

12. You did not hear that land over there was under flood?—No.
13. You are not far from the Hikutaia Stream?—About two miles and a half.
14. Is it not a fact that farms along the banks of the Hikutaia Stream have been flooded more during the last few years than in previous years?—Not that I am aware of.
15. Could you say they have not?—No.
16. *The Chairman.*] How do you get your milk to the creamery?—By launch.
17. Have you noticed any variation in the river?—During the last few years the depth of water has become less and less.
18. In the channel itself did you notice any variation?—I have never taken soundings in the channel.

CLARKE JOHN VEDDER examined. (No. 23.)

1. *Mr. Mueller.*] Your name is Clarke John Vedder, and you own land adjoining Mr. Thomas's?—Yes; 117 acres, part of Koronae No. 3 Block. I have 20 chains frontage to the river.
2. Has your land been injuriously affected?—Yes.
3. Have you suffered loss in the same manner as Mr. Thomas?—Pretty well.
4. How did you get your milk to the creamery?—In a small pulling-boat.
5. Can you state whether the navigation has altered since you went there?—Yes, by the sides of the river filling up.
6. Has the deep-water channel become narrower?—Yes.
7. You have heard Mr. Thomas's evidence?—Yes.
8. Can you corroborate what Mr. Thomas has said?—In most things.
9. *Mr. McVeagh.*] When did you measure the deep-water channel?—I never measured it; but there is a great difference between what it is at the present time and what it was three or four years ago. You can notice it with your eye, without measuring it.
10. Where did you observe it three or four years ago?—Just below my house and Mr. Thomas's.
11. What was the width of it three or four years ago?—I could not give you the measurements.
12. Have you any approximate idea of the width of the channel?—I put up the wharf between three and four years ago, and it was 2 ft. in the water at low water, and now there is 5 ft. fully of what they call silt and tailings between the wharf and the water. We have got to lengthen the wharf. The river is narrowing from bank to bank.
13. Have you noticed the material that is causing this narrowing?—Yes. I believe it to be tailings.
14. Might it not possibly be something else?—I do not think so. It is the same as the other stuff that is deposited along the river.
15. How do you distinguish between tailings and flood alluvium?—One is a different colour from the other.
16. When did you take up this land?—I think between five and six years ago.
17. *The Chairman.*] Who owns the land immediately opposite yours?—Mr. Moore.
18. Is the river pinching immediately opposite you in the same way as you describe?—Yes.
19. To a greater or lesser extent?—It is more so than in front of my house.

PAEROA, THURSDAY, 26TH MAY, 1910.

Mr. Myers, with Mr. Tunks, said he appeared for the mining companies.

CHARLES OHLSON examined. (No. 24.)

1. *Mr. Mueller.*] You are a labourer residing at Paeroa?—Yes. I have been here for eighteen years.
2. And during that time have you spent much of your time on the river?—Yes, a considerable portion of my time.
3. Have you taken soundings for different parties?—I have been with different parties taking soundings. I cannot remember the first year I took soundings, but it would probably be about 1895, when Mr. McArthur became Engineer.
4. Were you taking samples for a company?—Yes, an Australian company.
5. From your knowledge of the river during the last fifteen or sixteen years, can you state whether the floods now are more severe or less severe than they were?—They are more severe.
6. What do you attribute that to?—The tailings are silting up the river.
7. Can you compare the depth of the river between those early times and the present time?—Yes: there are places where eighteen years ago there was 10 ft. or 12 ft. of water, and there are only a couple of feet there now.
8. How far down the river have your observations taken you?—I used to take soundings below Kenny's—between Thorp's Bend and the Junction—in the Ohinemuri principally, and below the Junction.
9. What will be the effect if nothing is done as regards the river?—It will silt up altogether if they go on much longer.
10. Have you had experience as regards the deposit of fine slimes on the grass?—Yes.
11. What has been the result of that?—You could see it lying on the top of the grass, and it works itself amongst the grass on top of the soil.
12. What effect has that on the feed of the cattle?—So far as I can see, it injures the cattle. They cannot help eating it when they are eating the grass.