

Land for stop-banks to be dedicated free of cost.

Your Commissioners are satisfied that the value of the lands so protected will be so much increased by these stop-banks, and by the construction of proper drain-outfalls, that it is quite reasonable Parliament should require that the lands taken should be dedicated to the River Board free of cost; and they recommend that such lands as may be required should be resumed without compensation for the value of the lands up to an average width of $1\frac{1}{2}$ chains, or for any damage or loss during the period of construction of the works, excepting only that in any case where the area resumed exceeds 5 per cent. of the whole holding it is suggested that any excess above 5 per cent. should be paid for at a fixed rate of, say, £10 per acre. In the legislation required to give effect to this recommendation, provision should be made releasing the lands taken by the Crown from any mortgage charges, and burdening the balance of the lands therewith.

Access over stop-banks.

Any buildings within the resumed area should be shifted free of cost to the owner, and provision made at each holding for suitable access to the river-bank for jetty purposes and for the watering of stock. The stop-banks, after completion, should be soiled with the surface soil previously removed from the site, and the area should be sown with grasses of a character to bind the river-sands together.

Native lands.

The Commissioners recommend that all Native lands immediately abutting on the rivers, and which will be benefited by the proposed works, should either be purchased prior to the erection of the works or be brought into line with lands owned by Europeans in the matters of taxation and contribution towards the cost and upkeep of the new works.

Extent of stop-banks, Ohinemuri.—Sand-deposit ground.

The Commissioners recommend that the stop-banks should be carried up the Ohinemuri on both sides as far as the Te-Tawa-a-Te-Kuao Stream, near the abattoirs, and that immediately below Mackaytown the low-lying lands of the Wairere, Te Rewarewa, and Otara Blocks should be purchased, the fences removed, and that they be held vacant so as to afford room for the river-waters debouching with high velocity out of the gorge to spread out in time of freshes, and by losing their velocity to enable them to deposit any heavy material they may have in suspension before the waters enter upon the more level and tortuous course of the lower reaches of the river.

Riverside roads.

In the Township of Paeroa and elsewhere, where there are roads on the present river-bank, the stop-banks would probably take a special form to suit the local requirements.

River Ohinemuri: Diversion at Pereniki's Bend.—Waihi-Paeroa Gold-extraction Company (Limited), River claims.

The Commissioners are strongly of opinion that the course of the Ohinemuri should be shortened by some three miles by the construction of a short cut or diversion from Pereniki's Bend to a point a short distance above the Junction; but counsel representing the Waihi-Paeroa Gold-extraction Company (Limited) claimed before the Commissioners that under the seven river claims issued to that company so recently as the 18th March last (1910), the company would have a claim for compensation to a very large extent if this cut were made. It appears to your Commissioners to be unfortunate that the mining law is such that the licenses held by this company could have been reissued so recently when it must have been realized that their issue might have some bearing on the recommendations of the Commission which then was about to be formed.

The Commissioners deem it strange that the law should, on the one hand, permit the agricultural value of river-bank lands to be depreciated by the deposit therein and adjacent thereto of mining tailings, and should, on the other hand,