the Taieri River?—Yes.

27. Are there any means by which you could get a continuous scour from the higher reaches, or is it impossible to do so?—Well, that of course is an engineering point, but the scheme laid before the Board for its consideration was one which, if it had been given effect to, would have made it practically impossible for any portion of the Taieri to be flooded by the Silverstream.

28. You have a scheme before you?—That was the scheme.

29. Has the Board done anything to take the water away from that low swamp? The position apparently is this: The water of the high reaches follows down and reaches the depression not far from the Taieri River?—That lagoon. That is an extent of, roughly, 70 or 80 acres.

30. Is that being filled up?—Not now; it has been in the past. I will explain why. The connecting-link was this portion I have just told you about, the 46 chains that the Board has cleaned out. We cleaned it out to a width of 20 ft., and to a depth of 3 ft. of pure gravel, and emptied it into the river.

31. If you get the water into that lagoon, what means have you of taking it from the lagoon into the river?—Continue the channel into the river.

32. Is there not a back section of the Taieri water against the incoming water—the back water coming from the higher levels and forming dead water at this lagoon?—Yes, that is the action that takes place. Everywhere where this condition existed, the Taieri River is the larger body of water which carries the larger flood; then the tributary streams discharge into that, and it is a question which body of water is the higher. We have sometimes both of them in flood at the same time. Under those conditions, of course, the Taieri River, being the larger body of water, will hold back and pound the Silverstream water, but under other conditions, when there is only a Silverstream flood in existence and no Taieri River flood, that water would have a free access to the river. Under present conditions, assuming that the Taieri River was never in flood, which is an impossible assumption, the Silverstream water would not get down the Taieri River without the Taieri River being channelled and controlled.

33. When this cut was first started above, was it doing more good than it is doing at the present time to the people up above?—It is doing more good to them now than it did originally, as I told you. The original cut was not sufficiently large to free them. But continuing the water in that small channel has had the effect of converting it from a cut of 6 ft. wide and 3 ft. deep into a channel 15 ft. wide and 6 ft. deep.

34. Is that channel, as shown on the photograph, as efficient as it was in the beginning—when the photo was taken?—No, certainly not. It is practically inoperative. We have cleaned it out to the extent of 46 chains, but that is only a temporary work.